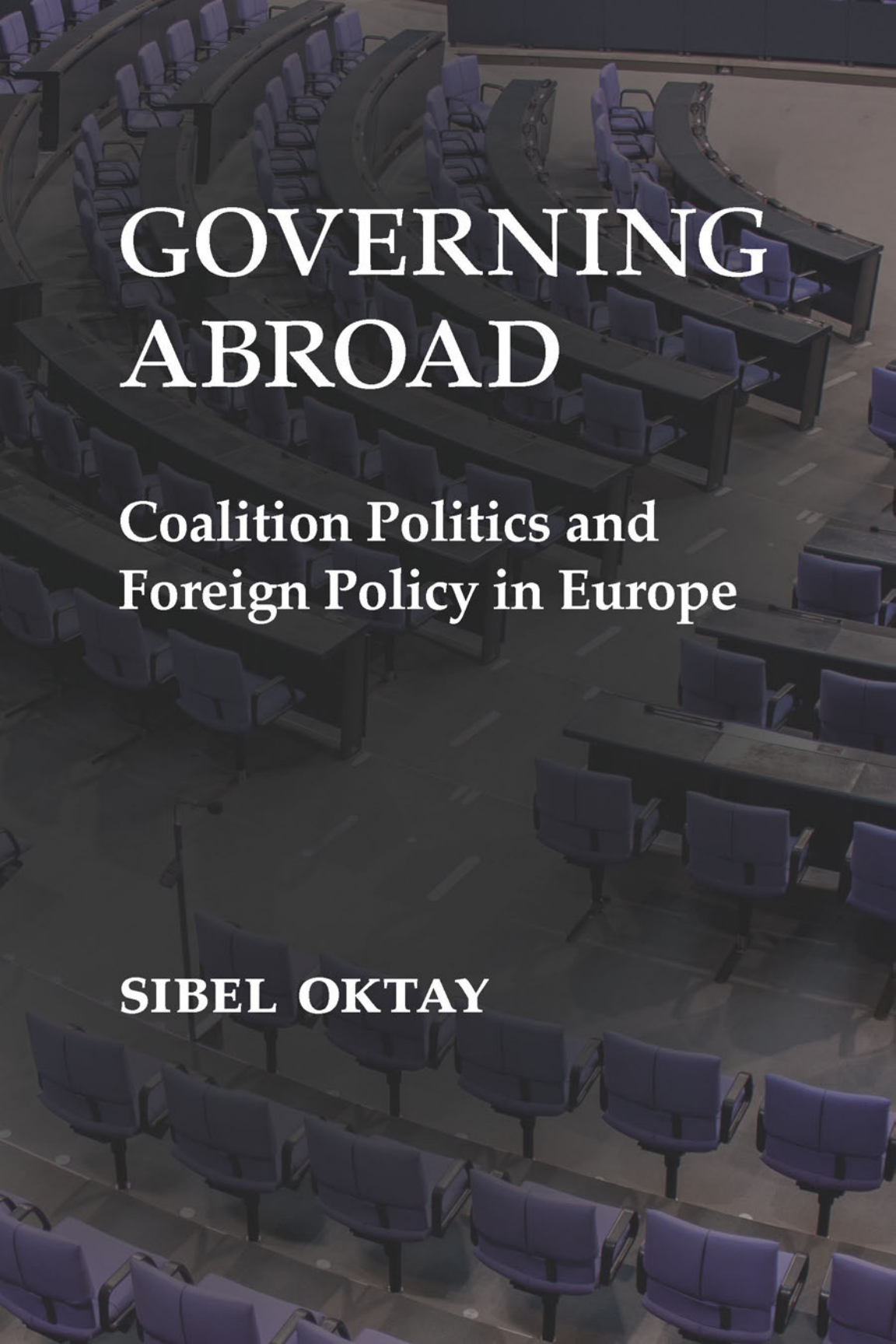

GOVERNING ABROAD

Coalition Politics and Foreign Policy in Europe

SIBEL OKTAY

Governing Abroad

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Sibel Oktay

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For Deniz and Hakan

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ONE

Why Study Coalition Governments in Foreign Policy?

In December 1979, when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) proposed to deploy forty-eight missiles in the Netherlands, the country voiced its hesitation.[1] The Dutch defense minister, Willem Scholten, stated at the time that his government could not "commit itself yet to deploy its share of the new missiles" and asked for a two-year grace period.[2] The Netherlands would debate the proposal not for two but for six years and postpone its decision three times before allowing the deployment in 1985.[3]

Denmark, too, had a lukewarm relationship with NATO during this period. That trend, however, had reversed by 1990. Soon after, the country engaged in its first "out-of-area operation with an element of coercion,"[4] contributing to the Persian Gulf blockade in response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. A little more than a decade later, Denmark would be one of the first nations to join the US-led war in Iraq.

The existing scholarship tells us that the international system would compel these small European countries to march to the drum of their powerful allies no matter what. Yet the examples show that their foreign policy behavior defeated this expectation. These governments were sometimes able to commit to participating in overseas military operations, while

1. Kugler, "NATO Chronicle"; Van Dijk, "A Mass Psychotic Movement."
2. Van Dijk, "A Mass Psychotic Movement," 1.
3. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition."
4. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change," 588; See also Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement 1973–2003*, 455.

delaying their decisions or keeping their allies in limbo at other times. What explains this variation in their behavior?

In 2007, a few thousand miles outside Europe, Israel was grappling with a different foreign policy challenge. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was eager to negotiate final terms with the Palestinian Authority to resolve the decades-long territorial conflict in the Middle East. Later that year at the US-mediated Annapolis Conference, however, Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni declared that the government would merely "launch" negotiations with Mahmoud Abbas, rather than "address the core issues."[5] Despite Olmert's willingness, Israel remained noncommittal in Annapolis. Even though the country had taken much more assertive steps in the recent past, including a unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005 and signing the Oslo Accords fourteen years prior, this time it held back.

The international systemic factors would hardly influence Israel's position at Annapolis. What about factors at the domestic level? Research in international relations (IR) and foreign policy analysis (FPA) tells us that one key domestic factor that influences foreign policy behavior is government structure. Single-party governments often make commitments much more easily than do coalition governments. Put differently, single-party governments act more decisively and assertively, generating expectations among their targets either by verbally communicating their willingness to pursue a specific policy or by the explicit use of their material resources.[6] But this doesn't explain Israel either. That country has never experienced single-party rule in its history—only coalitions—but has taken several assertive foreign policy steps in its neighborhood throughout the years.[7]

If the only type of government is a coalition in a given period of time in a country, focusing on the distinction between single-party governments and coalitions makes it impossible for us to explain how the structure of the government influences the regime's foreign policy activities. In fact, this distinction would not explain the variation in the foreign policy behavior of the Netherlands or Denmark during the Cold War either. Both of those countries have been ruled by coalition governments for decades.

So what explains the foreign policy behaviors of countries like the Netherlands, Denmark, or Israel, where coalitions are the predominant type of executive power? Why do some coalitions talk more decisively and allo-

5. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The Annapolis Conference."

6. Callahan, "Commitment," 182–83; Gaubatz, "Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations."

7. Benjakob, "Explained." In fact, Israel has not enjoyed a full-term government since 1988.

cate greater resources in international politics, while others postpone their decisions, dilute their policy positions, deliver deliberately vague statements, or shy away from deploying material resources? In other words, why do some coalitions make commitments more easily and assertively than others in the international arena?

In this book, I move beyond the dichotomy *between* single-party and coalition governments and look *within* coalitions to answer these questions. I argue that the specific constellation of parties in government explains why some of these coalitions can make stronger foreign policy commitments than others. I find that the size of the coalition, the distribution of the parties' policy preferences along the ideological spectrum, and the coalition's interaction with the parliamentary opposition together influence the nature of the regime's behavior abroad.

This is an important undertaking for both scholars and practitioners of foreign policy because coalition governments constitute the dominant outcome in parliamentary politics.[8] Nearly 90 percent of all Western European governments since 1945 have been composed of two or more political parties.[9] Citizens in this part of the world know that elections are less about any single party's majority victory than which parties would form the next governing coalition. Even the United Kingdom, known for its tradition of single-party governments, now navigates hung parliaments and multiparty cabinets. Coalitions dominate the political playing field outside of Western Europe as well. Israel, of course, is a prime example. Elsewhere in Israel's neighborhood, many have argued that the Turkish public's trepidation with unstable and short-lived coalition governments was partly responsible for the Justice and Development Party's first electoral victory in 2002,[10] as well as its re-election win in November 2015 after having lost the elections in June that year.[11]

Given their sheer frequency in parliamentary systems, it is no surprise that coalitions come in various sizes, captured by specific types. In countries like Germany, the Netherlands, or Austria, coalitions include just enough parties to achieve parliamentary majority. In other words, they are *minimum-winning coalitions*, where the departure of any party could bring down the government. In contrast, leaders in countries like Finland or Albania strive to strengthen their governments with as many seats in the parliament as possible. To do so, they typically form *oversized*, or *sur-*

8. Gallagher, Laver, and Mair, *Representative Government in Modern Europe*.
9. Bassi, "Policy Preferences in Coalition Formation."
10. Çarkoğlu, "Turkey's November 2002 Elections."
11. Öniş, "Turkey's Two Elections."

plus majority, *coalitions* and include more parties than necessary to maintain majority in the house. Fearing that having just enough seats in the parliament may threaten their stability in case any party decides to quit,[12] these governments intentionally cushion themselves with extra partners to minimize the possibility of calling for new elections due to dissolution. In still other cases, the number of parties in government does not guarantee majority support in the parliament. For instance, Danish coalitions are often formed as *minority coalitions*. Those governments have historically failed to meet the "50 percent of the seats plus one" dictum.

With many parties in government come many policy perspectives. Having a single party in government is convenient for leaders: to the extent that party members prefer a unitary and stable voice over factional clashes, the leader has an easier time rallying the party around effective policymaking. Coalitions, however, come with more strings attached. The leader must orchestrate the preferences and perspectives of all the parties in government. Similarly, the parties need to get along with each other if they want to govern together. Whether they are closer to one another along the ideological spectrum thus becomes a critical consideration. Coalitions with parties that share similar policy perspectives are not only expected to last longer, but they should also make policies and implement them much more smoothly than their internally contentious counterparts.[13] Therefore, coalition politics is not just about calculating the parties' seats in the parliament and detecting the type of coalition they form. It is also about where those parties exist ideologically and how their placement influences their ability and willingness to engage in collective decision making.

Finally, all these dynamics take place under the gaze of the parliamentary opposition. Coalition parties participate in government knowing that they will compete against each other in the next elections.[14] Quitting and joining the ranks of the opposition is ever a possibility, especially if these parties suffer from policy differences. Although all coalitions operate under this notion, minority coalitions face even greater vulnerability. The presence of an alternative majority in parliament poses a threat for these governments in particular, which are compelled to actively engage with the opposition to govern at home and abroad.

12. Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions*; Luebbert, *Comparative Democracy*; Kaarbo, "Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making"; Kaarbo, "Influencing Peace Junior Partners in Israeli Coalition Cabinets."

13. Diermeier and Stevenson, "Cabinet Survival and Competing Risks"; Warwick, "Ideological Diversity and Government Survival."

14. Martin and Vanberg, *Parliaments and Coalitions*.

I argue that the unique nature of multiparty governance forces us to consider three sets of factors to understand its dynamics and explain foreign policy making: (a) coalition type, which tells us how indispensable each party is to the stability of the coalition, (b) ideological cohesiveness, which tells us how much ideological dispersion exists inside the coalition, and (c) the coalition's standing vis-à-vis the parliament, which captures its relative vulnerability to the opposition. These factors generate various degrees of structural and situational constraints and opportunities for coalition governments to act at the international level. Much of this nuance in parliamentary politics gets lost, however, when we pay attention only to the distinction between single-party and multiparty governments. That dichotomy not only overlooks the remarkable variation in the forms of government in parliamentary systems, but it also, in effect, falls short of explaining the diversity of foreign policy behavior. As long as we focus on the dichotomy, we cannot explain why the Netherlands took six years to allow the missile deployment, why Denmark's relations with NATO remained muted during the 1980s but only picked up after 1990, or why Israel could not do more than just "launch" the talks at Annapolis. My argument therefore engages a broader debate in international relations research on the domestic political determinants of international behavior in democratic regimes. By focusing on the dominant form of the executive in parliamentary democracies, I provide a novel set of insights on how a party-level understanding of government better informs our efforts to explore the relationship between these regimes and their foreign policies.

Some political scientists may find this argument to be *almost* trivial, since the existing research in comparative politics has demonstrated time and again that these three key dynamics influence economic and public policy making across a host of issue domains, including budget and spending decisions, public sector growth, labor and healthcare legislation, and even corruption levels.[15] However, the effects of these dynamics have not yet been tested systematically in the foreign policy domain. Even though IR and FPA scholars have built bridges to the comparative politics literature to investigate the effect of coalitions on foreign policy behavior, much of this work has focused on the dichotomy between single-party and multiparty governments, rather than an investigation of the variation *within* coalitions. Their approach has thus offered an important and nec-

15. Bawn and Rosenbluth, "Short versus Long Coalitions"; Henisz, "The Institutional Environment for Economic Growth"; Huber, "How Does Cabinet Instability Affect Political Performance?"; Tsebelis, "Veto Players and Law Production in Parliamentary Democracies"; Tavits, "Clarity of Responsibility and Corruption."

essary, albeit coarse, test of the effects of executive structure on foreign policy in parliamentary systems. As a result, the outcomes of interest in this literature—international conflict initiation, escalation, participation in joint military or peacekeeping operations, to name a few—are explained with less precision than what is possible. By building on these existing works, I demonstrate first that the effects of coalition dynamics that shape public policy making are also observed in the foreign policy domain, and second that accounting for these dynamics helps us explain the variation in foreign policy behavior far more effectively.

This investigation has far-reaching policy implications as well. States do not exist in a vacuum. Sobel and Shiraev rightly point out that "few people want their country to take steps irrespective of what other nations do."[16] Hardly a day goes by in Washington without some expert, advisor, or pundit emphasizing the importance of the United States' commitment to its European allies.[17] The flip side of that coin—why and how those allies make commitments in foreign policy—is just as important. In the absence of a systematic inquiry over how foreign policy gets made in parliamentary systems that are so often ruled by coalition governments, decision makers, advisors, experts, and pundits who are unfamiliar with these regimes remain in the dark. This book sheds light precisely on this lacuna. As a result, it contributes not only to the scholarly literature but also to this broader policy conversation.

A Framework of Coalition Foreign Policy: The Argument in Brief

The aim of this book is to elucidate the dynamics of multiparty governance to investigate how they shape foreign policy decision making in parliamentary systems and explain the variation in these regimes' international behavior. To do so, I offer a coalition politics framework. I develop distinct explanations to explore how the type of a coalition, the degree of ideological cohesiveness among its parties, and its standing in the parliament influence the regime's international commitments. By unpacking coalitions, I take a closer look at how the specific constellation of parties in government affect foreign policy.

To undertake this puzzle, the book brings together and builds on the insights from the rich theoretical and empirical work in comparative

16. Sobel and Shiraev, *International Public Opinion and the Bosnia Crisis*, 299.
17. The Trump presidency might have been an exception, of course.

politics on coalition politics, legislative politics, and retrospective voting alongside the existing research on international relations and foreign policy analysis. I elucidate the dynamics of coalition foreign policy behavior by refining two major lines of explanation in comparative politics: the *veto players* and the *clarity of responsibility* theories.[18] By introducing what Hagan and his colleagues call "principal theoretical" dimensions,[19] namely, the size perspective and the policy distance between the parties that make up the government, I fine-tune these two comparativist approaches to explain why some multiparty governments act differently than others in foreign affairs. I also break new ground in coalition foreign policy research by investigating minority coalitions as a distinct type of multiparty government. I explore whether the "policy viability" and "fragmented opposition" explanations offered by comparativists[20] and international relations scholars[21] hold water to clarify how minority coalitions, despite their parliamentary vulnerabilities, can still act assertively abroad.

The findings of my approach illustrate that the dichotomous treatment of coalitions against single-party governments washes away several different patterns of foreign policy making in multiparty governance. Assertive behavior abroad takes place under certain types of coalitions that satisfy particular conditions of coalition size, ideological congruity, and relation to the parliamentary opposition. For instance, the results presented in this book indicate that having an oversized (surplus majority) coalition government increases the assertiveness, or intensity, of the regime's international commitments. The lack of clarity of responsibility (or, in other words, the presence of *responsibility diffusion*) explains this pattern: governments that include more parties than necessary can commit more assertively abroad by obscuring who is responsible for foreign policy. As a result, the parties in these oversized coalitions can emphasize government credibility over voter accountability and make otherwise unpopular foreign policy commitments. Oversized coalitions with significant internal ideological rifts can also backfire, however. Having too many diverse voices inside an oversized coalition weakens its commitment behavior at the international arena.

Minimum-winning coalitions, on the other hand, elicit a different pattern of behavior. All parties in a minimalist coalition are necessary to keep the government's parliamentary majority intact. Research shows that this

18. Tsebelis, "Decision Making in Political Systems"; Powell Jr. and Whitten, "A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting."

19. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition," 174.

20. Laver and Budge, *Party Policy and Government Coalitions*.

21. Hagan, *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective*.

provides each party (including *any* junior party) with the power to block proposals (that is, they act like true veto players), since they can threaten to leave the cabinet and bring down the government. Understandably, these tensions are greater when the government includes parties from diverse ideological backgrounds. And yet my findings conclude that these coalitions can engage in powerful international commitments, defying the expectations of the veto players explanation. In chapter 5 on the Netherlands, I demonstrate that an alternative explanation that involves mutual concessions among the parties that make up the government (in other words, *logrolling*) illuminates why this is the case. When the otherwise incompatible political parties in a minimum-winning setting clip together office perks and policy concessions with foreign policy proposals, they can act assertively in the international arena.

Finally, I find that minority coalitions are not necessarily foreign policy underdogs. Although they are trapped in the parliament by way of their seat share, minority coalitions adopt two distinct patterns of political interaction with the opposition, which allow them to commit strongly abroad. First, they *divide the opposition* with their own ideological composition and achieve policy viability. By making sure that the coalition partners come from the opposite sides of the political spectrum, they impede the possibility that an ideologically connected opposition in the parliament can block foreign policy commitments. Second, when they cannot divide the opposition, they *logroll* with it. In other words, by providing policy concessions on the opposition's preferred policies, the coalition attracts the opposition's support and ultimately gets things done in international politics.

My framework suggests that identifying the partisan composition of the coalition and how it interacts with the parliament illuminate the diverse ways in which they make commitments abroad. As a result, I demonstrate that coalition foreign policy is far more multifaceted than the existing research portrays it to be.

Existing Research on Democratic Politics and International Behavior

Why Should We Account for Coalition Politics?

This book focuses on the partisan composition of coalition governments to demonstrate how it impacts the international behavior of parliamentary regimes. It thus puts coalition theory research in comparative politics

to the test in the domain of foreign policy. Equally important, this book belongs to the literature on the domestic political determinants of democratic foreign policy. I engage three major research areas in this literature. Below I identify these and explain why a more nuanced account of coalition governments would benefit each.

At the broadest level, the book's argument engages directly with the *democratic peace* theory (DPT), which studies the factors that compel democracies to act more peacefully than other regime types in international politics.[22] This literature is far more diverse and multifaceted than I can do justice to in this chapter. Still, the framework I raise in this book engages closely with some of its core debates. One of those debates concerns the *audience costs* theory. It claims that democracies are often peaceful because when they do commit to more hard-line foreign policies, they are hard-pressed to follow through with them since backing down on them would damage their reputation, credibility, and electability.[23] Some argue that the size and impact of the audience cost on the leader also depends on whether the domestic public is interested and concerned about the international standing of their state, while others focus on the timing of elections.[24] A second debate in DPT focuses more closely on the distribution of power between the executive and the legislative branches to explain democratic behavior abroad. Elman contends that democracies tend to make more hawkish commitments—act more belligerent and forceful—at the international level when the institutionally more powerful branch favors those hawkish policy options over dovish alternatives.[25] An adjacent debate specifically concerns the democratic parliament's war powers. Proponents of the *parliamentary peace* theory assert that the executive's ability to commit to more belligerent behaviors abroad is curtailed when it faces a legislature with strong war powers that act as the regime's emergency brakes.[26]

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22. Bremer, "Are Democracies Less Likely To Join Wars?"; Levy, "The Causes of War"; Polachek, "Why Democracies Cooperate More and Fight Less"; Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." For a discussion of the post–Cold War shift away from systemic constraints to "determinants," see Stein, "Constraints and Determinants."

23. Fearon, "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests"; Leeds, "Domestic Political Institutions"; Reiter and Tillman, "Public, Legislative, and Executive Constraints"; Tomz, "Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations"; Kertzer and Brutger, "Decomposing Audience Costs."

24. Tomz, "Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations"; Kertzer and Brutger, "Decomposing Audience Costs"; Gaubatz, "Election Cycles and War"; Williams, "Flexible Election Timing and International Conflict."

25. Elman, "Unpacking Democracy."

26. Dieterich, Hummel, and Marschall, "Bringing Democracy Back In"; Wagner, "Is There a Parliamentary Peace?"; Auerswald and Saideman, *NATO in Afghanistan*.

A closer look at coalition foreign policy making would contribute to each of these macro-institutional debates by refining their expectations. Take the *audience costs* theory. It has not yet considered whether the structure of the government influences how leaders calculate the domestic political consequences of their behavior, or how election timing would influence that relationship. Research suggests that multiparty governments are not as vulnerable to the electoral costs of unpopular foreign policy (such as backing down, which audience cost theorists would contend) as we might expect them to be.[27] If some governments can really circumvent punishment for unpopular foreign policy better than others, then the argument that democratic leaders face audience costs or that their international behavior depends on the electoral cycle only holds water for certain types of governments for which it is electorally too costly to avoid the judgment of the masses.[28] Indeed, in chapter 6, I argue that Finland's decision to join the EU's monetary union, despite the Finns' strong and consistent disapproval, can be explained on these grounds. The audience costs research should therefore benefit from a more nuanced analysis of how coalition politics shape foreign policy making and how that relationship influences the presence and impact of audience costs on leaders.

This investigation should also benefit those studying the role of the executive-legislative balance of power and the impact of parliamentary war powers on international behavior. The executive is part and parcel of the legislative branch in parliamentary systems.[29] Therefore, whether the legislature is hawkish or dovish matters in foreign policy only in relation to the distribution of partisan preferences in the executive branch. Similarly, the extent to which the legislature can pull the executive toward nonaggressive foreign policies depends on the strength and partisan structure of the latter as well as on its ability to engage the parliamentary opposition to realize its own policy agenda.[30] Coalition politics complicates these scenarios by way of including multiple parties in government, and, counterintuitively, it creates opportunities to study the relationship between the legislature and the executive in parliamentary politics far more effectively.

The second line of inquiry that my book directly speaks to focuses more specifically on the governmental-level explanations of international

27. Kreps, "Elite Consensus as a Determinant of Alliance Cohesion"; Oktay, "Clarity of Responsibility and Foreign Policy Performance Voting."

28. Oktay, "Clarity of Responsibility and Foreign Policy Performance Voting."

29. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.

30. Oktay, "Chamber of Opportunities"; Clare, "Hawks, Doves, and International Cooperation"; Mello, "Parliamentary Peace or Partisan Politics?"

behavior. Some researchers in this area demonstrate the relative quantitative effects of a host of variables on foreign policy outputs. These variables include the number of parties in government, whether it is a single-party or multiparty government, its total parliamentary seat share, and its ideological position along the left-right political spectrum on major foreign policy commitments, such as conflict initiation, involvement, or escalation, frequently utilizing the Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) dataset.[31] Others take a qualitative approach to investigate the effects of these factors on democracies' decisions to get involved in overseas military operations.[32] Still others take an in-depth look at how the government constructs a foreign policy vision to find out how that vision shapes its behavior. They study the country's strategic culture, history, or role in international politics to see how they influence the foreign policy decision-making calculus of the government.[33] A final group of researchers skip over interparty dynamics at the governmental level and analyze interministerial dynamics instead.[34] Those using the poliheuristic theory study how decision makers adopt stepwise approaches to narrow down their choice sets before arriving at their final decisions.[35]

Each of these research tracks has been invaluable for explaining the nexus between domestic politics and the international behavior of democracies. Still, some gaps have been left unaddressed. The quantitative studies, for instance, remain undertheorized. Their "kitchen-sink" approach to independent variable specification and model building disregards the substantive reasons why certain democratic systems engage in international conflicts differently than others. These studies have been "less interested in understanding the theoretical reasons why certain domestic political factors in a democracy constrain its international behavior than they were

31. Ireland and Gartner, "Time to Fight"; Leblang and Chan, "Explaining Wars Fought by Established Democracies?"; Leeds and Davis, "Domestic Political Vulnerability and International Disputes"; Leeds and Davis, "Beneath the Surface"; Prins and Sprecher, "Institutional Constraints"; Reiter and Tillman, "Public, Legislative, and Executive Constraints"; Heffington, "Do Hawks and Doves Deliver?"

32. Auerswald and Saideman, *NATO in Afghanistan*; Rathbun, *Partisan Interventions*; Mello, *Democratic Participation in Armed Conflict*.

33. Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy"; Thies and Breuning, "Integrating Foreign Policy Analysis and International Relations"; Walker, *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*; Breuning, "Role Theory in Foreign Policy"; Cantir and Kaarbo, *Domestic Role Contestation*; Doeser, "Strategic Culture, Domestic Politics, and Foreign Policy"; Kaarbo, "A Foreign Policy Analysis Perspective."

34. Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*; Brummer, "The Reluctant Peacekeeper."

35. Mintz, "How Do Leaders Make Decisions?"

in which of those factors, if any, had any effect on conflict propensity."[36] Counting the number of parties (either dichotomously or continuously) to explain war behavior washes away the qualitative differences across governments. A multiparty government does not necessarily mean a *stronger* or *weaker* government. Indeed, the history of Israeli politics shows why counting parties is not enough to gauge the government's policymaking capacity in that country.[37] Similarly, asking whether the government enjoys a parliamentary majority or not does not tell us much unless we know its partisan distribution of seats in relation to that of the opposition. As I explain in chapter 2 in greater detail and quantitatively test for in Chapter 3, the absence of more fine-grained specifications and theory-driven models is a major reason behind the mixed outcomes that we observe in these studies.

The qualitative studies in this area have also kept the "single-party versus multi-party" dichotomy largely intact, asserting that coalition governance has an across-the-board constraining effect on decision makers. For instance, Auerswald and Saideman expect coalitions to impose "more significant caveats" on decisions to participate in joint military operations than single-party governments,[38] without considering the possibility that logrolling among the coalition parties might eliminate some of those caveats (as I demonstrate in chapter 5). The authors also expect that coalitions with greater ideological dispersion would impose greater caveats against participation in joint operations,[39] disregarding the ideological composition of the parliamentary *opposition*. As I elaborate further in chapter 2 and demonstrate empirically in chapters 3 and 4, the distribution of ideological positions in the opposition becomes a key factor in explaining how minority coalitions can engage in assertive behavior abroad despite their structural weakness in the parliament. The government's ideological composition matters, as Rathbun demonstrates.[40] I show that the parliamentary opposition matters just as much, especially when the government's policymaking ability depends on it.

Studies that emphasize the constructed nature of foreign policy, interministerial dynamics, or the specific policymaking mechanisms that generate behavioral outputs should also benefit from a closer investigation of coalition politics and foreign policy. To the extent that the country's role

36. Oktay and Beasley, "Quantitative Approaches in Coalition Foreign Policy," 477.
37. Sasley and Waller, *Politics in Israel*.
38. Auerswald and Saideman, *NATO in Afghanistan*, 68.
39. Auerswald and Saideman, *NATO in Afghanistan*.
40. Rathbun, *Partisan Interventions*.

in international politics or its strategic culture are interpreted by those in power, identifying the spread of policy preferences in the government and its parliamentary strength becomes crucial to explaining how culture and role conceptions influence the regime's foreign policy. Similarly, partisan politics within the executive branch should influence interministerial decision making. So long as the political parties bargain with each other at the formative stage to receive the cabinet portfolios that correspond to their policy interests, as the comparative politics research demonstrates,[41] we should expect the ministries' policymaking behavior to be influenced by partisan motivations. Finally, from the perspective of the poliheuristic theory, shedding light on coalition policymaking should help us better identify how decision makers determine which policy options are feasible and which must be eliminated from consideration early on in the process.[42]

The last line of inquiry my book speaks to is the literature on coalition foreign policy: the mothership. This research has grown not just because much of policymaking really takes place in group settings,[43] but also to respond to some of the research I have surveyed above. Studies in this vein pay much closer attention to the theoretical underpinnings of the impact that multiparty executives have on foreign policy. They look at the number of parties in government and identify the presence of a pivotal junior party (without which the government cannot maintain a majority in the parliament) as well as this party's ideological placement to establish if these more precise identifiers of government structure influence the regime's foreign policy.[44] This scholarship also looks at micro-level dynamics inside coalitions such as the conception of ideas, national roles, and the social-psychological patterns of decision making more substantively by illustrating how coalitions constitute a unique setting for interparty competition both at the ideational and institutional dimensions.[45]

Finally, these studies distinguish themselves from the preceding scholarship by acknowledging the plurality of foreign policy behavior beyond

41. Laver and Shepsle, *Making and Breaking Governments*; Bäck, Debus, and Dumont, "Who Gets What in Coalition Governments?"; Bassi, "Policy Preferences in Coalition Formation."

42. Mintz, "How Do Leaders Make Decisions?"

43. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition"; Hermann et al., "Resolve, Accept, or Avoid."

44. Clare, "Ideological Fractionalization"; Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*. More recently, Haynes asks whether electoral margins "entail broad coalitions that . . . require leaders to pursue a more cautious, lowest-common-denominator foreign policy." See Haynes, "Votes and Violence," 1.

45. Özkeçeci-Taner, "The Impact of Institutionalized Ideas in Coalition Foreign Policy Making"; Özkeçeci-Taner, *The Role of Ideas in Coalition Government Policymaking*.

wars. They move away from interstate disputes toward foreign policy events datasets.[46] International dispute behavior constitutes only a tiny sliver of all foreign policy. Surely states fighting with others abroad is always newsworthy, but how often do they take place compared to heads of government visiting their counterparts, signing agreements with them, or condemning their displeasing actions? States' interactions with the international arena span a far greater variety of behaviors.[47] Although foreign policy is so much more than war making, this variation often gets lost in the existing research. The data say it all: Figures 1.1 and 1.2 break down which event types were enacted most frequently by European governments between 1994 and 2004 as coded for in the 10 Million International Dyadic Events dataset, built by political scientists Gary King and Will Lowe.[48]

An important contribution of the coalition foreign policy literature has been to tap into this trove of data on international behavior. Several works utilize foreign policy events datasets to study how extreme, conflictual, or cooperative the states' behaviors are.[49] These methodological improvements expand our understanding of foreign policy as they demonstrate how far and wide these behaviors span beyond international conflict.

Despite this literature's contributions to the study of domestic politics and foreign policy, several underexplored puzzles remain. The first concerns minority coalitions. The literature has focused predominantly on majority coalitions; we have yet to figure out the conditions under which minority coalitions could still act decisively in foreign affairs. Second, existing studies rely on the number of parties in government and its parliamentary seat share as distinct variables to capture the variation in government types. In so doing, they raise the same questions as their predecessors with regards to the precise effects of government composition on foreign policy.

46. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*; Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme"; Beasley and Kaarbo, "Explaining Extremity in the Foreign Policies of Parliamentary Democracies"; Oktay, "Constraining or Enabling?" For a review, see Oktay and Beasley, "Quantitative Approaches in Coalition Foreign Policy."

47. McClelland, *World Event/Interaction Survey (WEIS), 1966–1978*; Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data." Researchers in the 1970s categorized states' international interactions across two dozen action verbs, although developments in events data analysis during the 1990s led to the creation of more than sixty such verbs to identify foreign policy behavior, ranging from apologies and promises to suspension of relations or provision of aid. See Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data."

48. King and Lowe, "VRA Documentation, 1990–2004.Pdf."; King and Lowe, "An Automated Information Extraction Tool."

49. Beasley and Kaarbo, "Explaining Extremity in the Foreign Policies of Parliamentary Democracies"; Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme"; Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*; Coticchia and Davidson, "The Limits of Radical Parties in Coalition Foreign Policy."

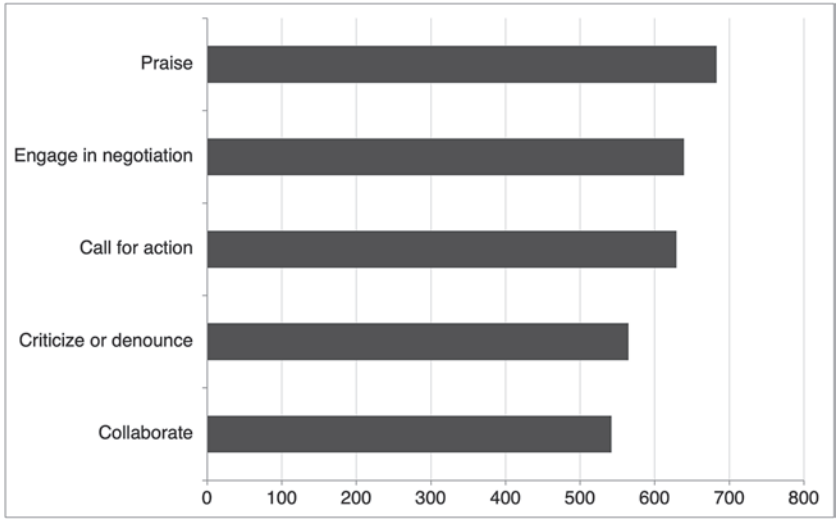

Figure 1.1. Event Types Observed 500–1,000 Times in the Dataset

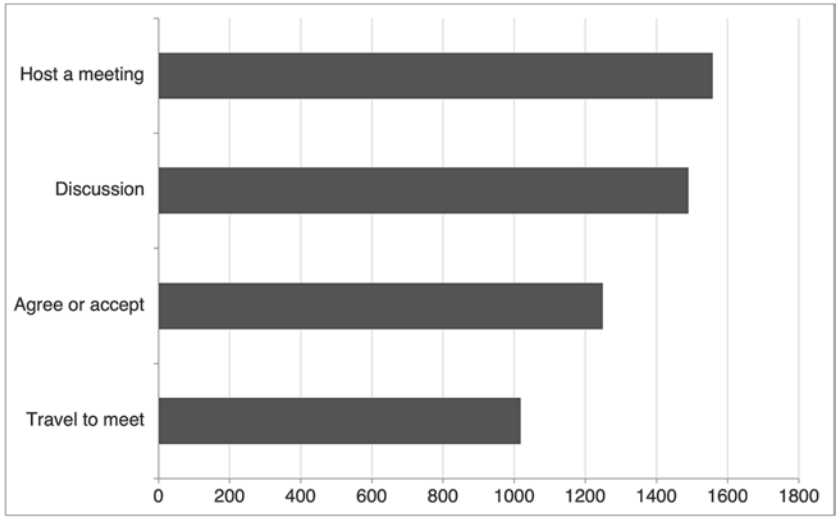

Figure 1.2. Event Types Observed 1,000–2,000 Times in the Dataset

Third, the literature tends to overemphasize the role of the pivotal junior party in foreign policy making. Focusing only on this party's ideological placement signals the underlying expectation that, first, all coalitions are held hostage by at least one such party, and second, that its partisan identity determines the government's position. This approach overlooks the impact that the overall cohesiveness of the government might have on policymaking. It also ignores that some coalitions could have *surplus* parties that are superfluous to maintaining parliamentary majority but are still included to bridge ideological gaps among the governing parties,[50] thus diluting the power of the pivotal party to blackmail the coalition and, at the same time, strengthening the coalition's position vis-à-vis the opposition. Further, the literature's current focus on the pivotal junior partner assumes a majority setting as it looks *inside* the government. By definition, then, it dismisses minority coalitions where the pivotal actor is *outside* the government.

Data limitations in the existing work is another reason why new research is needed. The most recent and well-known volume on coalition foreign policy to date, Juliet Kaarbo's *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, tests the effects of government structure on foreign policy choices using a dataset of Cold War events, leaving the question of whether the structural constraints imposed by the bipolar international system confounds this relationship open to debate.[51] Single-case studies, on the other hand, run into familiar criticisms regarding the generalizability of their results. A mixed-method design with a post–Cold War focus should provide novel insights on the effects of coalition politics on foreign policy, as it offers both big-picture quantitative and nuanced qualitative evidence while also controlling for the systemic constraints on state behavior by focusing on a period where such constraints are significantly muted.

My book addresses these gaps. In the chapters that follow, I blend insights from international relations, foreign policy analysis, and comparative politics scholarship to establish that coalitions impose varying levels of situational and structural constraints and opportunities on decision makers in foreign policy, generating diverse patterns to explain their behavior abroad.

50. Bassi, "Policy Preferences in Coalition Formation."
51. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.

The Plan of the Book

Why do some coalitions act more decisively and make stronger commitments than others in international affairs? Which factors enable some coalitions to act more assertively abroad, and which factors constrain them? This book combines international relations, foreign policy analysis, and comparative politics literatures to develop a framework of coalition politics that elucidates the relationship between the structure of the government and its international behavior to answer these questions. I utilize both quantitative and qualitative evidence from post–Cold War European parliamentary democracies to investigate the explanatory power of this approach.

Thus, in chapter 2, I lay out the theoretical framework of the book. I introduce the *veto players*, *clarity of responsibility*, *policy viability*, and *fragmented opposition* explanations to make the case that the way we have come to understand the relationship between government structure and foreign policy in international relations is inconclusive and incomplete. I then explain how a more nuanced but systematic approach that accounts for the coalition's type, its ideological cohesiveness, and its standing in the parliament can elucidate the relationship between government structure and foreign policy behavior, generating more crisp observable implications. In chapter 2, I also consider what factors other than coalition politics might influence foreign policy behavior. I discuss a range of variables at distinct levels of analysis, such as the presence of a threat to national survival, the possibility of mutual concessions between parties, public opinion, and the preferences of key individual decision makers in the government. These factors help clarify the scope conditions of my argument. I explore their explanatory power in the subsequent case study chapters of the book.

After laying out the framework and its expectations, in chapter 3, I take a quantitative approach to test the relationship between coalition governance and international commitments. I use a subset of Gary King and Will Lowe's 10 Million International Dyadic Events (10MIDE) dataset.[52] This set includes some seventeen thousand foreign policy events from more than 130 governments across thirty European countries, focusing on the period between 1994 and 2004. I combine this dataset with expert survey data on the ideological placements of European political parties, which allows me to test the "big picture" empirical relationships between coalition governments and their commitment behavior abroad. The results show that a party-level approach to identifying the type of coalitions and

52. King and Lowe, "VRA Documentation, 1990–2004.Pdf."

their ideological spread challenges the existing belief that they are categorically constrained or enabled in foreign affairs. The analyses conclude that not all coalitions are constrained or given a free pass abroad, dispelling the notion that we can study them collectively under one homogeneous category against single-party governments.

Statistical analysis provides a powerful approach to demonstrate the relationships between my key independent variables of interest and the intensity of foreign policy commitments among European parliamentary democracies. Still, it is equally important for me to show how these empirical relationships are observed on the ground by uncovering the patterns that exist between coalition governments and their international commitments. How does a minority coalition circumvent its size vulnerability in the parliament to join international operations? How can a minimum-winning coalition that suffers from deep ideological splits still manage to make military commitments? How could an oversized coalition decide to join a currency union despite strong public backlash? Given the breadth of the literature on democratic politics and foreign policy, how does the coalition politics framework perform against alternative explanations such as threats to national survival, logrolling dynamics among political parties, public opinion, or political leadership?

Thus, in chapters 4, 5, and 6, I situate my argument in the context of these factors at distinct levels of analysis using structured-focused comparative case studies. In this method of qualitative analysis, "the researcher writes general questions that reflect the research objective" and raises them for "each case under study to guide and standardize data collection, thereby making systematic comparison and cumulation of the findings of the cases possible."[53] In effect, the method "deals selectively with only certain aspects of the historical case" while "assur[ing] the acquisition of comparable data from the several cases" through the use of these standardized questions tailored to capture the effect of the variables of interest.[54] This method cannot exhaust all possible explanations of the phenomenon under study. Nevertheless, it allows me to focus on the most important possible causes of each case and provide "systematic and contextualized comparisons" across and within cases.[55] By complementing quantitative results with qualitative insights I can more clearly identify the ways in which coalition politics influences and informs the foreign policy decision-making process and its behavioral outputs.

53. George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 67.
54. George, "Case Studies and Theory Development," 61–62.
55. Mahoney, "Structured, Focused Comparison," 1100.

In each chapter, I focus on a key coalition type—minority, minimum-winning, and oversized—to investigate how the structure of the coalition, its ideological cohesiveness, and its standing in the parliament interact with the aforementioned alternative factors at the policy-making stage toward generating international commitments. These chapters contribute to the overall aim of the book with in-depth portrayals of the ways in which foreign policy decision making takes place inside coalitions while substantively acknowledging the national and international political contexts that these governments are situated in. In each chapter, I concentrate on countries where each coalition type is a typical institutional outcome of government formation. This ensures that the coalition dynamics investigated in the case studies are fairly well-established and representative of what takes place in the domestic political landscape of each country. By selecting these "typical" country cases per coalition type, I can then explore more systematically how the ideological cohesion of the coalition and its relationship with the parliamentary opposition shape its commitment decisions.[56]

Thus, in chapter 4, I start with minority coalitions, using Denmark as my setting. Existing research on Denmark suggests that this coalition type is more the rule than the exception in this country, making it a suitable locale to study the dynamics of its foreign policy making.[57] First, I investigate the shift in Denmark's relations with NATO from the 1980s to the 1990s, followed by its decision in 1990 to participate in the US-led naval blockade against Saddam's Iraq. This case demonstrates the *policy viability* explanation and the effect of having an *ideologically fragmented opposition* on the coalition's ability to commit in foreign policy. I explain that Denmark's lukewarm relations with NATO in the 1980s were due to the presence of an ideologically unified left-wing opposition against the right-oriented minority coalition. The opposition had used its majority advantage for nearly a decade by inserting dissenting footnotes in the government's NATO communiqués, marking a period known as the "footnote policy era." This had changed by 1990. The new minority coalition snatched one of the left-leaning parties in the parliament to effectively break up the opposition ranks. Although it introduced some ideological diversity inside the coalition, dividing the opposition enabled the government to strengthen its relations with the transatlantic allies, soon leading to Denmark's participation in the blockade.

Next in chapter 4, I turn to Denmark's 2003 decision to join the US-led

56. Seawright and Gerring, "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research," 297.

57. Damgaard, "Denmark: The Life and Death of Government Coalitions"; Elklit, "Party Behaviour and the Formation of Minority Coalition Governments."

war in Iraq. This case illustrates an alternative pathway to commitment when the kind of ideological disruption we saw in 1990 is absent. I show that even though the government in 2003 was an ideologically narrow right-wing coalition, it was able to *logroll* with a parliamentary opposition party to secure their support for the war effort. By attaching each other's policies together and moving closer to the opposition's platform, the government was able to achieve majority support in the parliament and commit to the war in Iraq. Together, these two cases illustrate how minority coalitions can make international commitments despite their parliamentary vulnerability. Importantly, each case study uncovers a different pattern of executive-legislative interaction to illustrate these outcomes. While the 1990 case supports the *policy viability* and *fragmented opposition* explanations that I raise with the coalition politics framework in chapter 2, the 2003 case demonstrates the power of *logrolling* as an alternative pattern. The cases show that even the most dramatic foreign policy episodes can be influenced primarily by the dynamics of governmental policymaking.

In chapter 5, I turn to the Netherlands. This country has been led by minimum-winning coalitions since the 1970s, making it a great laboratory to study the impact of this coalition type on foreign policy commitments.[58] This chapter takes on a unique comparative design. It illustrates that a country's foreign policy does not take place in vacuum but is fundamentally entrenched in the regime's domestic political climate: governments may come and go while dealing with the same, ongoing foreign policy challenge. To drive this point home, I focus on a single foreign policy issue—the decision to join the 2003 Iraq war—that spilled over three different minimum-winning coalition arrangements: an outgoing coalition, a coalition-in-the-making that was being negotiated in the aftermath of the January 2003 elections but had failed to finalize, and an incoming coalition. So how do minimum-winning coalitions still increase the intensity of their international commitments even though they also suffer from deep ideological differences? I show that, once again, the most compelling answer is *logrolling*: as political parties expect and want to be in government—a major side-payment in the form of office seats—they concede and go along with the more intense foreign policy preferences of their partners that call for greater international commitment. Alternative factors such as public opinion, threat to national survival, or individual preferences, on the other hand, remain insignificant or inconsistent explanations. Logrolling best explains the incremental resource commitment that the Dutch

58. Pennings and Keman, "The Changing Landscape of Dutch Politics since the 1970s."

provided to the war in Iraq during the government negotiations that took place between two ideologically distant parties, the Christian Democrats (CDA) and the Labour Party (PvdA) in 2003.

Chapter 6 completes the book's empirical framework by shifting the focus onto oversized coalitions. It takes Finland as its setting, where this coalition type has been observed since 1987.[59] The chapter explores Finland's entry to the European Union's Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in 1999, which took place despite a visible lack of public support. This case demonstrates the clarity of responsibility explanation, for which I provide quantitative support in chapter 3. I show how the lack of clarity of responsibility in oversized coalitions allows coalition parties to prioritize government credibility over voter accountability. Finnish coalition parties, particularly the smaller ones, prefer staying on good terms with their cabinet partners than with their constituents precisely because they expect electoral blame for unpopular foreign policy to dissolve at the ballot box, allowing them to get re-elected and participate in the next governing coalition. Moreover, the EMU case complements the comparative analytical approach of the book as it shifts the issue area away from conventional foreign and security matters. Doing so, this chapter further lends credence to the applicability of the book's main argument.

Chapter 7 concludes the book by weaving together its results. I demonstrate that a more nuanced examination of the structure of coalitions significantly improves our understanding of the relationship between governmental politics and international commitments in parliamentary democracies. Furthermore, the results push the boundaries of the current state of the art not just for the coalition foreign policy literature but also for the research on party politics and international relations more broadly. I consider new research avenues that build on and take advantage of the conclusions presented here. The remainder of the chapter overviews the book's implications for future scholarship and offers food for thought for policymakers. I also discuss how the book's main takeaway—that coalition politics matter in foreign policy—can travel to other parliamentary systems beyond Europe.

59. Raunio, "Europe and the Finnish Parliamentary Election of March 2003."

TWO

The Constraints and Opportunities of Coalition Foreign Policy

Moving beyond the Dichotomy

The four-party Liberal-National coalition replaced the Australian Labor Party's (ALP) single-party government in 2013 to quickly seize an ambitious foreign policy geared toward greater international presence. Just three weeks before the election, the country's soon-to-be minister of foreign affairs, Julia Bishop, had argued in an opinion piece for the Lowy Institute, an independent think tank in Australia, that the coalition would be "the best choice on foreign aid and trade policy." She emphasized the coalition's pledge to increase Australia's presence and influence in the Indo-Pacific, particularly through new trade agreements with the regional states.[1] In a 2016 piece for the Australian Institute of International Affairs, Bishop would praise the coalition's ability to deliver on this promise, including finalizing a strategic partnership agreement with Singapore, a free-trade agreement with Japan, and a deepening military relationships with China.[2] For a four-party coalition, Bishop's government was surprisingly successful at engaging in a variety of high-commitment behaviors in the international arena. Indeed, these behaviors required strong verbal assurances from the government as well as the substantial use of the country's material resources.

1. Bishop, "Why the Coalition Is the Best Choice."
2. Bishop, "Australian Foreign Policy."

Halfway across the globe, the foreign policy prospects were not as bright for another four-party coalition. The 2017 parliamentary elections in the Netherlands produced a highly fragmented legislature of thirteen political parties without a single party assuming a majority.[3] The incumbent People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) had won the largest number of seats, but nonetheless ended up forming a coalition with three other parties from diverse ends of the political spectrum: the liberal Democrats 66 (D66) alongside the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and Christian Union (CU). Analysts commented on the Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte's delicate balancing act in his new government, asking how he could "hold together a razor thin majority at home while maximizing the country's influence on the international stage."[4] And there it was: another four-party coalition, but with a much bleaker prospect of high-caliber, assertive foreign policy.

Clearly, multiparty governments vary in their ability to act abroad. Although "disunity and paralysis"[5] are not necessarily the only outcomes in coalition foreign policy as it has been recently observed in Australia, not every coalition—certainly not Rutte's—performs similarly. What explains this variation? Why are some coalitions able to assert themselves in the international arena while others fail to do so? Why is it easier for some coalitions to project their countries' presence abroad through signing trade agreements, forging stronger diplomatic relationships, or sending foreign aid? Why is it more difficult for other coalitions to act with such commitment in foreign affairs? These are important questions for both the scholars and practitioners of foreign policy. Answering them should not only shed greater light on the academic debate on the relationship between domestic politics and international outcomes, but also help analysts and policymakers toward making more informed observations and decisions when dealing with coalition governments in the international arena.

To answer these questions, this book focuses on the politics of coalition governance by taking political parties as its key constitutive unit. The debate takes two forms among those interested in explaining the policymaking dynamics of coalitions. The first focuses on the *constraints* that coalitions impose on the decision makers. Having too many political parties in government increases the amount of deliberations necessary to finalize a policy decision and even runs the risk of deadlock when an

3. "IPU Parline Database on National Parliaments."
4. O'Leary, "Mark Rutte: North's Quiet Rebel."
5. King, "Puncturing the Myth of Decisive Government."

agreement cannot be reached. As a result, coalitions are often considered cumbersome, prone to stalemate and political crisis.

The flip side of this debate focuses on the *opportunities* that coalition governments present to the decision makers, specifically, decreased levels of accountability for the parties that participate in the government. Voters have the easiest time identifying who is to blame when a single party is in charge: if they are not happy with the government's policies, they simply cast their vote for another party at the next election. Coalition governments, by way of having several political parties in the decision-making process, thwart this process. As coalitions make it more difficult for voters to hold parties responsible come election time, these governments lead to lower levels of *ex post* accountability. The effect is greater leeway for the decision makers: if at the end of the day voters are unable to assign blame to them, the parties in government will enjoy lower barriers against acting in costly and risky ways that would have otherwise jeopardized their electoral prospects. These include behaviors in the international domain, where voters might already have weaker incentives and fewer resources to monitor their government's activities.

The international relations literature mirrors this debate by focusing predominantly on the dichotomy between single-party and multiparty governments and the constraints generated by each to explain why parliamentary democracies behave the way they do abroad. It has failed, however, to systematically account for the variation that exists *within* coalitions. We can identify this variation along two dimensions. First, from a *structural* standpoint, coalitions vary based on the individual contributions of each party to the coalition's parliamentary size. Second, from a *situational* standpoint, they vary based on the ideological heterogeneity introduced by the governing parties.[6] Furthermore, minority coalitions constitute a special case of multiparty governments that researchers have yet to investigate in the foreign policy domain. Although these coalitions are *structurally* constrained vis-à-vis the opposition given their seat share in the parliament, they might enjoy *situational* opportunities to make commitments in foreign policy if they prevent the materialization of a credible policy challenge from the opposition parties in the parliament.

Three competing theories in the study of coalitions frame and elucidate this discussion. While the *veto players* theory highlights the constraints coalitions have to endure to make policy and act on it, the *clarity of responsibility* theory suggests that coalitions may enjoy greater freedom to embark upon costly policies since retrospective voter accountability is compromised as a

6. Oktay, "Chamber of Opportunities."

result of responsibility diffusion in the government. The *policy viability* and *fragmented opposition* explanations complement these theories by shedding more light on the policymaking capabilities of minority coalitions. As a result, identifying the structural and situational variation among coalitions provides a more thorough treatment of these theories and generates new hypotheses that highlight the different directions in which coalitions can influence the international commitments of parliamentary regimes.

In this chapter, I drive this point home. I introduce greater nuance to how we treat the explanatory power of these competing theories in order to explicate coalition foreign policy. In so doing, I argue that the ability of coalition governments to engage in international commitments depends on three key factors: the type of the coalition, which is captured by the individual contribution of each party in the coalition to the government's parliamentary strength; the degree of ideological cohesion inside the coalition; and the coalition's interaction with the parliamentary opposition, especially when it does not enjoy legislative majority. In what follows, I first provide an overview of the existing debates and then discuss how we can improve their findings through a more careful analysis of how coalition governments are organized. Next, I develop a series of hypotheses to test my coalition politics framework of foreign policy. I conclude with a discussion of some key alternative explanations that could further influence the commitment behavior of parliamentary democracies.

Constraining or Enabling? How Coalitions Influence Foreign Policy

Coalition politics began receiving greater attention from international relations scholars when the empirical debate over the democratic peace theory evolved into an investigation of the differences in the foreign policy behavior of democracies, often construed in terms of interstate conflict. Several studies in this research program have focused on the structure of the executive branch as a key source of domestic-institutional variation, asking whether it constrains or enables the regime's ability to engage in belligerence abroad.

Some in this debate argue that coalitions are more constrained in foreign policy than single-party governments and therefore decrease the likelihood of conflict behavior, because the presence of multiple parties involved in decision making creates higher barriers against acting abroad.[7]

7. Hagan, *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy*; Elman, "Unpacking Democracy"; Ireland and Gartner, "Time to Fight"; Reiter and Tillman, "Public, Legislative, and Executive Constraints."

In effect, coalition governments make "middle-of-the-road" foreign policies, suggesting more moderate behavior than one would expect under a single-party government.[8] In this vein, Maoz and Russett expect coalitions to be more peaceful abroad than single-party governments; similarly, Leblang and Chan hypothesize that single-party governments have a greater tendency for war involvement than do coalitions.[9] Testing for a series of alternative hypotheses, Palmer and his coauthors claim that single-party governments are more heavily involved in international disputes since they are harder to remove from power than are coalitions.[10]

Others reject these expectations, arguing that coalitions in fact enjoy greater room for costly and risky policies, including war involvement. From a comparative politics standpoint, Strøm claims that single-party governments face greater constraints against policymaking than do coalitions since it is easier for opposition forces to organize an effective challenge to a single party than to a government of multiple parties.[11] Brandon Prins and Christopher Sprecher invoke retrospective accountability as a key explanation to probe into the international behavior of coalitions. They argue that "with coalition governments, the voting public may be less able to attach responsibility to any one party for policy failures," which might encourage these governments to "be more willing to reciprocate militarized disputes."[12] Following a similar vein, Palmer and coauthors expect that once involved, single-party governments will be more constrained domestically and therefore less likely to escalate their international disputes than will coalitions.[13]

Based on these studies, it is difficult to conclude what the precise effect of coalitions is on foreign policy. Some find that larger coalitions are more likely to be involved in international disputes than single-party governments.[14] Others detect no relationship between conflict initiation and the number of parties in government, suggesting that single-party governments are not significantly different than coalitions.[15] Leblang and Chan

8. Elman, "Unpacking Democracy," 99.

9. Maoz and Russett, "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace"; Leblang and Chan, "Explaining Wars Fought by Established Democracies."

10. Palmer, London, and Regan, "What's Stopping You?"

11. Strøm, *Minority Government and Majority Rule*. See also Leblang and Chan, "Explaining Wars Fought by Established Democracies."

12. Prins and Sprecher, "Institutional Constraints," 275.

13. Palmer, London, and Regan, "What's Stopping You?"

14. Palmer, London, and Regan, "What's Stopping You?"; Prins and Sprecher, "Institutional Constraints."

15. Reiter and Tillman, "Public, Legislative, and Executive Constraints."

have argued that single-party governments enjoy more political certainty and security than their multiparty counterparts and, as a result, should be more likely get involved in wars. They found out, however, that this broad distinction did not explain war involvement, indeed a prime example of high-commitment behavior that requires not just strong speech acts that communicate resolve but also the use of substantial material capabilities.[16]

A more recent wave of research has gone beyond international conflict and incorporated events data to identify how exactly coalition governance influences foreign policy.[17] In a series of contributions, Juliet Kaarbo and Ryan Beasley test whether the number of parties in government and its parliamentary seat share influence international behavior in democratic regimes.[18] Contrary to the findings of previous studies, they conclude that coalitions act more extreme, or, in other words, with greater commitment, when they control slimmer majorities in the parliament. The authors find that coalitions also act more conflictually when *more parties* participate in the government.[19] Coalitions "are prone to deadlock and delay. But they also show signs of good decision," Kaarbo argues, suggesting that there is no conclusive evidence for the constrained nature of coalitions in foreign policy.[20]

To be sure, not all studies simply count parties and parliamentary seats to explain coalition behavior. Many foreign policy analysts treat coalition governments as distinct *decision units*, whose policymaking processes deserve closer and more substantive attention. According to that body of work, coalitions are defined first and foremost by their key decision rule, namely, that they lack an actor "which by itself has the ability to decide and force compliance on the others."[21] If coalitions have to make decisions collectively given this rule, then the natural next step is to investigate which factors *about this unit* facilitate or endanger collective decision making.

Hagan and his colleagues emphasize the party-political nature of coalitions to find out. They ask "what conditions lead often contending actors

16. Leblang and Chan, "Explaining Wars Fought by Established Democracies."; Callahan, "Commitment"; see also McManus, "Fighting Words."

17. For an overview, see Oktay and Beasley, "Quantitative Approaches in Coalition Foreign Policy."

18. Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme"; Beasley and Kaarbo, "Explaining Extremity in the Foreign Policies of Parliamentary Democracies."

19. Beasley and Kaarbo, "Explaining Extremity in the Foreign Policies of Parliamentary Democracies."

20. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 244.

21. Hermann, "How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy," 57.

to achieve agreement on foreign policy."[22] The answers they propose borrow substantially from some of the classic work in political science on coalition theory, including the ideological distance between and preference distribution among the parties that make up the coalition, their willingness to engage in *quid pro quo* and clip together each other's policy interests, and whether their national political contexts encourage consensus over competition among the decision makers.[23] Several qualitative case studies have utilized the decision units framework to scrutinize how policymaking and implementation takes place in coalitions.[24] But they fall short of a systematic identification and analysis of the elements that shape coalition governance and how these affect the coalitions' ability to engage in foreign policy. As a result, the party-political factors that influence coalition foreign policy remain undertheorized.

Essentially, then, there is a disconnect in the literature on coalition politics and foreign policy. Coalitions are either quantified using simple measures such as the number of parties and the government's parliamentary seat share, which has led to an array of disjointed findings, or they are dissected qualitatively to the point where their systematic analysis is either not feasible or not conducive to rigorous theorizing and empirical testing. Further, the quantitative literature has primarily focused on whether coalitions categorically *constrain* or *enable* policymakers' ability to act assertively abroad (and this outcome of choice is usually operationalized as conflict involvement). The fact that there is *structural* and *situational* variation among coalitions, which alters the extent to which they introduce constraints or opportunities to the decision makers, has largely been overlooked.

Taking a party-level approach to conceptualizing coalition governance makes it possible to identify these structural and situational sources of variation. Indeed, if we are to make competing claims on the impact of coalitions on foreign policy behavior, then the justification for these claims has to be embedded in the ways in which coalitions are structured domestically, as the "decision units" literature has proposed. That said, any systematic analysis of this phenomenon needs more nuanced theorizing and careful

22. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition," 173.

23. De Swaan, *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formations*; Axelrod, *Conflict of Interest*; Luebbert, "A Theory of Government Formation"; Browne and Frendreis, "Allocating Coalition Payoffs by Conventional Norm"; Hinckley, *Coalitions and Politics*; Baylis, *Governing by Committee*. For a review of this literature see Oktay, "Coalition Politics and Foreign Policy."

24. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition"; Beasley et al., "People and Processes in Foreign Policymaking."

identification of the key variables. This is where turning to the veto players and clarity of responsibility theories as competing explanations becomes useful for addressing these issues.

Contending Approaches to Theorizing Coalition Foreign Policy

The debate over whether coalitions engage in more or less assertive, or extreme, international behavior, including involvement in conflict, than single-party governments can be resolved only if we start by acknowledging that a categorical understanding of coalitions overlooks the variation within them. The existing theories on coalition politics, retrospective voting, and executive-legislative relations help us capture those variations.

The argument that coalitions curtail foreign policy decision making, produce less effective outputs, and ultimately decrease the likelihood of assertive foreign policy behavior echoes the logic of veto players. Veto players are defined as "individual or collective actors whose agreement is necessary for a change of the status quo."[25] Echoing precisely the decision units approach in the literature, government by coalition according to this theory implies the presence of multiple veto players, all of whom must agree to make policy decisions and implement them.[26] Increasing the number of parties in a government increases the number of veto players, making it more difficult to reach any decision, especially those decisions that signal commitments, which require the deployment of significant political and material resources.

Empirical tests of the veto players theory suggest that the government's ability to move away from the status quo is obstructed as the number of veto players increases. Nouriel Roubini and Jeffrey Sachs, for instance, show that having multiple parties in government acts as a barrier against decreasing budget deficits.[27] George Tsebelis, the political scientist who developed the veto players model, finds that the likelihood of producing labor law decreases when the number of veto players increases among European governments.[28] Invoking the same argument, Franzese concludes that the probability of introducing changes to budgetary policy decreases when the government is a coalition.[29] These findings resonate

25. Tsebelis, "Veto Players and Law Production in Parliamentary Democracies," 591.
26. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition," 170.
27. Roubini and Sachs, "Political and Economic Determinants of Budget Deficits."
28. Tsebelis, "Veto Players and Law Production in Parliamentary Democracies."
29. Franzese, *Macroeconomic Policies of Developed Democracies*.

in the foreign policy domain. Coalitions are expected to constrain decision making because the veto players in government resist changing the existing policy. An implication of the veto players argument is that it leads to foreign policies that are diluted so as not to provoke any government partners or significantly challenge their preferences.

What is crucial to note, however, is that the veto players model goes beyond the *number of veto players* to assess the likelihood of policy change. It expects that the stalling effect of veto players on policy may be conditioned by two additional factors. These include, first, whether there is preference homogeneity among the veto players, that is, whether these actors share similar preferences to facilitate any change in policy, and second, whether the veto players actually have the incentive to use their veto power to prevent such a change.[30] Indeed, in his study of labor law, Tsebelis demonstrates that the ideological heterogeneity of a coalition further impedes policy change; coalitions with a wider ideological range are much more constrained in producing laws compared to their ideologically more compact counterparts. Similarly, others have argued that economic growth rates and the ability to manage healthcare costs in democracies are negatively affected by the limitations exerted by both the size of the government and the distribution of political preferences inside it.[31]

Therefore, the veto players approach concludes that coalitions might be more constrained in policymaking than single-party governments, but with the caveat that this expectation requires further qualification. Specifically, the presence of multiple political parties in government, the extent to which they have incentives to use their veto power, and the degree of ideological heterogeneity among them *together* condition their ability to make policy, including foreign policy. This argument aligns closely with the "decision units" approach as I introduced above. But it is fundamentally more nuanced than the existing quantitative treatment of coalitions in the international relations literature, which focuses predominantly on the first condition, namely, that the government includes multiple political parties, all of which are considered veto players and expected to stall decision making. Therefore, we need to take a closer look at coalitions and their precise composition in order to qualify the veto-oriented argument that they constrain the commitment behavior of parliamentary democracies.

30. Tsebelis, "Decision Making in Political Systems," 293–301. For a discussion of the veto players model in foreign policy analysis, see Oppermann and Brummer, "Veto Player Approaches in Foreign Policy Analysis."

31. Henisz, "The Institutional Environment for Economic Growth"; Huber, "How Does Cabinet Instability Affect Political Performance?"

There is still another side to this debate. Contrary to the veto players logic, the clarity of responsibility theory predicts an opposite effect for coalition governments on policymaking.[32] Researchers have argued that in proportional representation systems with coalition governments, if voters cast their votes based on the parties' past performance (i.e., retrospective voting) rather than on their expected future performance, their evaluations will be "compromised because the lines of responsibility will be blurred [for the coalition parties]."[33] In other words, when policy is made by a body of multiple parties, it gets more difficult for voters to identify which party should be held responsible for it. Quantitative tests of this theory have shown that "when clarity of responsibility is obscured and when the level of responsibility is low, governing parties are less affected by how citizens evaluate the nation's economy."[34] More recent studies look at the growth of the public sector and corruption levels to argue that increasing the number of parties in government leads to larger public sectors and higher levels of corruption, respectively, which supports this theory.[35]

These studies all point to a decisional environment where accountability is compromised, concluding that governments that are less likely to be held accountable will enjoy greater room to pursue policies without fearing an electoral backlash. Therefore, they suggest the opposite of what was proposed by the veto players approach: coalitions suffer from less scrutiny than do single-party governments and thus can make riskier and more costly foreign policies that do not have to be moderate, and, should they fail, the electoral punishment will not be too high.[36] For this reason, some researchers claim that single-party governments are more constrained and cautious than coalitions "because they are reluctant to invite domestic political challenge, perhaps to the point of forcing an election."[37] According to this logic, then, we should expect coalition governments to circumvent the domestic costs of their policies, including foreign policy, more effectively than single-party governments. They should act with greater

32. Powell and Whitten, "A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting"; Anderson, "The Dynamics of Public Support for Coalition Governments"; Anderson, "Economic Voting and Political Context."

33. Hobolt and Karp, "Voters and Coalition Governments," 304. See also Fisher and Hobolt, "Coalition Government and Electoral Accountability."

34. Anderson, "Economic Voting and Political Context," 168.

35. Bawn and Rosenbluth, "Short versus Long Coalitions"; Tavits, "Clarity of Responsibility and Corruption."

36. Downs and Rocke, *Optimal Imperfection?* See also Oktay, "Constraining or Enabling?"

37. Leblang and Chan, "Explaining Wars Fought by Established Democracies." 390; Alesina and Rosenthal, *Partisan Politics, Divided Government, and the Economy*.

assertiveness in international affairs, making more forceful statements, taking more risks, and spending greater resources.

The preceding discussion on the veto players theory, however, gives us reasons to consider that the variation within coalition governments should also affect the degree of responsibility diffusion, and, as a result, influence their policy behavior. Coalitions might well engage in more committed foreign policy endeavors knowing that they could overcome the electoral risks associated with such policies at the ballot box. This argument assumes two additional conditions, however. First, it assumes that the coalition is big enough to obscure responsibility and diminish the voters' ability to hold them accountable. Second and equally important, it assumes that these parties are already in agreement to make the foreign policy commitment, suggesting that the governing parties enjoy some degree of preference homogeneity. We have yet to learn what happens to the explanatory power of the clarity thesis when we relax these assumptions. Do some coalitions engage in more assertive commitments *because* they are big enough to diffuse responsibility effectively? And even when the coalition is big enough, do we still observe committed behavior if it is also burdened by the incompatible policy positions of its constituent parties? Only when we unpack coalitions can we address these questions effectively.

This is precisely why we should dig deeper into the specific composition of coalitions to test the expectations of these two competing theories on foreign policy commitments. Explicating coalitions along the size dimension allows us to tease out the structural variation among them and identify which types of coalitions maximize the governing parties' incentives to utilize their veto power. To the extent that veto incentives are distributed differently across different types of coalitions, the explanatory power of the veto players thesis on foreign policy commitments should vary. Similarly, the coalition's ability to diffuse responsibility for its constituent parties should vary with its size. Dissecting coalition governments along the ideology dimension explicates the situational variation among coalitions by capturing the degree of cohesiveness between the governing parties. Are the barriers against assertive foreign policy behavior higher for coalitions with greater ideological diversity? And does ideological dispersion inside some coalitions decrease their ability to act abroad, which they would have otherwise done due to responsibility diffusion and the opportunity to avoid electoral blame that comes with it? The discussion I have presented so far suggests for both theoretical perspectives that the degree of ideological cohesiveness inside the coalition should condition the effect of its structure on foreign policy behavior.

A final assumption in this debate concerns the majority status of the coalition in the parliament. Both the veto players and clarity of responsibility theories share this assumption. The constraints or opportunities these theories focus on have to do with the dynamics taking place *inside* the coalition: the governing parties can utilize their veto power to stall, water down, or block decisions, or they enjoy diffusion of responsibility vis-à-vis the electorate and make more assertive commitments abroad. Since the parliamentary opposition does not present an impediment for these governments, their policymaking processes are influenced by what takes place inside them.

Constraints and opportunities take on an entirely different meaning for minority coalitions, however, because their existence hinges on their relationship with the parliamentary opposition holding the majority. Indeed, according to many, this key structural weakness leaves them at the "mercy of the legislature,"[38] constrains policymaking, and translates into "moderate policy."[39] As a result, the dynamics *between the government and the parliament* become as important as those taking place *inside the coalition*. How does the intensity of foreign policy commitments change when the government now has to consider both the executive and legislative contexts? *Minority coalitions* constitute a unique type of multiparty government that raises this question. Their ability to commit in foreign affairs should be influenced not only by the degree of ideological heterogeneity among the governing parties, but, as I explain further below, also by how they interact with the parliamentary opposition.

The veto players and clarity of responsibility theories therefore provide useful explanatory approaches to further theorize coalition foreign policy. They ensure the development of more refined hypotheses, but they should be further complemented by other theories that consider coalitions lacking parliamentary support. Unpacking coalition governments along the dimensions of size and ideological heterogeneity provides a more thorough assessment of both of these theories. It also highlights where these theories fall short, especially when it comes to explaining the foreign policies of minority coalitions. To address that gap, we need to consider a third dimension, namely, their relationship with the parliamentary opposition. In the next section, I provide a discussion of these dimensions to develop my hypotheses.

38. Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*.

39. Clare, "Ideological Fractionalization and the International Conflict Behavior of Parliamentary Democracies"; Hagan, *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective*; Ireland and Gartner, "Time to Fight"; Maoz and Russett, "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace"; Vowles, "Making a Difference?"

The Missing Link: The Type of Coalition, Its Ideological Cohesiveness, and Relations with the Parliament

How can we identify the structural variation within coalitions to assess their foreign policy behavior? The preceding review demonstrated that two alternatives exist, namely, the number of parties in the government and its total parliamentary seat share. Researchers use these formulations to measure the size and the strength of the coalition: larger coalitions include more parties and stronger coalitions enjoy greater seat shares in the legislature. But are these measures sensitive enough for capturing the variation *within* coalitions in order to test the constraining and enabling effects of these governments on international commitments?

Let us consider the following example to answer this question. The Dutch Labor Party (PvdA) won the parliamentary elections in 1994 with the largest number of seats in the parliament. Having failed to secure a single-party majority, however, the PvdA brought together two other parties, the Liberal Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) and the Democrats 66 (D66) to form a coalition government. When the party got re-elected in 1998, but once again with only a plurality of seats in the parliament, Prime Minister Willem "Wim" Kok decided to form the incoming coalition with his old partners VVD and D66. Table 2.1 shows that the three parties captured nearly the same combined percentage of seats in the 1998 elections as they did in 1994.

Is there anything fundamentally different between these two governments? Not really, according to the existing foreign policy literature. If we measure the size and strength of these coalitions by following the previous works, we will find no difference. They have the same number of parties, and collectively, they enjoy almost identical seat shares in the parliament. In quantitative studies, we would assign the same values to these governments, coding them as majority governments, majority coalitions, or as governments with three parties.

Table 2.1. Why Coalition Types Matter: Counting the Parties and Seat Shares

	Parties in Government (%)			
Dutch Tweede Kamer (150 seats)	PvdA	VVD	D66	Total Seat Share
Coalition I: Wim Kok (1994–1998)	24	20	15.5	59.5
Coalition II: Wim Kok (1999–2002)	29	24.7	9	62.7

Source: European Election Database.

In reality, however, these coalitions are significantly different from each other. What is the source of this difference? Let us look at how each party contributes to the government's stability in the parliament to find out. In Coalition I, all three parties are necessary to maintain the coalition's parliamentary majority. Given their individual seat shares, the PvdA needs *both* the VVD and D66 to keep the majority intact: if either of these parties decides to leave, the government would lose its parliamentary advantage and be exposed to instability. Coalition II is different: although it includes the same number of parties and controls almost the same percentage of seats, not every party in this government enjoys the same degree of indispensability. In the early 1990s, the D66 controlled 16 of the nearly 60 percent of the government seats in parliament and had the power to bring the coalition down on its own by leaving it. By 1999, however, the party had become superfluous, contributing seats to a coalition that had already cleared the parliamentary majority threshold without the D66. As far as the government's stability is concerned, the PvdA-VVD coalition could do just as well in the parliament without the D66 given its combined seat share. That was, of course, bad news for D66: it had lost its bargaining power, or what some foreign policy scholars call its "blackmail potential," to influence the government's decision-making process[40] in the second Kok government.

The example in table 2.1 shows that neither the number of parties nor the parliamentary seat share of the coalition constitutes sensitive enough measures to identify the variation between these coalitions, because they overlook how each political party in the coalition contributes simultaneously to its size and strength. This is an important aspect of coalitions that has a direct influence on their policymaking capability. Indeed, the government's parliamentary seat share is a weak measure particularly under proportional representation systems (PR), where parties are more disciplined, cohesive, and act as blocs.[41] To be sure, this is not just the case in the Netherlands. We also know from Denmark, a country under PR, that "all coalitions are based on the understanding that . . . party cohesion is generally very high."[42] An individual-based measure such as the government's seat share is thus inadequate to capture its legislative strength if

40. Kaarbo, "Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making"; Kaarbo, "Influencing Peace Junior Partners in Israeli Coalition Cabinets"; Clare, "Ideological Fractionalization and the International Conflict Behavior of Parliamentary Democracies."

41. Leblang and Chan, "Explaining Wars Fought by Established Democracies." See also Laver and Schofield, *Multiparty Government*, 15–35.

42. Damgaard, "Denmark: The Life and Death of Government Coalitions," 246.

the members of the parliament (MPs) belonging to the same party are expected to vote in the same direction or to defect and leave the government as a bloc. Counting the MPs to measure the coalition's strength, say, toward voting for an overseas military operation is irrelevant if we know that party discipline will compel all the MPs from the same party to reject or support the proposal.

The governments of Wim Kok illustrate, though, that counting the number of parties is not necessarily more helpful either. For one, it does not always tell us whether the coalition is a majority government or not. Coalitions can have anywhere between two (e.g., Ireland) or seven (observed often in Italy) parties and still lack a parliamentary majority. A party-count approach to measuring coalition size assumes that more is bigger and stronger, but many contradictory cases also exist. More importantly, counting the parties washes away the bargaining power that D66 had in Coalition I but lacked in Coalition II. Thus, a more sophisticated way of conceptualizing coalitions is necessary to capture their size and strength simultaneously, as well as to identify whether they can survive defections (in other words, highlighting the parties' uneven incentives to use a veto). Identifying coalitions based on how the governing parties contribute to their overall strength and stability is far more useful for capturing these nuances.

The literature on coalition politics provides us with a well-established typology to accomplish just that. Coalitions that are minimalist, or minimum-winning, include just enough number of parties to clear the majority threshold in the parliament, but not more. In effect, minimum-winning coalitions provide each governing party with the power to obstruct decision making and bring the government down. Oversized or surplus coalitions, on the other hand, have at least one extra party that is not necessary to maintain the majority.[43] Minority coalitions include multiple parties but cannot attain a parliamentary majority at all.

This typology is useful for a number of reasons. First, it conceptualizes coalitions to capture precisely the variation I have been emphasizing so far. It considers not just the multiparty status of these governments but also how much each party contributes to their strength and stability. Second, it brings the foreign policy research on coalitions closer to the existing work on the domestic politics and processes of multiparty governance in political science, where this typology remains the gold standard. Foreign

43. Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*; Volden and Carrubba, "The Formation of Oversized Coalitions in Parliamentary Democracies."

policy scholars increasingly emphasize that "the main difference is between coalitions with the minimal number of parties required for a parliamentary majority ('minimal winning') and those with either too few ('undersized cabinets') or more ('oversized coalitions') members than are necessary," referring to classic work by Riker and Dodd.[44] It is time to put that difference to test. Third and most importantly, this typology makes better theorizing possible.

Let me revisit the veto players debate to show how. I pointed out earlier that this theory considers the government's policymaking ability to be conditional not just on the number of veto players, but also on their incentives to utilize their veto power. The qualitative distinction between minimum-winning and oversized coalitions captures this variation in incentive distribution. According to both the veto players and the decision unit perspectives, every party in a coalition is a veto player. The coalition typology suggests, however, that some parties may lack veto power in certain types of coalitions. In a minimum-winning coalition any party can use its veto power and block proposals or pull the government to its own policy position by threatening to leave. This is a credible threat: if the party defects, the government loses its parliamentary majority, gets exposed to opposition challenge, and faces new elections. Given the potential damage it can incur on the government, every party in a minimum-winning coalition has incentives to use their veto power to influence policy. The incentive comes from the party's ability to single-handedly bring the government down. We should therefore observe the veto players logic influencing the foreign policy process especially in minimum-winning coalitions, stalling decision making, and ultimately leading to weaker foreign policy commitments.

This may not be the case for oversized coalitions, however, which includes parties that cushion the government against defections but are not vital for maintaining the government's majority status. Put differently, these parties are not true veto players since their rejection of government policy is not relevant for steering the policy process; the government would remain intact in the parliament and pursue those policies just as well without them.[45] Therefore, the incentive to use veto power is distributed more unequally across parties in oversized coalitions than it is for minimum-winning coalitions. This should weaken the explanatory power of the veto

44. Clare, "Ideological Fractionalization and the International Conflict Behavior of Parliamentary Democracies," 968. See also Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions*; Dodd, *Coalitions in Parliamentary Government*.

45. Provided that these policies require cabinet approval only or a simple majority in the parliament.

players thesis in oversized coalitions. Why would the extra (or surplus) parties in oversized coalitions want to weaken their role in the government by opposing a policy proposal if such opposition really has no teeth? As we shall see in chapter 6, this was precisely the rationale that two surplus parties adopted in the run-up to Finland's eurozone membership decision. This is also the reason why Israeli leaders constantly seek to add new partners to their coalitions. Doing so prevents the government from getting hijacked by the existing junior parties in the government and strengthens its parliamentary presence while appeasing the smaller parties by folding them into the executive branch.[46]

Instead, a different consideration might be at play for oversized coalitions. These coalitions are larger than necessary by definition, which can make responsibility diffusion far easier and therefore create stronger opportunities for the governing parties to circumvent the electoral costs associated with their policy decisions. This brings us back to the clarity of responsibility logic. It encourages us to test whether diffusion promotes commitment behavior if there is a multiparty government, particularly when the government is bigger than necessary. To the extent that coalitions with more parties and a stronger legislative presence are more capable of diffusing responsibility than coalitions with fewer parties and weaker support in the parliament, oversized coalitions might enjoy weaker voter accountability and make more assertive commitments in foreign policy, which require greater use of the regime's material and political resources. This mechanism would also help those surplus parties that might disagree with coalition policy but choose to go along with it: the diffusion of responsibility would allow them to overlook their voters' preferences and align with the rest of the government. If this argument holds, then we should observe foreign policy behaviors to become more extreme, or elicit greater commitment, when the government is an oversized coalition that enjoys a strong and stable majority in the parliament.

How does the situational variation within coalitions—the degree of ideological diversity among their constituent parties—influence these relationships? We know that issues in foreign policy can be as ideologically contentious as those in domestic politics.[47] So there is reason to expect that the ideological constellation of coalition parties can influence foreign policy considerations just as much as they do in the domestic policy domain.

To be sure, foreign policy scholars do not disregard the role of ide-

46. Stinnett, "International Uncertainty." See also Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.

47. Schuster and Maier, "The Rift."

ology in decision making altogether. The decision unit researchers have argued that one key characteristic of coalitions concerns "the effects that each actor's constituencies can have on the members of the decision unit."[48] Constituencies expect their governing parties to act in line with their positions already determined along the political spectrum. These positions constrain and guide the decision makers and are often conceptualized in the form of ideologies.[49] Joe Hagan underscores the role that ideological differences among the coalition partners play on their policymaking capabilities. He suggests that "there is little long-term interest shared in sustaining the unsatisfactory compromise agreement of a multi-party coalition"[50] if these parties are far from each other in the first place. When coalition parties come from diverse ideological backgrounds, we expect these differences to impede their willingness to govern together, let alone act assertively abroad.[51] Koch sums it up nicely: ideological diversity "is the degree to which parties in government have similar or different ideological, or policy, preferences."[52]

Existing research shows that party ideology captured along the left-right spectrum provides a good proxy for understanding the parties' foreign policy preferences across a host of issue areas, such as participation in military operations, foreign aid allocation, or support for diplomatic engagement over the use of force.[53] So we can expect that when coalition

48. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition," 171.

49. Koch, "Governments, Partisanship, and Foreign Policy."

50. Hagan, *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective*, 72.

51. In contrast, Leblang and Chan ("Explaining Wars Fought by Established Democracies") expect coalition governments to be less constrained in decision making since they represent a large, combined constituency (cf. Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, *War and Reason*). The authors assume, however, that the parties in such a coalition enjoying the support of a broad share of the electorate will share exactly the same set of policy preferences. This is obviously very unlikely given the nature of proportional representation and the incentives that it creates toward generating ideologically diverse and therefore competitive multiparty systems.

52. Koch, "Governments, Partisanship, and Foreign Policy," 804.

53. Wagner et al., "The Party Politics of Legislative–Executive Relations"; Haesebrouck and Mello, "Patterns of Political Ideology and Security Policy." For a review, see Raunio and Wagner, "The Party Politics of Foreign and Security Policy." See chapter 3 for further discussion on how party ideology predicts foreign policy preferences. Importantly, more recent research debates whether the "new politics" dimension captured along the Green/Alternative/Liberal v. Traditional/Authoritarian/Nationalist axis (commonly known as the gal/tan axis, see Hooghe, Marks, and Wilson, "Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?") could also explain the European parties' foreign policy preferences. These studies find that foreign policy preferences are much better explained by the parties' general left-right positions rather than their gal/tan positions (Wagner et al., "The Party Politics of Legislative–Executive Relations"; Haesebrouck and Mello, "Patterns of Political Ideology and Security Policy.") Dissecting still further, Haesebrouck and Mello find that par-

parties are closer to each other on the ideological spectrum, they should enjoy greater preference homogeneity and therefore should be more likely to reach agreement on foreign policy, enabling them to act abroad. In an ideologically diverse coalition, the desire to commit the regime's political and material resources to a foreign policy issue should be low, thus resulting in weaker commitments at the international arena.

Does the evidence support this expectation? Current research paints an incomplete picture. Many studies have thus far focused on how the government's overall political orientation influences its international behavior.[54] They find, for instance, that left-leaning governments elicit more dovish and peaceful behavior, whereas right-leaning governments act with greater hawkishness and belligerence.[55] Others focus only on the relative positions of coalition partners to demonstrate how an outlier party may influence foreign policy outcomes. Kaarbo and more recently Coticchia and Davidson focus on the critical junior partner—the party that can bring down the government on its own—to assess how its position influences the coalition's foreign policy choice.[56] Joe Clare demonstrates that the probability of initiating international conflict is similar across coalitions and single-party governments when the former is more compact, which he measures by the presence or absence of an ideologically distant critical junior party in the coalition.[57] Focusing on the parties' relative positions could be misleading,[58] however, and presents an incomplete assessment of how partisan discord affects policy outcomes. Any explanation that focuses on the critical junior partner becomes significantly more difficult to test empirically when the government includes several of these parties, and it fails to explain foreign policy choices altogether when the government is oversized and may lack a critical junior partner.

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ties' positions along the gal/tan axis can explain support for different types of military operations: in Western Europe, gal parties are more supportive of peacekeeping operations, while tan parties are more supportive of strategic operations. Since I test my theory on a much wider range of foreign policy events that go well beyond military behavior, I use the general left-right party positions in my analysis.

54. Palmer, London, and Regan, "What's Stopping You?"; Koch and S. Cranmer, "Testing the 'Dick Cheney' Hypothesis"; Wagner et al., "The Party Politics of Legislative–Executive Relations"; Clare, "Ideological Fractionalization and the International Conflict Behavior of Parliamentary Democracies"; D. Auerswald and S. Saideman, *NATO in Afghanistan*.

55. For a review of this literature see Raunio and Wagner, "The Party Politics of Foreign and Security Policy."

56. Kaarbo, "Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making"; Kaarbo, "Influencing Peace Junior Partners in Israeli Coalition Cabinets"; Coticchia and Davidson, "The Limits of Radical Parties in Coalition Foreign Policy."

57. Clare, "Ideological Fractionalization and the International Conflict Behavior of Parliamentary Democracies."

58. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 58.

Considering that a key factor in coalition politics and policymaking concerns the government's degree of preference homogeneity, theorizing the role of ideology using the coalition's overall ideological cohesiveness should better inform coalition foreign policy. As I explained earlier, the veto players approach to coalition foreign policy remains incomplete without incorporating the government's overall ideological cohesiveness as a conditioning factor. The ideological positions of parties should matter the most in a minimum-winning setting where their veto incentives are the strongest. These coalitions are likely to end up in deadlock when ideological heterogeneity exists, possibly causing the government to dissolve, as illustrated by the 2010 episode over the deployment of Dutch troops to the mission in Afghanistan.[59] Alternatively, the parties in these coalitions may choose the middle road and refrain from taking any assertive action abroad in order not to antagonize any coalition partner, as Elman contends.[60] In so doing, they avoid putting the government's survival at risk. The Dutch debate over the stationing of NATO's cruise missiles introduced in chapter 1 is a good example. Since the governing parties at the time could not agree, they chose not to commit and instead postponed their decision for several years.

Similarly, I will examine whether those coalitions that enjoy responsibility diffusion and are therefore susceptible to making more assertive commitments abroad actually fail to do so when they suffer from ideological rifts inside. If the clarity of responsibility theory holds true as it stands, coalitions—especially oversized coalitions—must enjoy diffusion and survive the future electoral consequences of their international commitments regardless of the ideological differences inside them. If not, accounting for the degree of ideological disparity among coalition parties should reveal when diffusion gives way to discord, deadlock, and even dissolution. Examples from Israel are telling. An oversized coalition led by Yitzhak Shamir had been stuck in a deadlock for three weeks over the peace initiatives of 1989, suggesting that disagreement counteracts diffusion. Nearly two decades later, another oversized coalition, this time led by Ariel Sharon, was deadlocked over his 2004 proposal to dismantle the Jewish settlements in Gaza. The deep disagreements among the coalition parties led to their gradual departure over the next six months, ultimately leaving the senior party Likud alone.[61] When the ideological differences among parties in oversized coalitions are hard to reconcile, these governments become even harder to maintain. This should further weaken their ability to act abroad.

59. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.
60. Elman, "Unpacking Democracy."
61. Spruyt, "Territorial Concessions" See also Oktay, "Chamber of Opportunities."

Then there is the minority coalition, the one that some political scientists disagree on how to best categorize. For some, they are "majority governments in disguise" since they receive outside support from opposition parties in the parliament.[62] Arendt Lijphart doubles down on this viewpoint, suggesting that we should treat them as oversized coalitions.[63] These scholars imply that the same explanations we use to identify policymaking in majority coalitions can be applied to minority coalitions. Empirically, this is hardly plausible. If minority coalitions truly resembled majority coalitions, let alone oversized coalitions, we would first expect them to be as durable. We know, however, that they are not. On average, majority governments last longer than minority governments.[64] Conrad and Golder show that post–Cold War minority coalitions in central and eastern Europe last for only 364 days on average, whereas oversized coalitions live nearly twice as long (608 days).[65] Others corroborate these findings and conclude that majority coalitions enjoy longer lifespans than minority coalitions.[66] Instead, we should study them for what they are: multiparty governments that are also particularly vulnerable in the parliament.

Minority coalitions are unique precisely because unlike minimum-winning and oversized coalitions, these governments exist as long as the parliamentary majority allows them to.[67] Minority coalitions are structurally the weakest of all coalition types for this reason and face significant constraints against acting assertively abroad. As a result, we study their relations with the parliament far more closely than we study those of majority coalitions. But there is a catch here. Specifically, the placement of the opposition parties along the ideological spectrum now becomes important to assess the coalition's policymaking capacity *because the opposition out-*

62. Strøm, "Democracy, Accountability, and Coalition Bargaining," 56; Maria Thürk shows that minority coalitions should resemble majority cabinets only when they enjoy formal support from the opposition. Otherwise, she contends that minority governments perform worse than majority governments. See Thürk, "Small in Size but Powerful in Parliament?"

63. Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*, 104.

64. Blondel, "Party Systems and Patterns of Government in Western Democracies"; Sanders and Herman, "The Stability and Survival of Governments in Western Democracies"; Grofman and Van Roozendaal, "Modelling Cabinet Durability and Termination."

65. Conrad and Golder, "Measuring Government Duration and Stability in Central Eastern European Democracies," 131.

66. Warwick, *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*; Diermeier and Stevenson, "Cabinet Survival and Competing Risks."

67. Indeed, Fortunato et al. show that voters consider opposition parties to be highly influential in countries where minority governments are observed frequently, invoking Denmark as their key example. See Fortunato et al., "Attributing Policy Influence under Coalition Governance."

numbers the coalition: if the opposition parties cannot come together to level an effective rebuttal against its policies, then the coalition will be in a much safer place politically.

Luckily, political scientists have already provided us with leads to take this inquiry further. Writing more than two decades ago, Michael Laver and Ian Budge discussed this phenomenon by invoking the term "policy viability." They argue that governments are policy-viable when their "policy position is such that there is no alternative executive coalition that can put forward a credible policy position that is preferred to the incumbents by a majority of legislators."[68] Simply put, if the government positions itself such that it prevents the formation of any alternative majority in the parliament, it will be safe. In the case of minority coalitions, the authors expect that governments that include the core party will not be defeated by the parliament.[69] In subsequent work, Michael Laver and Norman Schofield extend this debate further. They argue that if governments can "divide the opposition by putting forward policy packages at the 'centre' [*sic*] of the policy space," they should be able to obstruct "the opposition to agree on an alternative," thereby "allowing the government to manage with much less than a majority."[70] As Rasch summarizes, "if minority governments are centrally located and the opposition divided ideologically or in policy terms, the government has more than one way of building majorities behind its proposals. If, however, the opposition is easily united and can confront the cabinet *en bloc*, effective policy-making virtually becomes impossible."[71] This explanation is also known in the literature as the *positional agenda power* theory.[72]

Along similar lines, Hagan has proposed a fragmented opposition explanation to shed light on the foreign policy making capacity of democracies. Hagan argues that "like the regime's [strength] itself, strength of party opposition depends upon its internal cohesiveness. *If a sizeable number of opposition seats are controlled by different parties*, then it is less likely that they will be able (or even willing) to work together to mount an effective assault on the regime and its policies."[73] Minority coalitions—a special case

68. Laver and Budge, *Party Policy and Government Coalitions*, 6.

69. Laver and Budge, *Party Policy and Government Coalitions*.

70. Laver and Schofield, *Multiparty Government*, 81.

71. Rasch, "Why Minority Governments?" 58. See also Field, *Why Minority Governments Work*.

72. Klüver and Zubek, "Minority Governments and Legislative Reliability," 720. See also Tsebelis, *Veto Players*.

73. Hagan, *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective*, 83. Emphasis added.

of minority governments—provide a plausible setting where this kind of fragmentation is possible.

The question then becomes: How can the government ensure that the opposition seats belong to parties as far away from each other along the political spectrum as possible to diminish their ability to challenge? The answer lies in the composition of the government itself: To the extent that the ideological composition of the minority coalition leaves the opposition fragmented, the former will enjoy the room to govern, including in the foreign policy arena. The opposition parties, in this case, would lack the willingness to work together and confront the government.

I build on these studies to argue that given the structural vulnerability of minority coalitions, their ability to act in foreign affairs depends primarily on whether they can prevent the formation of a credible parliamentary opposition. Assuming that parties on the same side of the political spectrum are more likely to work with each other with fewer frictions than with parties on the opposite side, the best course of action for a minority coalition would be to bite the bullet and introduce some ideological heterogeneity to its own ranks in order to prevent the natural formation of an ideologically unified majority opposition. Doing so requires a careful tailoring of the coalition itself, where incumbent parties reach across the proverbial aisle and govern with parties on the opposite side of the political spectrum. The conditioning impact of intragovernmental partisan discord on the foreign policy behavior of these coalitions should not be linear, then, precisely because the government's ideological setup can obstruct the unity of the opposition. This is another reason why minority coalitions and their ideological composition should be investigated separately from other types of coalitions.

Figure 2.1 provides a simplified illustration of my argument. Imagine five political parties occupying a parliament of 100 seats. Party A has 18 seats, B 21, C 20, D 23, and Party E has 18 seats. These parties are distributed along the left-right political spectrum such that Party A is at the far left, C is at the center, E is at the far right, and Parties B and D are in between. In this scenario, a government formed between Parties B and D would result in a center-left/center-right minority coalition, holding 44 percent of the seats.

Now let us pay attention to what the BD government does to the parliamentary opposition. They have created an ideological wedge inside the opposition. Although they have the majority, the ACE opposition is unlikely to challenge this government. Consider, for instance, Party C's alternatives. To build a credible opposition against the coalition's policies,

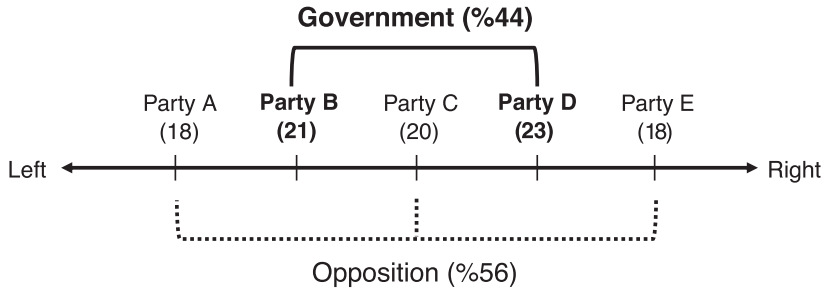

Figure 2.1. Minority Coalition and Fragmented Parliamentary Opposition

Party C has to convince both Party A and Party E, which are at the opposite ends of the political spectrum, to work together. This is much more difficult to achieve compared to an alternative scenario, where the BD government tailors its own policy position to converge to Party C's preference point. After all, the figure shows that crossing the center of the political spectrum expands the BD government's ideological range such that it now includes the preferences (as proxied by party ideology) of the party that falls within it (that is, Party C).

This scenario echoes the *ideological proximity* theory, which argues that a minority government's ability to implement its policy should increase if the ideological distance between the governing and opposition parties decreases.[74] Indeed, the BD government can offer much smaller concessions to Party C than either to Party A or E given this proximity.[75] Likewise, for Party C, negotiating a compromise with the BD government while remaining outside its ranks could be far more cost-effective and politically beneficial than building a highly unstable bridge across Parties A and E to mount a challenge against it. The party would do this either by acting as what the literature calls a "support party," or strictly as an opposition party but still "making issue-by-issue deals with the government."[76]

In sum, minority coalitions hinder the chances of a unified parliamentary opposition to challenge by creating an ideological wedge when they include parties from both sides of the political spectrum.[77] Although minor-

74. Klüver and Zubek, "Minority Governments and Legislative Reliability," 722.

75. Klüver and Zubek, "Minority Governments and Legislative Reliability," 722; See also König and Lin, "Portfolio Allocation Patterns and Policy-Making Effectiveness."

76. Fortunato et al., "Attributing Policy Influence under Coalition Governance," 4.

77. Testing the "positional agenda power theory" against the "ideological proximity theory" falls outside the scope of this book. Still, readers will note that crossing the center of

ity coalitions should otherwise commit less in the foreign policy domain, we should therefore expect those making this leap across the aisle to face fewer domestic constraints and engage in more assertive commitments abroad. We shall see in chapter 4 that doing so was highly advantageous for the minority coalition in Denmark, especially when the opposition's support was necessary to commit the regime's resources to an overseas military operation in Iraq in 1990.

Hypotheses

The above discussion brings me to the hypotheses I will examine in the remainder of the book. The two contending theories that I have presented in this chapter lead to two broad hypotheses. First, if the veto players theory explains the commitment behavior of coalitions in foreign affairs, then we should expect the intensity of commitments to decrease when the government is a majority coalition, regardless of its structural (minimalist or oversized) or situational (ideologically cohesive or dispersed) characteristics. In contrast, if the clarity of responsibility theory explains their behavior, then this relationship should be positive. Here, I isolate majority coalitions per the preceding discussion. This exercise provides a good starting point to engage with the existing studies.

Hypothesis 1 (Veto Players): Majority coalitions decrease the intensity of foreign policy commitments.

Hypothesis 2 (Clarity of Responsibility): Majority coalitions increase the intensity of foreign policy commitments.

The following hypotheses refine both the veto players and clarity of responsibility approaches in the literature by accounting for the structural and the situational variation among coalitions. To start, the veto players theory suggests that we should expect minimum-winning coalitions to lead to less intense foreign policy commitments. Since the incentive to use veto power is distributed uniformly across the parties in minimum-winning settings, these coalitions face significant constraints against engaging in assertive international behavior.

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the spectrum as depicted in figure 2.1 satisfies the key conditions for both theories, therefore possibly maximizing the minority coalition's ability to implement its policies, or, in my case, its ability to engage in strong international commitments.

As for oversized coalitions, however, I expect responsibility diffusion to be at work. These coalitions not only distribute the veto incentive unevenly across the governing parties, but they are also larger than necessary. Together, these characteristics should allow them to act more forcefully in the international arena: they can diffuse responsibility among the governing parties better than the minimally organized coalitions, and those parties without veto power may choose to go along with the government because they anticipate low levels of electoral punishment anyway. If this second expectation, laid out in Hypothesis 4 below, is defeated by the data, then it would point to a stronger support for the veto players thesis and the constraining effect of majority coalitions in foreign affairs.

Hypothesis 3: Minimum-winning coalitions engage in weaker commitments.

Hypothesis 4: Oversized coalitions engage in more intense commitments.

To the extent that the "size" and "ideology" dimensions of coalitions "form the core of the coalition theory,"[78] the effect of coalition governance on foreign policy should depend on their interplay. The hypotheses I have laid out do not yet account for the ideology dimension that further differentiates these coalitions, however. This brings me back to identifying the situational variation among them. The veto players theory implies that the negative effect of minimum-winning coalitions on commitments should be further amplified when the coalition is ideologically loose and dispersed. Although oversized coalitions should enjoy diffusion on average, they should also be prone to the negative effect of ideological rifts on commitment behavior, generating discord and weakening the behavioral advantages of diffusion. Even if the surplus parties in oversized coalitions have weaker incentives to disrupt the policymaking process and influence commitments, deeper rifts inside these large coalitions could lead to lengthier and more contentious debates among all the governing parties. Some smaller parties might even attempt to save electoral face precisely by engaging in such debates. Indeed, one such attempt to save face is "negative campaigning," where governing parties criticize each other to differentiate their own policy platforms in an effort to attract votes.[79] Therefore, at

78. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition," 175.

79. Sagarzazu and Klüver, "Coalition Governments and Party Competition." For a review of this literature see Haselmayer and Jenny, "Friendly Fire?"

increasing levels of ideological disunity, I expect both minimum-winning and oversized coalitions to make weaker foreign policy commitments compared to single-party majority governments.

Hypothesis 5: Minimum-winning coalitions engage in weaker commitments as ideological dispersion among the governing parties increases.

Hypothesis 6: Oversized coalitions engage in weaker commitments as ideological dispersion among the governing parties increases.

Finally, I test the effect of minority coalitions on commitment behavior. I expect that their structural vulnerability in the parliament should impose a negative effect on their commitment intensity on average. That said, building on the policy viability and fragmented opposition explanations, I expect minority coalitions that include parties from both the left and the right sides of the political spectrum to moderate this relationship by ideologically fracturing the "alternative majority" in the parliament, acting with greater commitment abroad as a result.

Hypothesis 7: On average, minority coalitions engage in weaker commitments abroad.

Hypothesis 8: When minority coalitions include parties from both sides of the political spectrum, they engage in more assertive commitments abroad.

What Else Can Influence Governing Abroad?

It makes sense to focus on the government's structure in parliamentary regimes both internally and vis-à-vis the legislature to explain its international commitment behavior. After all, the foreign policy authority in parliamentary systems belongs to the executive branch, which stems from within the ranks of the parliament. Further, governments in these regimes are often conceived as coalitions of multiple political parties. It is therefore meaningful and necessary to scrutinize the coalition itself as well as its standing in the parliament to illuminate its behavior abroad.

This chapter has argued for the need to move beyond a dichotomous treatment of governments and has provided explanations for why coalitions are far more heterogeneous than we often portray them to be. These governments vary based on how the incumbent parties contribute to the

government's strength and stability, how far these parties are from each other along the ideological spectrum, and how successful the coalition is in fragmenting the opposition when it lacks majority support. My argument has so far concentrated on two opposing logics—veto players and clarity of responsibility—as well as the policy viability and fragmented opposition theses to elucidate the different directions coalition foreign policy can take. Building on these theoretical foundations, I argue that the reason some coalitions act more assertively abroad, while others do not, has to do with the ways coalitions are organized.

To be sure, a valid counterpoint is that the way coalitions are organized is hardly the only factor that explains their international behavior. If the foreign policy commitments of these governments were simply a function of their composition, then world leaders, researchers, analysts, or pundits would not have needed to pay attention to the plethora of information that makes its way into policy briefs, intelligence reports, or news stories on a daily basis, including international shocks, changes in leadership, or fluctuations in the public's approval of the government and its policies. In other words, explaining and intelligently responding to the foreign policy of parliamentary governments, and coalitions in particular, is possible when we situate coalition politics in the context of the international system, domestic politics, and the individual dispositions of the decision makers.

Decades of research in international relations and foreign policy analysis concurs with this approach. Several studies highlight how foreign policy gets shaped by the powerful countercurrents that exist between political parties that defy our expectations, major international systemic events that might constitute exogenous shocks to the regime, influential decision makers in the regime who might shape the policymaking process in their own images, as well as what the masses think about their governments and the foreign policy issue itself. In this section, I discuss these factors. They clarify the pathways that connect democratic governments to their foreign policy outputs, and they perform as the conditions that inhibit, reinforce, or facilitate their international behavior. I then take each of these elements into account in the subsequent case study chapters of the book.

Let us start with the same actors around which I have built my argument: the political parties. Although ideological rifts and disagreements are known to be the main culprits of government instability and breakdown,[80] there is no denying that political parties also love to help each other despite

80. Warwick, "Ideological Diversity and Government Survival"; Warwick, *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*; Diermeier and Stevenson, "Cabinet Survival and Competing Risks."

their differences, specifically when they know they will get something in return. *Logrolling* is a key mechanism that allows for precisely this. Hagan and his colleagues define logrolling as the "willingness of one group to accept side payments."[81] Others emphasize more broadly that logrolling arrangements produce "voting alliances" in the parliament,[82] ensuring that the policy proposals that require parliamentary consent achieve it. "Explicit compromises" often take place among political parties, which end up submitting to otherwise contentious policies in return for government seats.[83] These seats are often offered to opposition parties by the government to further sweeten the deal and secure their support for policies.[84] In sum, then, logrolling as a mechanism for facilitating policymaking counteracts the effect of interparty conflict that could otherwise lead to deadlock. The nature of multiparty governance in particular proliferates the conditions for making mutual concessions among parties *inside and outside* the government, since no party single-handedly controls the executive and enjoys majority support in the parliament.[85] As a result, logrolling becomes a powerful dynamic that enables ideologically contentious parties to overcome their differences and govern together at home and abroad.

In the foreign policy domain, too, governments overcome deadlocks by offering side payments to those with the incentives to defect. These come in the form of office seats or promises for future policies in return.[86] This quid pro quo that parties enter into might also explain how coalitions end up acting more assertively than we expect them to. Kaarbo's study provides insights into how this is possible in contexts where the veto incentive is strong.[87] The critical junior parties, whose support is vital to the maintenance of the coalition and to its policymaking capability, are especially well-suited to get what they want in return for cooperating with the rest of the government on contentious policy proposals.

Logrolling thus constitutes a strong alternative explanation for assertive behavior, especially in ideologically contentious minimum-winning

81. Hagan et al., "Foreign Policy by Coalition," 175.

82. Lanfranchi and Luethi, "Cohesion of Party Groups and Interparty Conflict in the Swiss Parliament," 118.

83. Luebbert, *Comparative Democracy*, 63. See also Saalfeld, "Coalition Governance under Chancellor Merkel's Grand Coalition."

84. Huber and Martinez-Gallardo, "Cabinet Instability and the Accumulation of Experience."

85. Oktay, "Chamber of Opportunities."

86. Snyder, *Myths of Empire*; Hagan, *Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective*; Kaarbo, "Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making."

87. Kaarbo, "Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making."

coalitions, where the parties are not only less likely to agree on each other's policy preferences, but also have the strongest incentive to utilize their veto power or at least threaten to do so to sway the government. It diminishes the negative effect of these factors on policymaking, particularly when it comes to committing the regime's political and material resources. By attaching future policy goals or office seats to their support for the government's policy, the parties that are necessary to keep the government intact pursue their agenda and goals more effectively. In chapter 5, I show how logrolling took place among Dutch political parties and its foreign policy consequences by analyzing this country's decision to participate in the 2003 Iraq war.

Logrolling also explains how minority coalitions manage to pull their countries into costly international pursuits even though they fail to divide and conquer the opposition ranks. Evidence shows that minority coalitions that are ideologically compact and are therefore exposed to the opposition can still commit assertively abroad when they logroll with it. We will observe this mechanism at work in chapter 4, where I investigate Denmark's decision to join the 2003 Iraq war.

Voters are integral to a functioning democracy, but are they to foreign policy? Do our opinions on foreign affairs matter to our governments when they engage in foreign policy? Perhaps we should start by asking whether citizens even care enough about foreign affairs to develop opinions, or if they just follow the cues they receive from the leaders.[88] One of the oldest and longest debates in international relations research continues to be the role of *public opinion* on foreign policy.[89] Can governments still make assertive commitments abroad even if they do not have the public's support behind them? Some political scientists argue that the masses hardly influence foreign policy decisions. Rather, the relationship takes place in the opposite direction and echoes the cue-taking logic: how the government formulates and implements foreign policy influences the public's opinions on it instead.[90] Others find that public support does not explain why governments follow through with their commitments once they verbally bind themselves.[91] Still other political scientists qualify their claims, explaining that public support has to be specific and targeted on the foreign policy

88. Berinsky, "Assuming the Costs of War."

89. For a recent take, see Kertzer and Zeitzoff, "A Bottom-up Theory of Public Opinion about Foreign Policy."

90. Leeds and Davis, "Domestic Political Vulnerability and International Disputes."

91. Lantis, *Domestic Constraints and the Breakdown of International Agreements*.

issue to have any influence on the government's international behavior.[92] Everts and Van Staden warn that public support "is only one of the factors shaping the outcome of the political process, and one cannot easily isolate the impact of one factor from that of others,"[93] encouraging us to consider public opinion in the context of the other factors that influence foreign policy making.

Ultimately, there is reason to expect that capturing the role of public opinion on foreign policy is possible through a closer investigation of the issue itself as well as the domestic and international political context within which it is embedded. This is especially important in the context of oversized coalitions, where diffusion hinges on the government's ability to overlook and circumvent public opinion. I take on this challenge in the subsequent case study chapters of the book. I investigate whether a strong public opinion exists for or against the respective foreign policy issues in Denmark, the Netherlands, and Finland and to what extent it influences the coalition's commitment behavior beyond what is predicted by its composition.

Moving beyond the domestic political environment, factors that pertain to the international system also matter in shaping foreign policy behavior, as they introduce exogenous shocks to the government's decision-making processes. *Threat to the survival of the regime* is an alternative explanation of this sort that can outweigh the effects of government composition on international commitments. External threats, including terrorist attacks, trigger national security and survival, which encourage politicians to ignore domestic rivalries and push their disagreements aside.[94] Auerswald argues that while coalitions should be less likely to use force than would single-party majority governments, this "should hold true as long as the national survival of the democracy is not threatened."[95]

The 1995 Kardak crisis between Turkey and Greece illustrates how national security trumps partisan discord. Unstable and short-lived coalition governments had been the defining feature of Turkish politics throughout the 1990s. Comprising the center-right True Path Party (Dogru Yol Partisi—DYP) and the social democratic Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—CHP), the caretaker government led by

92. Kaarbo, "Influencing Peace Junior Partners in Israeli Coalition Cabinets."

93. Everts and Van Staden, "Domestic Factors in the Making of Defense Policy," 125.

94. Metselaar and Verbeek, "Beyond Decision Making in Formal and Informal Groups"; Indridason, "Does Terrorism Influence Domestic Politics?"; Bueno De Mesquita, *The War Trap*.

95. Auerswald, "Inward Bound," 470.

Prime Minister Tansu Çiller was one of those fragile coalitions.[96] Although it was fraught with infighting at the time, the coalition had to put all that aside when a Turkish freight ship ran aground on an islet known as Kardak (Imia), which Greece claimed as its sovereign territory. The Çiller government showed notable cohesiveness and declared in response that Kardak was within Turkey's sovereign jurisdiction instead.[97] Turkey went further and soon sent its commando units to the islet[98]—an example of intense commitment in the form of military force deployment—to further cement its claims despite the ongoing clashes between the country's two governing parties. The Kardak episode illustrates that elites can still work together to respond to national security threats despite the frictions that otherwise pervade their policymaking ability. Threats to the regime and national survival should thus be accounted for as a contextual condition that can influence the foreign policy commitments of *any* government, regardless of its composition. The impact of coalition dynamics on the government's international behavior should be minimal where the issue invokes threats to national security.

Last but hardly least, we must consider the role of individuals in foreign policy. Kuperman looks at Israeli foreign policy as early as the 1950s to argue that the prime minister's position prevails over those of other ministers or the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).[99] Fast forward some fifty years and there is no doubt we are now in an age of personalized politics. Some argue that it is "presidentialized," suggesting that leaders are now less constrained by their domestic institutions and enjoy greater control over the policy process.[100] Considering the ever-increasing spotlight that leaders receive on a daily basis—especially in the international arena—it is important to investigate if political leaders play an independent role in shaping their government's international behavior beyond what its composition predicts.

Surely, much ink has been spilled on the influence of leaders in foreign policy. The leader's unique interest in foreign affairs, her previous experience in a given foreign policy area, or her psychological traits are some of the individual-level factors that could influence decision making.[101] To

96. The Islamist Refah Party's (Welfare Party) election victory in December 1995 brought the system to a halt when parties could not agree how to form the next governing coalition. See Migdalovitz, *Greece and Turkey*.

97. Migdalovitz, *Greece and Turkey*, 1.

98. "Kardak'a Bayrak Diken Gazeteci Bakan Oldu."

99. Kuperman, "The Impact of Internal Politics on Israel's Reprisal Policy."

100. Poguntke and Webb, *The Presidentialization of Politics*.

101. Hermann et al., "Who Leads Matters"; Kaarbo and Hermann, "Leadership Styles

the extent that individuals impose an independent effect on the regime's foreign policy, they might further amplify or moderate the effects of government composition on international commitments. Lantis explains that Helmut Schmidt's leadership was a key element behind Germany's decision to join the European Monetary System in 1978, for instance, when he was leading a coalition government comprising the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats.[102] Leaders may often play key roles in striking compromises between parties both inside and outside the coalition in an effort to circumvent the structural and situational constraints of parliamentary governance.

Moreover, "the strong tendency for a contraction of authority to the highest levels of government" during international crises could also push leaders to overcome the institutional constraints imposed by the structure of the government, resulting in leader-driven behaviors at the international level.[103] The decision units research program contends that the contraction of authority to the leader in times of crisis could be observed even in coalitions, where no single actor could shape the decision-making process.[104] Exogenous shocks such as threats to national security would not only shape the government's behavior, but they could also highlight the role of the leader along the way. Together, these factors compel us to consider the role of key leaders in the foreign policy apparatus, such as prime ministers or foreign ministers. We should investigate how leaders navigate the constraints as well as the opportunities imposed by their governments and how these interactions influence the international commitments of their regimes.

Conclusion

Studying the factors that increase democracies' likelihood of using military force abroad, Auerswald argues that "coalition premiers will only reluctantly use force, as they must pay particular attention to achieving immediate success or risk a parliamentary revolt, especially if the governing coali-

of Prime Ministers"; Horowitz and Stam, "How Prior Military Experience Influences the Future Militarized Behavior of Leaders"; Saunders, *Leaders at War*. Hermann, "Assessing Leadership Style."

102. Lantis, *Domestic Constraints and the Breakdown of International Agreements*.

103. Hermann et al., "Who Leads Matters," 85–86.

104. Hermann et al., "Who Leads Matters."

tion is fragile."[105] What fragility entails, however, remains unknown. It can emanate from the structural or situational characteristics of coalitions, or both. From a veto players logic, coalitions are fragile because they include multiple veto players. Still, the power of the veto over policy outputs is conditional upon the distribution of the veto incentives among the parties as well as their ideological proximity to each other. Furthermore, coalitions can be surprisingly resilient and assertive in the international arena if they are big and compact enough to avoid electoral blame, or small but ideologically diverse enough to avoid a successful offense from the parliamentary opposition.

To summarize, the constraints and opportunities that coalition governments enjoy in the foreign policy domain are part and parcel of their structural and situational features. Not all coalitions are fragile or unconstrained. Rather, their room for maneuver is fundamentally shaped by how they are organized, which then influences their ability to make international commitments. In the next chapter, I present a series of quantitative analyses using post–Cold War foreign policy events to show these relationships at work.

105. Auerswald, "Inward Bound," 477.

THREE

From Parties to Coalitions

Explaining Foreign Policy Commitments in Post–Cold War Europe

European party systems are getting more fragmented than ever.[1] New parties, most notably populists, are gaining electoral ground across Europe alongside (and often at the expense of) their mainstream counterparts. Bastions of two-party systems like the UK have been grappling with challenger parties such as UKIP or the Brexit Party. The Spring Party in Poland, Podemos in Spain, or Syriza in Greece have similarly disrupted the party systems in their countries.[2] These changes have been attributed traditionally to long-term trends such as globalization, while recent research points to more specific phenomena such as the European Parliament elections, the 2008 global financial crisis, and the increasing levels of social diversity on one hand and, on the other, the ability and willingness of the challenger parties to own new issues and capture voters who no longer feel served by mainstream parties.[3]

1. Thorlakson, "Introduction to Special Section"; Green and Prosser, "Party System Fragmentation and Single-Party Government"; Poguntke and Schmitt, "The Crisis, Party System Change, and the Growth of Populism"; Emanuele and Chiaramonte, "Explaining the Impact of New Parties."

2. Tilles and Junes, "The Future of Politics Is Coming to Poland"; Vachudova, "Populism, Democracy, and Party System Change in Europe." For a recent analysis of the rise of challenger parties in Europe, see De Vries and Hobolt, *Political Entrepreneurs*.

3. For an overview, see Raunio and Wagner, "The Party Politics of Foreign and Security Policy." See also Dinas and Riera, "Do European Parliament Elections Impact National Party

Coalition governance has always been a central feature of politics in countries like Germany, Italy, or Austria. Now, as more parties populate legislatures throughout this part of the world for a variety of reasons, one thing becomes clear: coalition governments have become more probable than ever. Mainstream parties are increasingly compelled to work with these smaller newcomers for governing together on a host of issue domains including foreign policy. From Britain to Estonia[4] to Latvia[5] to Spain,[6] the debates on coalition foreign policy are now much louder. Naturally, these developments highlight the need for a more nuanced understanding of coalition governments and, more crucially, why coalitions do not always act alike in foreign affairs.

In the previous chapter, I emphasized that a party-based approach to coalition foreign policy can explain why some multiparty governments act more assertively and decisively—or, in other words, more *committed*—than others in the international arena. I have provided a theoretical framework to explain that the way coalition governments are organized and how they interact with the parliamentary opposition together shape their foreign policy behavior. Specifically, the type of the coalition, the ideological spread of its parties along the left-right political spectrum, and the coalition's parliamentary standing vis-à-vis the opposition influence foreign policy decisions in various directions, generating diverse commitment outcomes.

In this chapter, I assess this argument quantitatively. Specifically, I test the hypotheses I laid out in chapter 2 by analyzing the foreign policy events of European governments in the post–Cold War period. I start with an overview of the dataset and the key variables I utilize for the analyses. I then introduce the modeling decisions, followed by the presentation of my results. I conclude the chapter with an overview of the findings and discuss their significance before I present in-depth case analyses in the subsequent chapters.

Counting Coalitions: How to Measure European Governments?

As this book has established, the existing scholarship on democratic foreign policy has often focused on the single-party versus multiparty dichotomy

System Fragmentation?"; Casal Bértoa and Weber, "Restrained Change"; Riera, "Socio-economic Heterogeneity and Party System Fragmentation"; De Vries and Hobolt, *Political Entrepreneurs*.

4. Raik, "Estonia's Cold Conservative Spring."
5. Bergmane, "Why Latvian Elections Matter for Europe."
6. Mestres, "The Unwavering European."

to account for the variation in the international behavior of parliamentary regimes. I have explained in chapter 2 that this approach overlooks the qualitative differences between coalitions, leads to truncated analyses, and generates mixed results.

But what *counts* as a government? Readers will note that rarely do democratic governments in parliamentary systems complete their full electoral mandate with the exact same cabinets they start with. A single governmental term of four or five years may often be too long and too arduous for parties in parliamentary executives. For that reason, governments often undergo cabinet reshuffles; they see old partners depart and new ones arrive. Coalitions, therefore, are not just observed frequently in European political systems simply due to the nature of electoral competition. The unique dynamics of coalition maintenance may result in multiple coalitions in the life cycle of a given electoral term, as I demonstrate in chapter 5. In effect, there might be more than a single coalition between two elections. Similarly, coalitions might collapse into single-party governments, and single-party governments might welcome new parties and continue serving as coalitions. With each such change, the government will need to recalibrate its foreign policy preferences, agenda, and, as a result, its behavior. Since my unit of analysis is the foreign policy event, I must correctly identify the government that was in charge during each of those events. All this implies that a few ground rules must be established at the outset to capture each of these changes in government structure to more accurately explain foreign policy behavior. I must first decide how to identify governments before I measure them.

I rely on the existing literature to do this. Following Lijphart and others,[7] I code for a new government in the dataset whenever any of the following conditions is met: (a) there is a new parliamentary election, (b) the government has a new prime minister even though its partisan composition remains the same, (c) the party composition of the government changes (i.e., a party leaves the government or a new party joins), (d) the prime minister or the cabinet resigns but is reinstated by the head of state. I conducted close readings of the monthly *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Reports* to capture these changes in European governments. It makes sense to expect that in addition to these *physical* changes to government composition, *institutional* changes such as losing the electoral mandate and serving as a caretaker should also influence foreign policy behavior. To

7. Lijphart, *Democracies*; Warwick, "Ideological Diversity and Government Survival in Western European Parliamentary Democracies"; Browne, Gleiber, and Mashoba, "Evaluating Conflict of Interest Theory."

account for those changes, I code for a new government when the executive is designated as caretaker according to the monthly country reports of the Economist Intelligence Unit.[8]

Now that I have conceptualized the government, the next task concerns distinguishing the government types. First, I differentiate between single-party and coalition governments as well as between minority and majority governments. Coalitions include at least two parties; minority governments include 50 percent or less of the seats in the legislature. Parties that win joint seats in the elections are counted as single parties. Examples include Belgium's Reformist Movement (PRL-FDF) in 1999 and the Christian Democratic and Flemish and New Flemish Alliance (CD&V-NVA) in 2006 as well as Italy's Rose in the Fist (RNP) in 2006, which was an electoral alliance between the Italian Radicals (RAD) and Italian Democratic Socialists (SDI). Otherwise, parties that enjoy exclusive seats in the parliament are counted separately, such as the German Christian Democratic Union (CDU), and its sister party in Bavaria, the Christian Social Union (CSU). When governments include independent parliamentarians without a party, I count them toward the government's total number of parliamentary seats, but these seats are not counted toward any governing party. Political parties that are not formally included in the government are not counted toward government composition, such as the Movimento per le Autonomie (MpA) in Silvio Berlusconi's 2008 government, which supported the government while remaining outside its formal framework.[9]

The data on the seat shares of governments and parties come from the Parliament and Government Composition Database (ParlGov), the ElectionGuide website of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Database of National Parliaments (IPU-Parline), Norwegian Social Science Data Services, and the Italian Ministry of the Interior.[10] These data were supplemented with in-depth readings of the Economist Intelligence Unit's monthly country reports on each of the

8. I also consider the rare instance of mass resignations from a governing party that alters the parliamentary standing of the government. Such resignations signal that the party suffers from severe internal disagreements, challenging my starting assumption that governing parties are unitary actors and act disciplined when participating in coalitions. Coding the government as a new government thus accounts for visible intraparty factionalism. There is only one instance in the dataset that fits this criterion: 63 MPs from the Turkish Democratic Left Party (DSP) resigned in July 2002, during a DSP-led tripartite coalition in Turkey. The total seat share of the government decreased from 64 percent to 52 percent while the DSP's seats decreased from 136 to 73, turning the party into the smallest partner in the coalition.

9. In this sense, it can be argued that this study focuses on "executive coalitions," rather than "legislative coalitions." See Laver and Budge, *Party Policy and Government Coalitions*, 4.

10. Döring, "The Collective Action of Data Collection"; Döring and Manow, "Parlia-

TABLE 3.1 Number of Governments in the Dataset by Country

Western Europe		Central and Eastern Europe	
Country	Number of Governments	Country	Number of Governments
Austria	8	Albania	3
Belgium	5	Bulgaria	2
Denmark	5	Croatia	3
Finland	5	Czech Republic	4
Germany	4	Estonia	3
Greece	5	Hungary	3
Iceland	4	Latvia	6
Ireland	4	Lithuania	4
Italy	8	Macedonia	4
Luxembourg	4	Poland	6
Malta	5	Slovakia	5
Netherlands	5	Slovenia	4
Norway	5	Turkey	6
Portugal	4		
Spain	4		
Sweden	5		
United Kingdom	3		

thirty countries included in the analyses to locate the exact dates of and the reasons for government change based on the above coding criteria. Table 3.1 presents the countries included in the analysis and the breakdown of the 136 governments that served between 1994 and 2004.[11]

Independent Variables

Next, I turn to the operationalization and measurement of the key explanatory variables. To capture the structure of coalitions and the qualitative variations among them, I adopt the long-standing typology used in the coalitions literature in comparative politics and distinguish between

ments and Governments Database (ParlGov)"; "IFES Election Guide"; "IPU Parline Database on National Parliaments"; "European Election Database (EED)."

11. Given their brief tenure in office, some governments have no recorded events in the original international events dataset. See King and Lowe, "VRA Documentation, 1990–2004.Pdf." Examples include Wolfgang Schuessel's caretaker government that served briefly between September 2002 and April 2003 or Mesut Yilmaz's caretaker government that served from November 1998 to November 1999. This prevents me from treating the dataset as balanced cross-sectional time-series and decreases the number of governments in the dataset to 136.

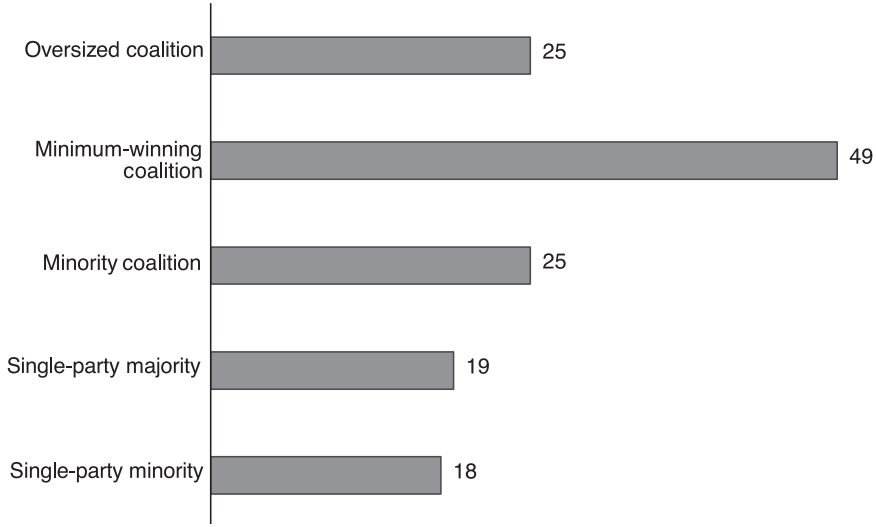

Figure 3.1. Types of Governments in the Dataset

minority, minimum-winning, and surplus majority (oversized) coalitions. Minority coalitions include two or more parties but collectively occupy 50 percent or less of the parliamentary seats. If the coalition loses its parliamentary majority even when the smallest partner departs, it is coded as a minimum-winning coalition. Surplus majority (oversized) coalitions include at least one party without which they can still maintain their parliamentary majority.[12] This typology allows me to measure the contribution of the governing parties to the coalition's overall parliamentary strength and stability. Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of governments across these types during the 1994–2004 period. Figure 3.2 shows where these government types are observed most often in Europe.

The second key explanatory factor concerns the ideological spread of the governing parties: how much ideological cohesion exists in the coali-

12. Volden and Carrubba, "The Formation of Oversized Coalitions in Parliamentary Democracies." I therefore diverge from the existing research that defines most grand coalitions as oversized coalitions. See Kaarbo, "Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making." Grand coalitions might be "too big" if they command an overwhelming majority (70 to 80 percent of parliamentary seats). Technically, however, they are often minimum-winning coalitions, where the departure of any junior partner leads to the loss of parliamentary majority. Austria's ÖVP-SPÖ grand coalition is a good example, as are the CDU/CSU-SDP governments in Germany. See Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*.

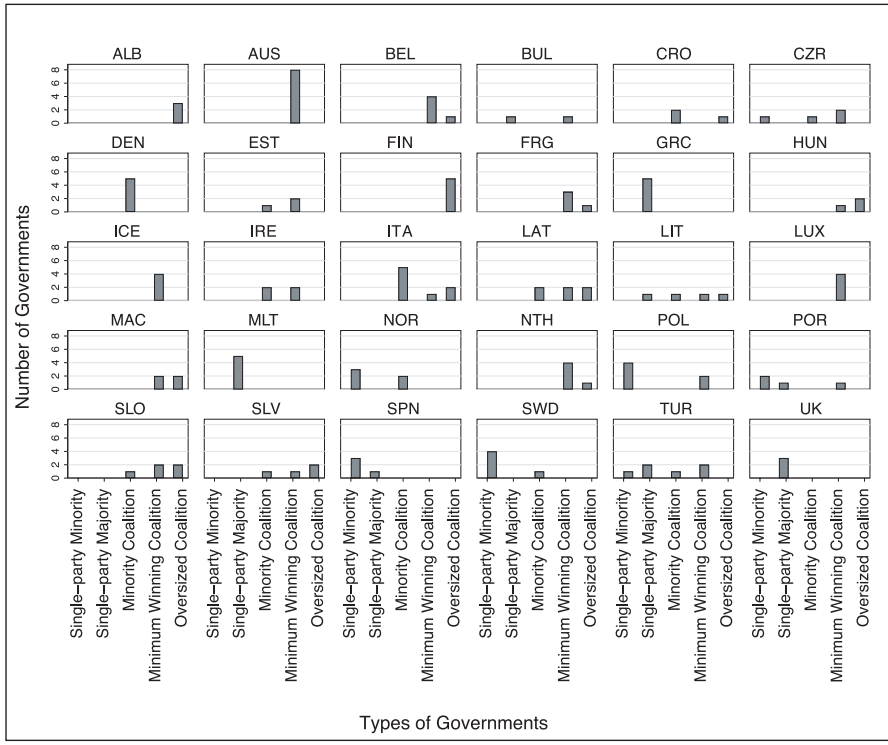

Figure 3.2. Distribution of Government Types across Europe, 1994–2004

tion? To the extent that the parties are closer to each other ideologically, the government will be compact.[13] Otherwise, it will be ideologically loose. In effect, I assume single-party governments to be unitary actors.[14] When it comes to coalitions, ideological cohesion among parties helps them make foreign policy decisions not just faster but also facilitates more assertive steps in the international arena rather than having to dilute preferences to meet at the lowest common denominator. If parties are further away from each other ideologically, it should be more difficult for them to make commitments in foreign policy compared to an ideologically cohesive government.

In order to measure the government's ideological cohesion, I must first identify the ideological placement of each governing party on the left-right

13. Axelrod, *Conflict of Interest*.
14. In chapter 7, I discuss the implications of relaxing this assumption.

political spectrum. According to Warwick, parties' "left-right position represents by far the best single measure of overall position."[15] The left-right placement data is also often used in the international relations and foreign policy analysis scholarship to explain conflictual and cooperative behavior.[16] Scholars have found that the general left-right dimension effectively captures the parties' foreign policy positions and preferences toward various issue areas such as military missions, ratification of human rights treaties, and support for international law.[17] Therefore, I follow the literature and focus on the general left-right positions of political parties to measure their ideological positions and how these positions influence foreign policy behavior.[18]

Laver and Hunt describe three ways in which we can determine party positions: analyzing party documents, relying on mass public opinion, or expert judgments.[19] I use expert survey datasets to identify the parties' left-right ideological positions. Marks and his colleagues argue that "expert surveys are more consistent with the evaluations of voters and parliamentarians than data currently available from party manifestos," meaning they do a better job at reflecting the true locations of parties along the political spectrum.[20] Others add that expert surveys are advantageous as they report "the judgments of the *consensus* of experts . . . in a *systematic way*."[21]

A rich literature in comparative politics uses expert surveys to identify party positions.[22] I follow this practice and use a collection of expert datasets to measure the left-right ideological positions of parties, including Hix and Lord's survey data, which was extended by Ray, as well as the

15. Warwick, "Voters, Parties, and Declared Government Policy," 1677.

16. For an overview of this debate, see Raunio and Wagner, "The Party Politics of Foreign and Security Policy." For some examples, see Rathbun, *Partisan Interventions*; Palmer, London, and Regan, "What's Stopping You?"; Clare, "Ideological Fractionalization and the International Conflict Behavior of Parliamentary Democracies"; Schuster and Maier, "The Rift"; Mello, "Parliamentary Peace or Partisan Politics?"; Massie, "Why Democratic Allies Defect Prematurely"; Auerswald and Saideman, *NATO in Afghanistan*.

17. Simmons, *Mobilizing for Human Rights*; Neumayer, "Death Penalty Abolition and the Ratification of the Second Optional Protocol"; Wagner et al., "The Party Politics of Legislative–Executive Relations"; Haesebrouck and Mello, "Patterns of Political Ideology and Security Policy."

18. See also Oktay, "Clarity of Responsibility and Foreign Policy Performance Voting."

19. Laver and Hunt, *Policy and Party Competition*. See also Ray, "Measuring Party Orientations towards European Integration."

20. Marks et al., "Crossvalidating Data on Party Positioning on European Integration."

21. Benoit and Laver, *Party Policy in Modern Democracies*, 9. Emphasis in original.

22. Castles and Mair, "Left–Right Political Scales"; Huber and Inglehart, "Expert Interpretations of Party Space and Party Locations in 42 Societies"; Laver and Hunt, *Policy and Party Competition*.

1999–2007 iterations of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) dataset.[23] First, I determine when exactly a government comes to power (either through elections or one of the "new government" coding rules described above). Next, I use the expert dataset that is the closest to the start date of the government to code the governing parties' positions.[24] Following Hooghe et al., I consider parties that are less than 5 on the left-right scale to be left-wing, and parties that are 6 or more to be right-wing parties. Following CHES's conventions, I code parties that have a score of 5 on the 0–10 left-right spectrum as "center" parties.[25] I provide a detailed explanation of my coding procedure in the methodological appendix at the end of the book.

Once I code the party positions, I capture the governing parties' ideological cohesiveness by measuring how dispersed each party is from the coalition's mean ideological position. This variable, *ideological dispersion*, thus captures the standard deviation of parties' positions from the coalition mean. Higher values of this variable indicate greater dispersion, therefore

23. Hix and Lord, *Political Parties in the European Union*; Ray, "Measuring Party Orientations towards European Integration"; Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning"; Steenbergen and Marks, "Evaluating Expert Judgments."

24. Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning"; Bakker et al., "Measuring Party Positions in Europe." Huber, "How Does Cabinet Instability Affect Political Performance?" also adopts a similar procedure. I use these datasets together as they follow the same methodology. Validity and reliability tests show that CHES provides similar information when compared to alternative data sources, such as party manifestos. The CHES project investigators argue that "as was the case with his [Ray, "Measuring Party Orientations towards European Integration"] data, our expert survey measures seem to capture essentially the same information about party positions as other measures such as the party manifestos" (Steenbergen and Marks, "Evaluating Expert Judgments," 360). The analyses reported in Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning," 12, suggest that "the CHES survey produces information that is in line with alternative sources. There is a reasonable level of convergence between the CHES data and the manifesto coding data, a non-expert instrument, though the associations are lower than with expert surveys." Importantly, Haesebrouck and Mello, "Patterns of Political Ideology and Security Policy," 571, show that the party position measures of the CHES and CMP datasets are correlated with high substantive ($\rho \sim 0.6$) and statistical significance ($p < 0.001$). I therefore conclude that the CHES data are reasonably reliable and valid on the ideological positioning of political parties when compared to other well-known party position datasets such as the Comparative Manifesto Project, the Benoit-Laver expert survey, and the Rohrschneider-Whitefield expert survey (Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning," 13). The tandem use of these datasets helps me capture the changes in party positions across time.

25. Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning."

less ideological cohesion, and are a proxy for the degree of policy incongruence among the parties in government.[26] This variable is highly correlated with a different measure, called "ideological range," that accounts for the "absolute value of the distance between the most extreme parties of a coalition,"[27] but has a smaller variance (0.52 for *dispersion*, 1.95 for *range*). As a robustness check, I run the analyses first using *dispersion* and then the *range* variable. I present the analyses that use the *range* variable in the chapter appendix.

Finally, I introduce an alternative "ideology" variable to test the fragmented opposition/policy viability hypothesis for minority coalitions. I use the ideological placement scores of each political party in the coalition to decide if it fragments the parliamentary opposition. Specifically, I check whether the coalition includes parties from *both* the left and the right of the political spectrum. I call this variable *center crossed*. If the coalition includes parties with placement scores smaller than 5 and also greater than 5, then it crosses the center of the political spectrum and can ideologically fragment the opposition, diminishing the latter's capacity to mount an effective challenge against its policies.

Dependent Variable: Commitment Intensity

Next, I turn to my main dependent variable, *commitment intensity*. My discussion has thus far suggested that commitment is an attribute of foreign policy outputs. It encapsulates "expectations about the actor's future behavior."[28] As they raise others' expectations, commitments result in increasing the future decisional and behavioral constraints on the actor.[29] I introduced briefly in chapter 1 that commitments generate expectations among others either through the explicit use of resources, called "resource commitment," or through verbally communicating the regime's willingness to pursue a specific policy, known as "binding commitment."[30] Commitments are stronger, more assertive, and more effective—in other

26. The standard deviation measure is constructed by using the following equation: $\sqrt{\frac{1}{N-1}\sum_{i=1}^{N}(x_i-\bar{x})^2}$, where i denotes the party and x denotes is left-right policy position. See also Oktay, "Constraining or Enabling?"

27. Tsebelis, "Veto Players and Law Production in Parliamentary Democracies," 599.

28. Callahan, "Commitment," 176. See also Gaubatz, "Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations," 111.

29. Callahan, "Commitment," 182–83.

30. Callahan, "Commitment."

words, more *intense*—when they exert greater decisional and behavioral constraints on the actor through utilizing more resources and generating firmer expectations among their targets.[31]

To operationalize the commitment intensity of foreign policy behaviors, I use the Goldstein scale of cooperation and conflict.[32] The scale extends from -10 to 10, where negative values communicate conflict/aggression-oriented behavior and positive values indicate cooperation/peace-oriented behavior. Values closer to 10 on each end of the spectrum indicate substantive resource use and strong use of language that binds the actor to future positions; put differently, they suggest more intense commitment behavior. Values closer to 0 denote more ambiguous, less committed verbal forms of behavior that do not require resource use. For example, *optimistic comment* assumes a value of 0.1 on the Goldstein scale and *proposal* assumes a value of 0.8, whereas *blame* gets -2.2. These behavioral categories signal much weaker commitments than, say, *military mobilization* (-7.6), giving an *ultimatum* (-6.9), *diplomatic recognition* (5.4), or *extending humanitarian aid* (7.6). Figure 3.3 provides a simplified illustration of the scale. The full Goldstein scale can be found in the appendix at the end of this book.

I fold the Goldstein scale in the midpoint, such that values closer to 10 indicate more intense commitments and values closer to 0 indicate more ambiguous, less intense commitments, regardless of their cooperative or conflictual content. Juliet Kaarbo and Ryan Beasley use this folded scale to measure the "extremity" of foreign policy behavior.[33] I call it the "commitment intensity" of foreign policy behavior instead. The way I understand it, *extremity*, on its face, conceptually makes sense when it is analyzed in the thick context of interstate relations, similar to how we think of the conflictual nature of foreign policy behavior.[34] Rather than "extremity," I argue that the underlying measure is conceptually better captured by the concept of "commitment" and therefore call my dependent variable "commitment intensity" instead.

31. Callahan, "Commitment," 182. See also Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*; Jervis, *The Logic of Images in International Relations*.

32. Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data."

33. Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme"; Beasley and Kaarbo, "Explaining Extremity in the Foreign Policies of Parliamentary Democracies"; See also Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.

34. Note that international conflict data, such as the Militarized Interstate Disputes data, run into no such conceptual problems since those events are counted and measured relative to a predetermined number of battlefield casualties, indeed a clear consequence of conflictual relations between actors.

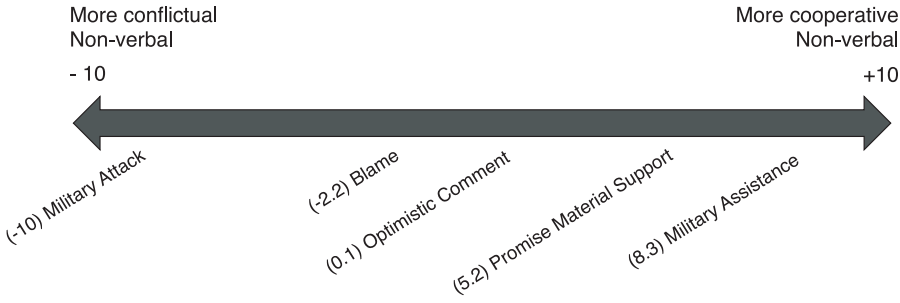

Figure 3.3. Goldstein's Foreign Policy Behavior Scale

How to Model Commitment Behavior

I utilize events data to identify the foreign policy behaviors of European governments. Events capture "who does what to whom, and how" (and, of course, *when*, as they are time-stamped). Events datasets are used frequently in the literature. Examples include the World Events/Interaction Survey (WEIS), Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB), and Comparative Research on the Events of Nations (CREON).[35] None of these datasets extends into the post–Cold War period, however. This is a temporal limitation that prevents researchers from identifying whether the international systemic factors overwhelm the domestic-level relationships that influence the foreign policy of countries included in these datasets. I am thus obliged to look elsewhere, so I use the 10 Million International Dyadic Events dataset (10MIDE) that exclusively covers the post–Cold War period.[36] I isolate all thirty European parliamentary systems and focus on the foreign policy events that took place between 1994 and 2004. Figure 3.4 illustrates the distribution of these events across the countries in the dataset.

Not surprisingly, the great powers of Europe—Germany (FRG), the United Kingdom (UK), and to some extent Italy (ITA)—have more foreign policy events recorded in the dataset than other countries. This might have to do with the reporting preferences of the media outlets (such as Reuters), where these events are collected from. In other words, media outlets might be overreporting the foreign policy behaviors of the few powerful European states because they receive more attention from both news producers and news audiences. I take into account the unbalanced nature of the

35. McClelland, *World Event/Interaction Survey (WEIS)*; Azar, "The Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB) Project"; Hermann et al., *CREON, A Foreign Events Data Set*.

36. King and Lowe, "VRA Documentation, 1990–2004.Pdf."

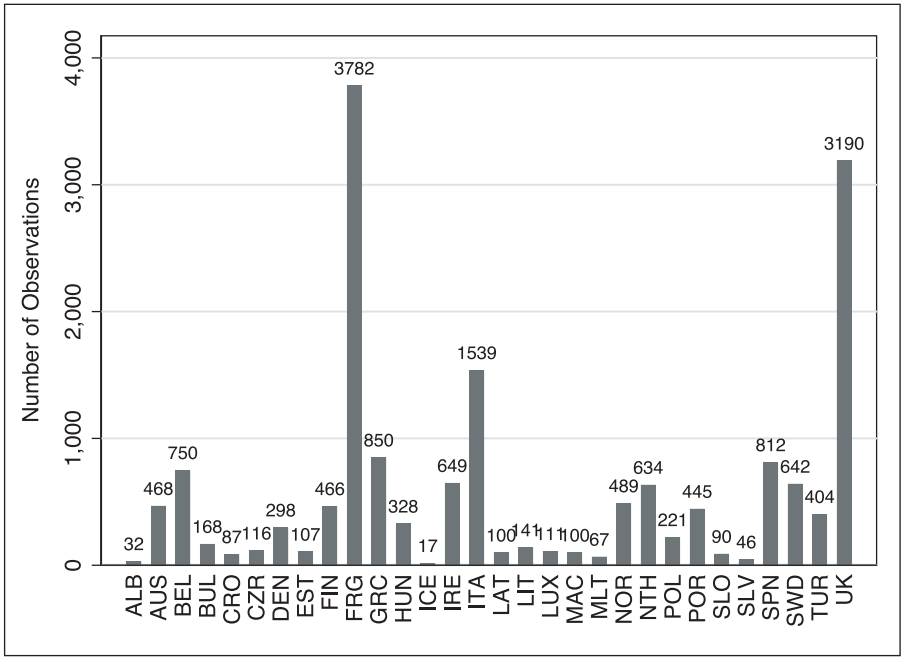

Figure 3.4. Distribution of Foreign Policy Events across Europe, 1994–2004

dataset in my estimation methods, as I will explain shortly. The convention used to code the events in the 10MIDE dataset follows McClelland, which was later refined by Goldstein.[37] This allows me to code the commitment scores using the Goldstein scale. The methodological appendix at the end of the book provides an explanation of my coding procedure as well as the commitment intensity score of each event category that is included in the dataset. Figure 3.5 shows the distribution of commitment behaviors across the five different government types that I account for in the dataset, suggesting that no specific government type has a skewed distribution of commitments.

I use multilevel regression analysis to estimate the models. This method is suitable for analyzing data with nested characteristics. In my case, the dataset includes both government-level data such as ideological dispersion and coalition type as well as country-level data such as national capabilities, which I include as a control variable and discuss in the next section. I

37. McClelland, *World Event/Interaction Survey (WEIS)*; Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data."

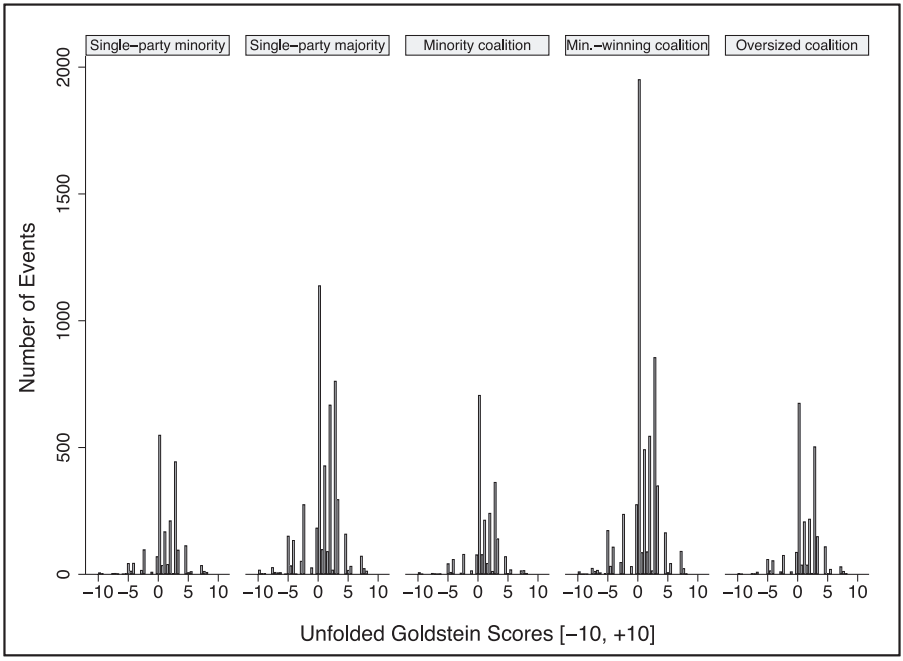

Figure 3.5. Foreign Policy Commitments across Governments

could have modeled country-level effects on commitment behavior using country fixed-effects, but that would have prevented me from including country-level variables in the analysis. Multilevel regression allows me to control for key country-level variables while accounting for the effect of unobserved country-level variation through utilizing random-intercept models.[38] This estimation method also takes into account the unbalanced nature of the dataset.

Control Variables

Commitment behavior can be influenced by a host of factors beyond the type of the coalition, its ideological cohesion, or its relationship with the parliamentary opposition. In the quantitative analyses that follow, I account for a series of alternative factors that could influence the foreign policy commitments of these European democracies.

38. Steenbergen and Jones, "Modeling Multilevel Data Structures."

National Capabilities: Surely any regime would enjoy greater maneuvering ability in foreign affairs with more abundant material capabilities. Regardless of the constraints or opportunities presented by the domestic political context, governments that have greater resources at their disposal can act more assertively at the international level. I consider this relationship by including in the models a national capabilities variable. Following the IR literature and past work on coalition foreign policy, I use the Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC) data to account for the actor regime's material capabilities.[39]

Democratic Target: Democracies behave differently when they interact with other democracies than they do with nondemocracies.[40] It is therefore possible that European governments commit differently when the targets of their behavior are fellow democracies. To account for this explanation, I include in the models the regime type of the event's target country using the Polity IV data.[41] Following the literature, regimes that assume a value of 7 or above are considered democracies.[42] The data show that the foreign policy events the targets of which were democracies are more than twice as frequent as nondemocratic targets in this period, as illustrated in figure 3.6. Targets that are nonstate actors lack both CINC and Polity scores; they are therefore coded missing.

In addition to these, I include several other controls to the models. These are context-specific variables that the multilevel analysis allows me to account for at both government and country levels. They consider whether high-profile international episodes or memberships in international organizations further influence commitment behavior.

European Union Membership: The EU has become a more prominent global player, particularly during the early post–Cold War period, increasing its foreign policy capacity, or "actorness," and influencing the foreign policies of its member states.[43] For instance, Italy was initially reluctant to adopt the climate targets outlined in the Kyoto Protocol, but the EU's

39. Fordham and Walker, "Kantian Liberalism, Regime Type, and Military Resource Allocation."; Morgan and Palmer, "A Model of Foreign Policy Substitutability"; Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme"; Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War"; Singer, "Reconstructing the Correlates of War Dataset on Material Capabilities of States."

40. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace"; Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace*; Russett and Oneal, *Triangulating Peace*.

41. Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr, *Polity IV Project*.

42. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*; Gartzke, "The Capitalist Peace."

43. Schmidt, "Europeanization and the Mechanics of Economic Policy Adjustment"; Groenleer and Van Schaik, "United We Stand?"; Jupille and Caporaso, "States, Agency, and Rules." For a conceptual discussion of the term "actorness" see Ginsberg, "Conceptualizing

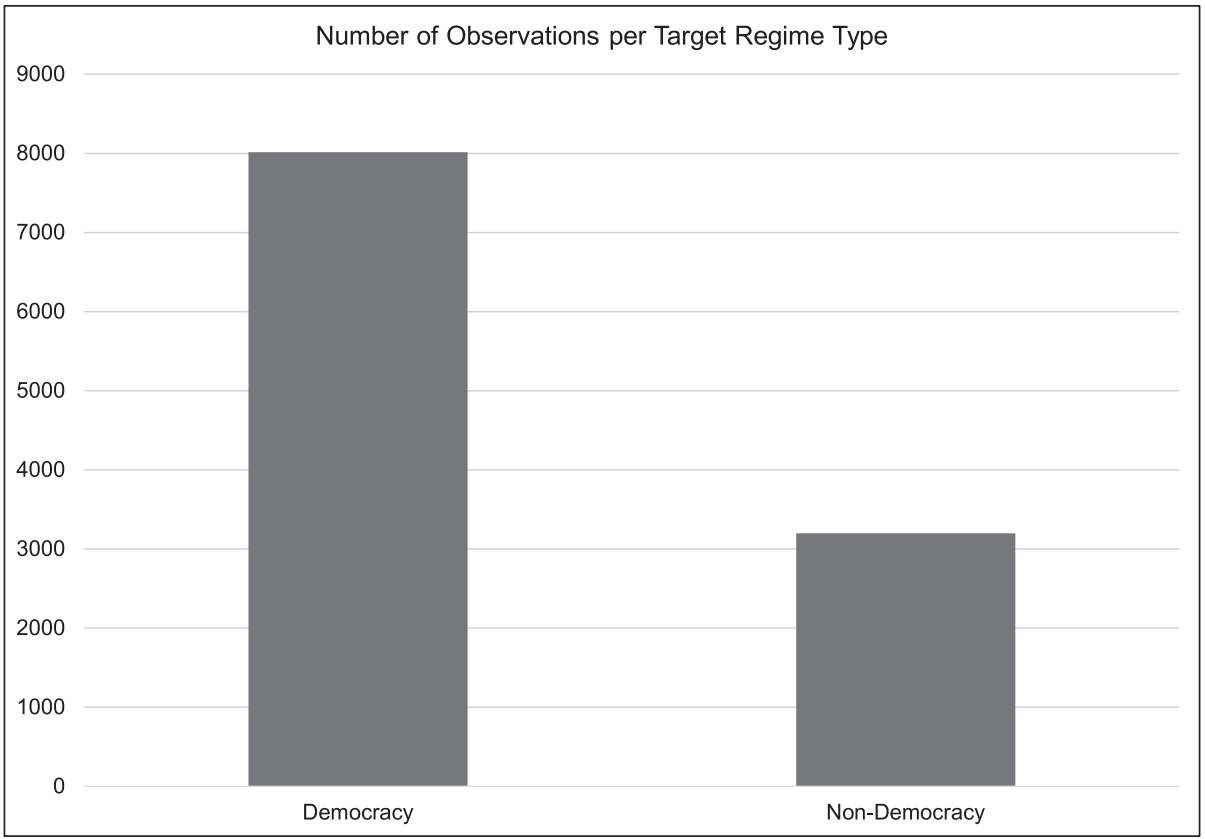

Figure 3.6. Foreign Policy Events with Democratic and Nondemocratic Targets

commitment to the treaty forced this country to change its policy and converge to the EU's position.[44] The length of EU membership could influence the foreign policy commitments of the member states, although the direction of this relationship is open to debate. If the mechanism is socialization,[45] then the length of membership should positively influence commitment behavior. If it is instead about the power differential between the EU and the member state, then the relationship could be negative: the EU might have greater influence over a new member state, whereby the latter become "net adopter" of EU foreign policy rather than its "net influencer" simply for having been new to the club. I control for these potential effects by accounting for the length of EU membership in years for each country as of December 31, 2004. Figure 3.7 provides a summary.

Wars in Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, and September 11: Governments, regardless of their structure, may have to make more assertive and more decisive foreign policy commitments in the face of international crises. The period that I focus on in this chapter had witnessed two violent wars in Europe, an overseas military operation to which some European countries contributed, and terrorist attacks in the United States that received swift and forceful response from European allies. Did these episodes overwhelm the foreign policy behaviors of the countries in the dataset? I control for each by including dichotomous variables to capture whether a government was in power during the Bosnia War (April 1, 1992–December 14, 1995), the Kosovo War (February 28, 1998–June 10, 1999), on the day of September 11, 2001, or during the 2003 invasion of Iraq (March 13, 2003–May 1, 2003).

None of these variables imposes a significant effect on the dependent variable. Therefore, I drop them from the main analyses that I discuss in the remainder of this chapter. I report the full models that include these additional controls in the chapter appendix (tables 3A.2 and 3A.3).

Results

I begin the analyses by following the modeling decisions of previous empirical work and applying them to the more recent, post–Cold War for-

the European Union as an International Actor"; Wong and Hill, *National and European Foreign Policies: Towards Europeanization*.

44. Groenleer and Van Schaik, "United We Stand?"

45. Groenleer and Van Schaik, "United We Stand?"

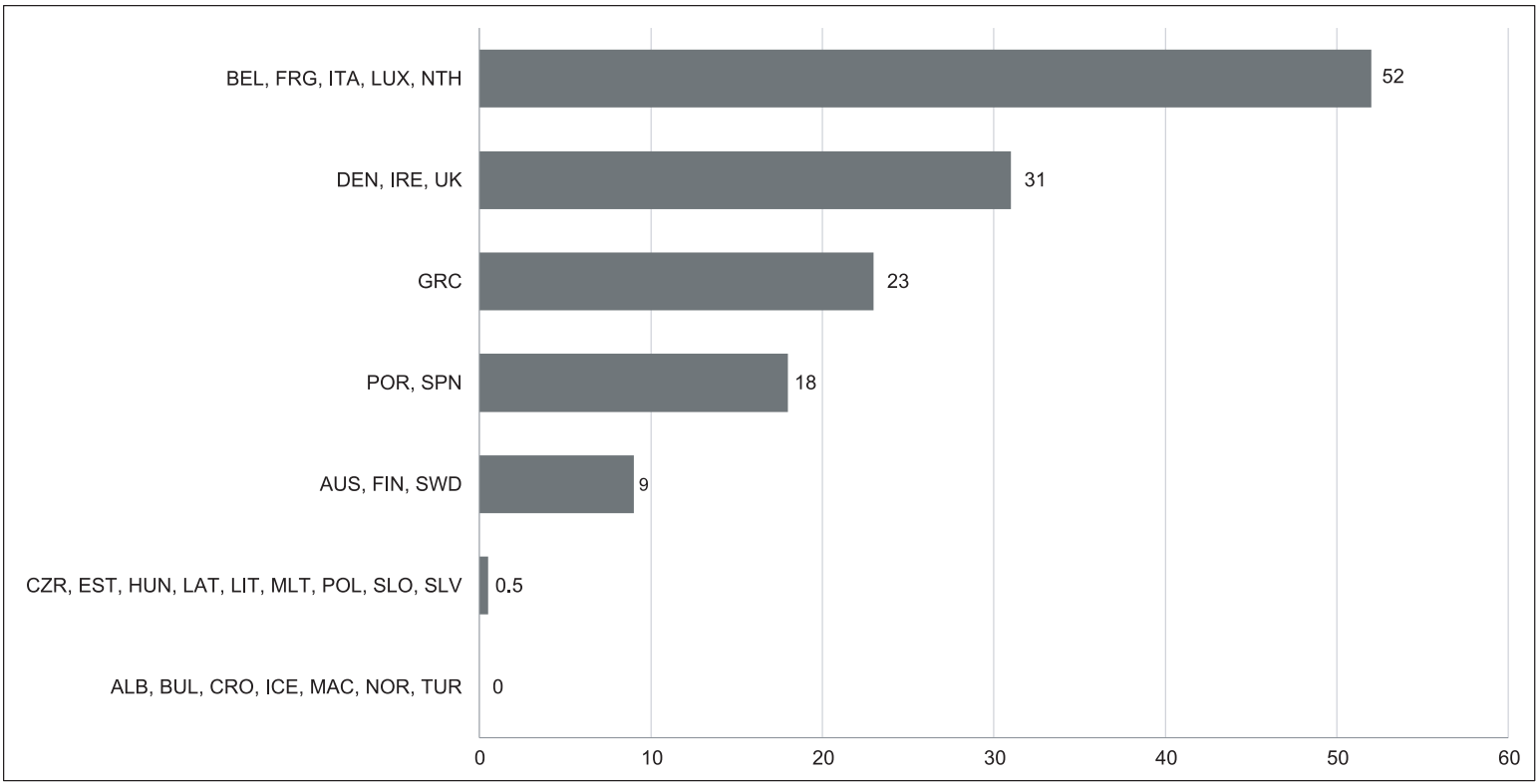

Figure 3.7. Years of EU Membership as of December 31, 2004

eign policy events data.[46] Next, I gradually improve both the estimation technique (from ordinary least squares—OLS—to multilevel regression—MLM) and the measures of government structure by including the key variables that capture coalition size, its ideological cohesiveness, and its relationship with the parliamentary opposition. If coalitions are generally constrained, then commitment intensity should decrease as the veto players approach expects (H1). Otherwise, coalitions should be positively associated with commitment intensity as the clarity of responsibility theory expects (H2). These results should change, however, when *ideological dispersion* is accounted for. I expect that *dispersion*, on average, has a negative effect on commitment behavior.

Different types of coalitions should also impose different effects on commitment intensity. Minimum-winning coalitions should decrease commitment intensity given the veto power of its constituent parties (H3). Oversized coalitions should be less constrained as a result of responsibility diffusion and should engage in more assertive commitments (H4). Further, the effects of coalition type on commitment behavior should be influenced by the governing parties' ideological cohesiveness: higher values on the *dispersion* variable should dampen the commitment behavior of both minimum-winning (H5) and oversized coalitions (H6). Finally, I expect minority coalitions to be more constrained than single-party majority governments on average and therefore engage in less assertive commitments (H7). In line with the fragmented opposition/policy viability explanation, however, I expect minority coalitions to act more assertively in foreign affairs when they fragment the parliamentary opposition by including parties from both the left and the right of the political spectrum (H8).

In the first set of analyses, I use the *ideological dispersion* variable as the main measure of the coalition's degree of ideological cohesiveness. The results on table 3.2 support all but two of the expectations I have laid out. The first model echoes the existing approaches in Kaarbo and Beasley (2008) and Kaarbo (2012) and uses OLS regression with robust standard errors to test the effects of the two key independent variables: coalition and minority government. It shows that neither variable has a statistically significant effect on commitment intensity. This result speaks to the literature in important ways. Kaarbo and Beasley find, for instance, that coalitions engage in more extreme behavior.[47] But they only construct a *cabinet type* dummy to capture coalition and single-party governments without consid-

46. Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme"; Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.

47. Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme."

TABLE 3.2. What Explains the Intensity of Foreign Policy Commitments?

	(1) (OLS)	(2) (MLM)	(3) (MLM)	(4) (MLM)	(5) (MLM)	(7) (MLM)	(9) (MLM)
Coalition	–0.064	–0.145*					
	(0.034)	(0.066)					
Minority	–0.059	–0.141*					
Government	(0.042)	(0.060)					
CINC	–9.617***	–8.009*	–7.436*	–11.342**	–11.333**	–11.161**	–11.733*
	(1.551)	(3.724)	(3.702)	(4.133)	(4.125)	(4.045)	(4.678)
Dem. Target	–0.321***	–0.319***	–0.320***	–0.321***	–0.321***	–0.320***	–0.320***
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)
Single-Party			–0.082	–0.087	–0.087	–0.084	–0.107
Minority			(0.089)	(0.091)	(0.091)	(0.090)	(0.096)
Minority Coalition			–0.275**	–0.067	–0.060	0.080	–0.216
			(0.097)	(0.150)	(0.215)	(0.164)	(0.170)
Minimum-Winning			–0.140	0.151	0.149	–0.024	0.039
Co.			(0.084)	(0.119)	(0.131)	(0.144)	(0.136)
Oversized Coalition			–0.046	0.323*	0.320*	0.404**	0.551***
			(0.090)	(0.132)	(0.144)	(0.136)	(0.167)
Ideological				–0.192**	–0.190**	–0.291***	–0.110
Dispersion				(0.060)	(0.071)	(0.077)	(0.073)
Mino. Co.*					–0.006		
Dispersion					(0.140)		
Min.-Win. *						0.228*	
Dispersion						(0.109)	
Oversized *							–0.292*
Dispersion							(0.122)
Constant	2.526***	2.590***	2.555***	2.586***	2.586***	2.589***	2.599***
	(0.048)	(0.072)	(0.081)	(0.084)	(0.084)	(0.083)	(0.090)
Country-Level Std.		0.133***	0.131***	0.137***	0.136***	0.132***	0.164***
Error		(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.042)	(0.037)	(0.045)
Event-Level Std.		1.783***	1.783***	1.791***	1.791***	1.790***	1.790***
Error		(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
N	11211	11211	11211	9963	9963	9963	9963

Standard errors are in parentheses.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

ering whether these governments enjoy a parliamentary majority. Once the majority status of these governments is controlled for, the conclusion that coalition governments engage in more assertive action is no longer viable.

Model 2 improves the estimation by taking into account the nested characteristics of the dataset and runs the same model using multilevel regression. The results show that minority governments (regardless of whether they are coalition or single-party) decrease commitment intensity. This model also supports the veto players hypothesis, as coalition governments impose a negative effect on commitments, challenging the existing finding that coalitions engage in more extreme behavior.[48] But this is still an incomplete picture, since, as I explained in chapter 2, not all coalitions are alike. It is necessary to account for their type and ideological cohesion to identify the specific kinds of effects that coalitions have on commitment behavior.

The next two models in table 3.2 unpack coalitions based on type and ideological dispersion to do just that. The base category in these models is single-party majority government; this allows me to compare the effect of each coalition coefficient relative to the model intercept. Model 3 shows that, other things being equal, *minority coalitions* act significantly less committed than single-party majority governments in foreign policy, supporting my expectation (H7). Model 4 accounts for ideological cohesion inside the coalition. Again, as expected, commitment intensity decreases as governing parties fall farther away from the coalition's mean ideological position. At greater levels of dispersion, incumbent parties experience greater difficulty to commit themselves to assertive foreign policy behaviors. Across multiple models, *oversized coalitions* incur a positive effect on commitment behavior on average, supporting my expectation along the lines of responsibility diffusion (H4). *Minimum-winning coalitions* do not impose an independent negative effect on commitment intensity, failing to support my hypothesis based on the logic of veto players (H3). As I discussed in chapter 2, veto incentives are particularly strong in minimum-winning settings when the coalition is ideologically heterogeneous. In order to truly capture the effect of minimum-winning coalitions, we need to look further at how the degree of ideological cohesiveness inside these governments conditions their behavior.

The remaining models in table 3.2 thus capture the interactive effect of ideological dispersion on the commitment behavior of each coalition type. In Model 5, I focus on minority coalitions. Measured in terms of

48. Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme."

the standard deviation of party positions from the mean coalition position, *ideological dispersion* has no moderating or amplifying effect on the commitment behavior of minority coalitions. Model 6 takes on minimum-winning coalitions: contrary to my expectation (H5), the interactive term *Minimum-winning Coalition * Ideological Dispersion* has a positive and significant coefficient. This suggests that higher levels of ideological dispersion actually induce a positive effect on the commitment behavior of minimum-winning coalitions.

I illustrate this finding in figure 3.8 below. Keeping other variables at their mean values, the figure shows the predicted commitment scores at increasing levels of ideological dispersion across minimum-winning and non-minimum-winning contexts as represented by the solid and dotted lines, respectively, and the corresponding 90 percent confidence intervals. As ideological dispersion increases inside the government, commitments become less assertive; this is indicated by the negative slope observed cross both trend lines in figure 3.8. That said, this relationship is much less steep for minimum-winning coalitions, suggesting that this coalition type has a dampening effect on commitment behavior at high levels of ideological dispersion. Minimum-winning coalitions, whose parties are ideologically less compact, end up committing more than otherwise expected, challenging the expectations of the veto players approach. As I will demonstrate qualitatively in chapter 5, logrolling between coalition parties provides a strong explanation to make sense of this result. At higher levels of ideological dispersion, parties in minimum-winning settings end up working together more effectively through logrolling and therefore engage in more committed behavior in foreign policy.

Finally, in Model 7, I look at the behavior of oversized (surplus majority) coalitions. As expected, oversized coalitions engage in less assertive commitments at higher levels of ideological dispersion (H6). Figure 3.9 illustrates this relationship based on the results of Model 7, with 90 percent confidence intervals. Although at lower levels of ideological dispersion oversized coalitions engage in more assertive commitments than other government types and therefore lend support to the clarity of responsibility explanation as I have argued, this relationship is no longer maintained at higher levels of dispersion, as the steep negative slope of the trend line represents. They lose their assertive foreign policy edge at high levels of dispersion compared to all other governments. When the many partners in these coalitions also have vastly different ideological positions, it gets much harder for them to commit in foreign policy as a government.

Table 3.2 also provides information on how the control variables influ-

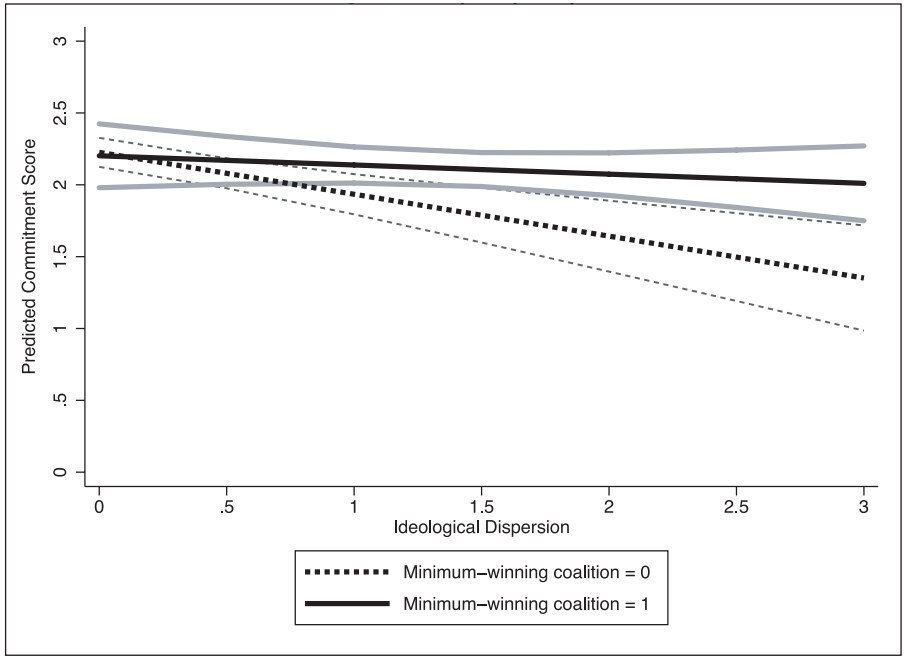

Figure 3.8. Ideological Dispersion and the Commitments of Minimum-Winning Coalitions

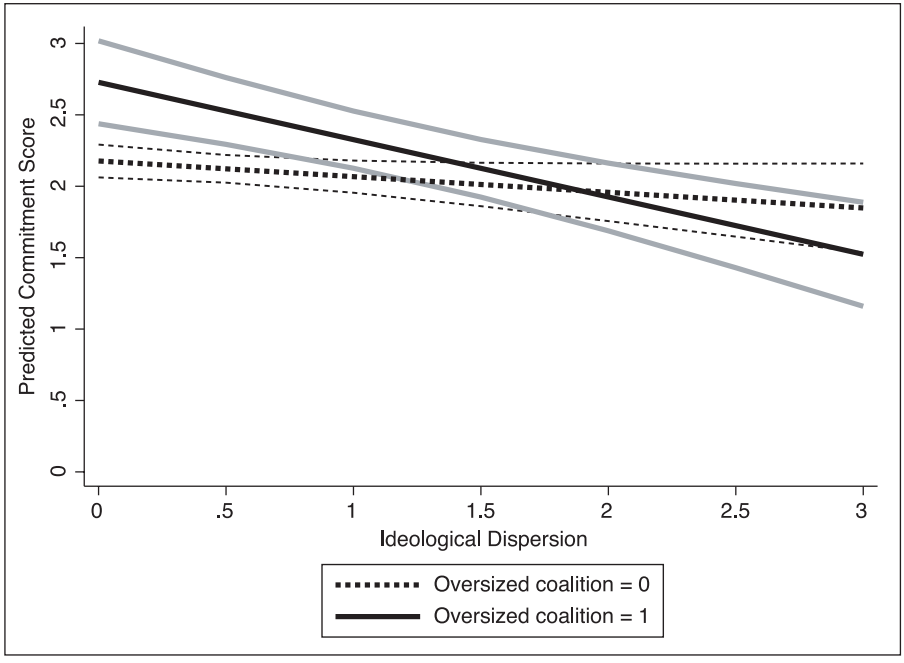

Figure 3.9. Ideological Dispersion and the Commitments of Oversized Coalitions

ence the dependent variable. Echoing Kaarbo and Beasley's findings, the variable "*national capabilities*" of the actor country imposes a negative effect on commitment intensity.[49] It seems that the more powerful these European actors are, the more prudent and restrained they behave in international politics. Finally, the results indicate that European democracies act similarly more restrained when their foreign policies engage democratic countries. Most of these findings hold when I run the analysis using Tsebelis's *ideological range* variable as an alternative measure of ideological cohesion among the governing parties. Higher levels of ideological range inside the coalition similarly decrease the intensity of commitments, as do minority coalitions, on average. Oversized coalitions act more committed than single-party majority governments, but this effect is once again dampened as the ideological range of the coalition increases. I provide these results in the chapter appendix (table 3A.1).

Next, I focus on minority coalitions to test the fragmented opposition/policy viability hypothesis. This time, I utilize the *center crossed* variable instead as a measure of the ideological spread among governing parties as well as its relationship vis-à-vis the parliamentary opposition. If the coalition includes parties from both the left *and* right of the political spectrum—if, in other words, the government *crosses the center*—then it would effectively divide the parliamentary opposition ideologically. This should have an amplifying effect on the coalition's commitment intensity, which means I expect the interaction term for minority coalitions to be positive and statistically significant. To develop a more robust discussion, I interact *center crossed* with other coalition types as well and check if my argument is robust against this alternative specification of the ideology variable. Table 3.3 below reports the results of these analyses.

As expected, the results suggest that minority coalitions that cross the center of the political spectrum do engage in more assertive commitments compared to single-party majority governments (the model baseline), supporting the fragmented opposition/policy viability hypothesis (H8). This is indicated by the positive and significant coefficient of the interaction term *Minority Coalition * Center Crossed*, included in Model 1. I graph this finding in figure 3.10 below, which shows the predicted commitment score of minority coalitions across the two alternative scenarios of ideological composition while other variables are kept at their mean values, with 90 percent confidence intervals. The figure illustrates that when a minority coalition is purely right- or left-wing, it behaves significantly differently

49. Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme."

TABLE 3.3. Intensity of Foreign Policy Commitments, IV: Center Crossed

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
CINC	–9.701*	–6.826	–9.152*
	(3.777)	(4.241)	(4.075)
Democratic Target	–0.324***	–0.318***	–0.319***
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)
Single-Party Minority	–0.108	–0.096	–0.109
	(0.089)	(0.093)	(0.092)
Minority Coalition	–0.541***	–0.229	–0.418***
	(0.147)	(0.123)	(0.118)
Minimum-Winning	–0.083	–0.293**	–0.198*
Coalition	(0.096)	(0.108)	(0.098)
Oversized Coalition	0.035	–0.002	0.161
	(0.103)	(0.108)	(0.112)
Center Crossed	–0.069	–0.148	0.150
	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.079)
Minority Coalition*	0.403*		
Center Crossed	(0.177)		
Minimum-Winning		0.414***	
Coalition* Center		(0.115)	
Crossed			
Oversized Coalition*			–0.616***
Center Crossed			(0.126)
Constant	2.575***	2.567***	2.572***
	(0.080)	(0.087)	(0.085)
Country-Level Std. Error	0.125***	0.152***	0.144***
	(0.036)	(0.040)	(0.040)
Event-Level Std. Error	1.785***	1.784***	1.783***
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
N	10423	10423	10423

Standard errors are in parentheses.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

and elicits less commitment than all other governments. When it includes parties from both the left and the right of the political spectrum, however, its behavior elicits greater commitment. Indeed, minority coalitions act no differently than other types of governments when they fragment the opposition. Even though they are structurally vulnerable, figure 3.10 suggests that minority coalitions that reach across the aisle increase their commitment intensity.

The results in table 3.3 convey that unlike minority coalitions, oversized coalitions that cross the center of the political spectrum engage in

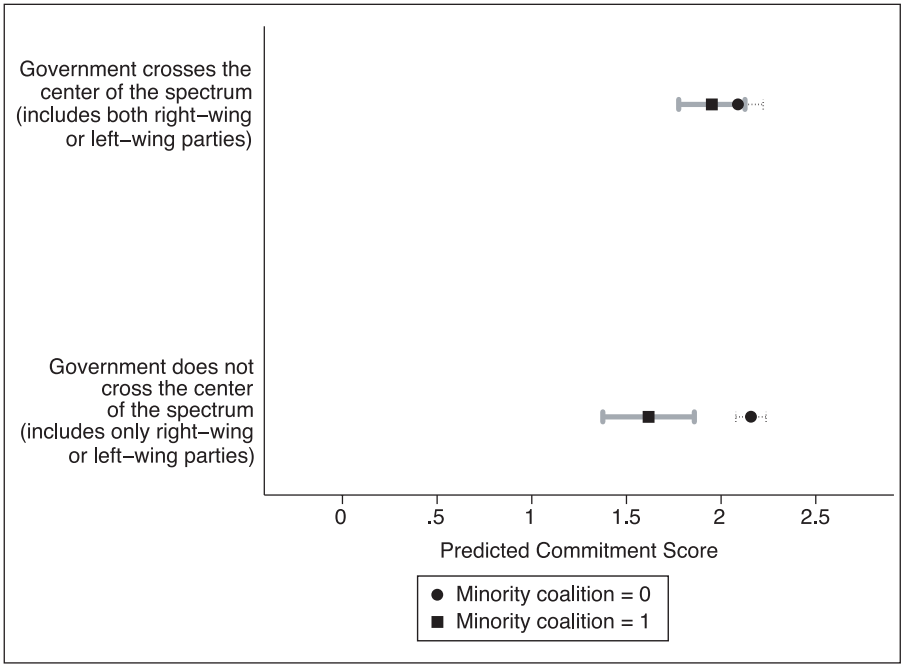

Figure 3.10. The Ideological Composition of Minority Coalitions and Commitment Behavior

less assertive commitments. This is not surprising, since crossing the center entails a decrease in its ideological cohesion and could lead to policy disagreements, dampening the coalition's commitment behavior. For instance, a shift from a homogeneously right-wing or left-wing oversized coalition to an ideologically heterogeneous oversized coalition leads to an expansion of its ideological range as well as to an increase in the standard deviation of the mean ideological position of the coalition (that is, *ideological dispersion*). Finally, crossing the center increases the commitment behavior of minimum-winning coalitions. The positive and significant sign of the coefficient for this interaction defeats my original expectation (but remains consistent with the results in table 3.2), which stated that minimum-winning coalitions would commit less assertively when the incumbent parties are ideologically diverse.

That said, the results in table 3.3 makes sense especially in the context of grand coalitions, which is a specific type of minimum-winning coalition. In parliamentary regimes, grand coalitions are formed when the two largest parties from the opposite sides of the political spectrum get together to

build what is often referred to as a "national unity" government. Observers often expect these coalitions to take bolder policy decisions than other types of minimum-winning arrangements because they include the largest (yet ideologically opposing) political forces in the country. The Christian Democratic–Social Democratic governments in Germany or the Labor-Likud governments in Israel come to mind as the foremost examples of this trend. When these parties collaborate as governing partners, they often address pressing policy issues that may force them to act more decisively and thus with greater commitment.

Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the coalition politics framework I laid out in chapter 2 by exploiting European foreign policy events from the post–Cold War period. Specifically, I have tested the veto players and clarity of responsibility theories in their refined form by explicating coalitions along the dimensions of type and ideological cohesion. Furthermore, I have accounted for a key group of multiparty governments—minority coalitions—for the first time in the foreign policy analysis literature. In a series of analyses, I inspected whether minority coalitions are indeed structurally vulnerable compared to single-party majority coalitions as far as their commitment behavior goes. I have also tested the argument that minority coalitions can circumvent their vulnerability by including parties from both the left and the right sides of the political spectrum, thus dividing the parliamentary opposition ideologically.

The quantitative findings in this chapter strongly support the arguments I presented in chapter 2. Put simply, there is no single pathway between coalitions and their foreign policy commitments. This is precisely because coalitions are so much more diverse than scholars and pundits often consider them to be. Once we take into account their type, ideological cohesiveness, and parliamentary standing, we observe that these factors shape coalitions' commitment behavior in multiple different directions. The analyses in this chapter demonstrate that a more nuanced specification of coalition composition is necessary to discover these relationships.

Let us unpack this conclusion further. First, the analyses demonstrate that neither the veto players nor the clarity of responsibility approach can single-handedly explain coalition foreign policy. Although the veto players approach seems to explain the commitment behavior of all coalitions at the outset, this theory loses its ground once the type of coalition and its ideological cohesion are factored in.

Second and relatedly, the analyses show instead that some coalitions are more susceptible to the diffusion effect than others once the ideological disparities in government are independently accounted for. On average, oversized coalitions are associated with more intense foreign policy commitments compared to single-party majority governments, lending more support to the responsibility diffusion approach. Parties in oversized coalitions can engage in bolder foreign policy commitments precisely because the responsibility of those decisions diffuses among them, minimizing the potential electoral costs of their international behavior. Indeed, parties in these governments might even choose to act against the preferences of their constituencies if they anticipate that they will get re-elected anyway because of responsibility diffusion. I will demonstrate how this takes place in chapter 6, when I explore Finland's decision to join the Economic and Monetary Union.

Third, my findings on oversized coalitions shed greater light on some of the earlier findings in the literature. For instance, in their 2008 study, Juliet Kaarbo and Ryan Beasley find that governments act more "extreme" as the number of parties in government increases from one to many. In their 2014 follow-up, the authors also find that stronger coalitions (that is, those with a larger parliamentary presence) engage in more nonverbal (i.e., high-intensity) behavior than verbal (i.e., low-intensity) behavior, while coalitions with more parties act more conflictually.[50] Together, their conclusions suggest that we observe more committed foreign policy behavior when coalitions with many parties *also happen to* command larger seat shares. This is often observed in oversized coalitions. Capturing the precise type of coalition helps to make sense of these results in relation to each another.

Relatedly, in their 2014 study, Beasley and Kaarbo assert that more parties in coalitions are associated with more extreme conflictual behavior, although they also concede that their analysis does not conclusively show whether the explanation behind this relationship is responsibility diffusion or logrolling.[51] As I will show qualitatively in chapters 5 and 6, distinguishing between minimum-winning and oversized coalitions is useful precisely to demonstrate the conditions under which these explanations are at work. In those chapters, I demonstrate that the commitment behavior of oversized coalitions is explained by responsibility diffusion, while logrolling explains the behavior of minimum-winning coalitions.

Fourth, the analyses illustrate that while oversized coalitions engage in

50. Kaarbo and Beasley, "Taking It to the Extreme."

51. Beasley and Kaarbo, "Explaining Extremity in the Foreign Policies of Parliamentary Democracies," 739.

more intense international commitments than single-party majority governments on average, their commitment intensity decreases as the ideological cohesion among the parties decreases. This result is robust against the different specifications of the ideology variable, including the standard deviation of party positions from the mean coalition position, ideological range, and the "center crossed" measure.[52] As oversized coalitions become ideologically more diverse, disagreements begin to jeopardize their policymaking capabilities, working against the expectations of the clarity of responsibility mechanism and ultimately resulting in less intense international commitments.

Fifth, this chapter has presented interesting findings on the behavior of minimum-winning coalitions. It seems that these governments act more committed than expected when the ideological dispersion among the governing parties becomes more prominent. This is counterintuitive, as one would expect the coalition partners in minimum-winning coalitions to use their veto power and either block or water down those policy proposals that call for greater commitment, especially when they are further apart from each other ideologically. Having said that, there are alternative explanations in the literature that might shed greater light on the quantitative results, including the presence of a strong and decisive head of government, a national threat that requires swift and assertive action, a public opinion that strongly supports assertive action, and, most importantly, the presence of logrolling among the governing parties. In chapter 6, I explore these alternative explanations in the context of minimum-winning coalitions with a case study of the Dutch decisions in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq war.

Finally, this chapter reveals the commitment behavior of minority coalitions for the first time in the foreign policy literature. It has often been emphasized that minority coalitions suffer from a structural vulnerability due to their size and therefore engage in moderate foreign policy behavior. My quantitative analysis concludes that the negative effect of minority coalitions on international behavior is not a given. Minority coalitions can overcome their size vulnerability if their ideological setup leaves the parliamentary opposition fragmented. To reveal this relationship, I constructed a *center crossed* variable and captured the coalition's ideological setup, namely, whether it includes parties from both sides of the political spectrum and

52. Warwick, "Ideological Diversity and Government Survival"; Tsebelis, "Decision Making in Political Systems"; Tsebelis, "Veto Players and Law Production in Parliamentary Democracies." For the analyses that use *ideological range* as the key independent variable, see chapter appendix.

in effect fragments the parliamentary opposition. The results show that minority coalitions can commit more assertively when they reach across the aisle and include parties from the opposite ideological camp. Bringing in parties from the left and the right allows the coalition to fragment the parliamentary opposition ideologically, allowing it to engage in more assertive commitments abroad.

This is a novel and important finding that brings minority coalitions back into the analysis of democratic foreign policy. For a long time, the literature has focused either on the distinction between coalitions and single-party governments, or between majority and minority governments. I showed in this chapter what happens to the commitment intensity of international behavior when the government is a coalition that also happens to lack parliamentary majority.

In the next chapter, I qualitatively demonstrate the dynamics of foreign policy making in minority coalitions as I investigate two case studies from Denmark's foreign policy in the Middle East. First, I will show how a minority coalition succeeded in dividing the parliamentary opposition, finally bringing an end to Denmark's worrisome track record with NATO and pulling the country into the 1990 naval blockade in Iraq. In a second case study, I will demonstrate how a post–Cold War minority coalition managed to commit to the 2003 Iraq war even in the absence of a fragmented parliamentary opposition.

Chapter Appendix

TABLE 3A.1. Foreign Policy Commitments of European Governments (IV: Ideological Range)

	(1) (OLS)	(2) (MLM)	(3) (MLM)	(4) (MLM)	(5) (MLM)	(6) (MLM)	(7) (MLM)
Coalition	–0.064	–0.145*					
	(0.034)	(0.066)					
Minority	–0.059	–0.141*					
Government	(0.042)	(0.060)					
CINC	–9.617***	–8.009*	–7.436*	–10.255*	–10.251*	–10.768*	–10.940*
	(1.551)	(3.724)	(3.702)	(4.368)	(4.382)	(4.340)	(4.843)
Democratic Target	–0.321***	–0.319***	–0.320***	–0.321***	–0.321***	–0.320***	–0.320***
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)
Single-Party Minority			–0.082	–0.090	–0.091	–0.094	–0.110
			(0.089)	(0.093)	(0.094)	(0.093)	(0.097)
Minority Coalition			–0.275**	–0.093	–0.099	0.005	–0.236
			(0.097)	(0.146)	(0.223)	(0.154)	(0.167)
Min.-Winning Co.			–0.140	0.125	0.127	–0.024	0.018
			(0.084)	(0.113)	(0.119)	(0.136)	(0.131)
Oversized Co.			–0.046	0.330*	0.332*	0.399**	0.477**
			(0.090)	(0.131)	(0.139)	(0.136)	(0.152)
Ideological Range				–0.097***	–0.098**	–0.138***	–0.054
				(0.028)	(0.031)	(0.035)	(0.037)
Minor. Co.* Range					0.003		
					(0.077)		
Min.-Win.* Range						0.101	
						(0.053)	
Oversized* Range							–0.111*
							(0.054)
Constant	2.526***	2.590***	2.555***	2.579***	2.579***	2.589***	2.594***
	(0.048)	(0.072)	(0.081)	(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.092)
Country-Lev. Std. Er.		0.133***	0.131***	0.149***	0.150***	0.148***	0.172***
		(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.040)	(0.045)	(0.040)	(0.046)
Event-Lev. Std. Er.		1.783***	1.783***	1.790***	1.790***	1.790***	1.789***
		(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
N	11211	11211	11211	9963	9963	9963	9963

Standard errors are in parentheses.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

TABLE 3A.2. Foreign Policy Commitments of European Governments (IV: Ideological Dispersion, Full Model Including All Controls)

	(1) (MLM)	(2) (MLM)	(3) (MLM)
CINC	–13.412**	–13.679**	–14.282**
	(4.923)	(4.670)	(5.345)
Democratic Target	–0.316***	–0.317***	–0.317***
	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)
Single-Party Minority	–0.124	–0.102	–0.133
	(0.098)	(0.096)	(0.101)
Minority Coalition	–0.110	0.010	–0.255
	(0.221)	(0.172)	(0.174)
Minimum Winning Co.	0.100	–0.054	0.012
	(0.139)	(0.152)	(0.142)
Oversized Co.	0.273	0.359**	0.482**
	(0.150)	(0.139)	(0.175)
Ideological Dispersion	–0.173*	–0.273***	–0.112
	(0.075)	(0.080)	(0.074)
Minority Co.* Dispersion	–0.024		
	(0.145)		
Minimum Win.* Dispersion		0.215	
		(0.117)	
Oversized* Dispersion			–0.252
			(0.133)
Years of EU Membership	0.001	0.002	0.002
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.003)
September 11, 2001	–0.035	–0.037	–0.020
	(0.063)	(0.062)	(0.063)
2003 Iraq Invasion	–0.125	–0.095	–0.098
	(0.089)	(0.089)	(0.091)
Bosnia War	–0.006	–0.022	–0.013
	(0.063)	(0.063)	(0.063)
Kosovo War	–0.034	–0.038	–0.025
	(0.055)	(0.054)	(0.055)
Constant	2.638***	2.625***	2.629***
	(0.100)	(0.097)	(0.105)
Country-Level Std. Error	0.144***	0.133***	0.161***
	(0.044)	(0.038)	(0.044)
Event-Level Std. Error	1.790***	1.790***	1.789***
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
N	9963	9963	9963

Standard errors are in parentheses.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

TABLE 3A.3. Foreign Policy Commitments of European Governments (IV: Center Crossed, Full Model Including All Controls)

	(1) (MLM)	(2) (MLM)	(3) (MLM)
CINC	–12.184**	–9.286	–11.683*
	(4.656)	(5.031)	(4.877)
Democratic Target	–0.320***	–0.318***	–0.319***
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)
Single-Party Minority	–0.121	–0.092	–0.117
	(0.094)	(0.098)	(0.096)
Minority Coalition	–0.547***	–0.261*	–0.450***
	(0.151)	(0.127)	(0.121)
Minimum Winning Co.	–0.103	–0.278*	–0.213*
	(0.102)	(0.111)	(0.103)
Oversized Co.	0.017	–0.004	0.150
	(0.106)	(0.109)	(0.114)
Center Crossed	–0.061	–0.138	0.138
	(0.088)	(0.094)	(0.081)
Minority Co.* Center Crossed	0.346		
	(0.181)		
Minimum Win.* Center Crossed		0.373**	
		(0.125)	
Oversized* Center Crossed			–0.605***
			(0.136)
Years of EU Membership	0.002	0.002	0.002
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
September 11, 2001	–0.065	–0.061	–0.029
	(0.061)	(0.061)	(0.062)
2003 Iraq Invasion	–0.093	–0.049	–0.065
	(0.086)	(0.089)	(0.087)
Bosnia War	–0.027	–0.048	–0.040
	(0.060)	(0.061)	(0.060)
Kosovo War	–0.041	–0.033	–0.012
	(0.052)	(0.053)	(0.053)
Constant	2.623***	2.603***	2.597***
	(0.095)	(0.100)	(0.098)
Country-Level Std. Error	0.129***	0.147***	0.141***
	(0.037)	(0.040)	(0.040)
Event-Level Std. Error	1.785***	1.784***	1.783***
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
N	10423	10423	10423

Standard errors are in parentheses.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

FOUR

Reaching across the Aisle

Danish Commitments during the 1990 and 2003 Wars in Iraq

Why do some coalitions act more assertively than others in international politics? Why are some coalitions able to make stronger commitments whereas others end up diluting their positions? This book has argued that the coalition's type, the degree of ideological dispersion among its constituent parties, and its standing in the parliament together shape its foreign policy, particularly the intensity of commitments. In chapter 3, I tested this argument quantitatively using foreign policy events collected across thirty European countries in the post–Cold War period. I showed that coalitions are not necessarily constrained in foreign policy compared to single-party majority governments, nor do they enjoy a blank check. Instead, commitment behavior varies depending on how large and stable the coalition is vis-à-vis the parliament, and how much ideological diversity exists among the governing parties.

Chapter 3 demonstrated that all else being equal, minority coalitions engage in weaker commitments than single-party majority governments. This is hardly surprising. Minority coalitions govern under the shadow of a majority opposition in the parliament, so it is expected that they would act with more restraint in foreign policy so as not to invite the opposition's backlash and cause a government crisis. More surprisingly, however, chapter 3 concluded that minority coalitions that include parties from the left *and* the right of the political spectrum—crossing the ideological center—

increase the assertiveness of their international commitments. In other words, minority coalitions are not necessarily doomed to submissive and timid behavior abroad. Depending on their internal ideological organization, these governments can turn their parliamentary fate around and act more decisively in foreign affairs.

Chapter 2 laid out the reasoning behind this dynamic by bringing together the "policy viability" and "fragmented opposition" explanations. Minority coalitions are structurally constrained, as they do not enjoy a parliamentary majority. They can be "policy viable," however, if the way that these governments are organized prevents the formation of an alternative majority of opposition parties in the parliament that can defeat them. Put differently, the opposition's ability to obstruct government policy substantially decreases if it cannot come together in the first place to organize a credible pushback against the policy. The structural weakness of minority coalitions, then, poses a real threat to foreign policy making and implementation especially when the opposition can mount a coherent and credible policy position in response.

One way for minority coalitions to impede the parliamentary opposition's ability to form such an alternative majority is to divide it ideologically. If the ideological composition of the minority coalition can fragment the opposition bloc, then it can diminish the latter's capacity to obstruct. How can minority coalitions fragment the opposition? By tailoring their own partisan composition. Coalitions that are pure right-wing or pure left-wing are the most susceptible to attacks from the parliamentary opposition for this reason; they leave the ideological terrain of the opposition wide open and unpatrolled. But if they cross the center of the political spectrum and include parties from both the left *and* the right of the ideological space, then they can effectively curtail the opposition's ability to form a coherent majority bloc.

Chapter 3 demonstrated this explanation quantitatively, concluding that minority coalitions whose parties come from the opposite sides of the political spectrum can commit more assertively than single-party majority governments. Still, quantitative analysis can demonstrate only so much on its own. It can show how the association between two variables—in this case, minority coalitions and international commitments—is conditioned by the ideological composition of the coalition. The substantive storyline behind this relationship, therefore, needs to be examined further. How can the minority coalition's ideological setup influence its foreign policy commitments? How is it that the coalition's relationship with the parliamentary opposition constrains its foreign policy in some cases but enables more

assertive behavior in others? To answer these questions, it is necessary to tap into the actual policy processes that take place among these actors. Further, substantiating quantitative analyses with qualitative data helps situate the results in the context of alternative explanations that are not readily quantifiable. Therefore, this chapter, along with the next two, adopts a qualitative approach to substantiate the quantitative results and illustrate them in the context of other individual-, domestic-, and international-level factors that were discussed in chapter 2.

This chapter explores the policy processes that allow minority coalitions to commit abroad. I analyze two foreign policy episodes from Denmark in the post–Cold War period. First, I take Denmark's decision to send a naval ship to the blockade in the Persian Gulf in 1990 following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. I explain that the Danish commitment in the operation was possible thanks to the incoming coalition's ability to ideologically fragment the parliamentary opposition in the aftermath of the 1988 elections and bring an end to what is known in Danish politics as the "footnote policy era" that stymied the government's transatlantic relations between 1982 and 1988.

Next, I fast-forward a decade and turn to Denmark's participation in the 2003 war in Iraq. Unlike the 1990 episode, the country's decision to join the US-led war coalition took place under a minority coalition that did *not* fragment the parliamentary opposition. The 2003 decision constitutes a *deviant case*, where the outcome of interest (commitment) was observed even though the key factor (the presence of an ideologically fragmented opposition) was absent. I analyze this case to illustrate the alternative conditions under which commitment is possible during minority coalition rule. The 2003 decision demonstrates that in the absence of a fragmented opposition, *logrolling* between the right-wing minority coalition and a right-wing opposition party in the parliament was decisive in driving forward the war commitment.

Together, the 1990 and the 2003 decisions highlight not just the conditions under which minority coalitions enjoy policy viability, but also the limits of the fragmented opposition explanation, while situating themselves in the context of alternative factors such as logrolling, public opinion, threats to national security, and political leadership. I adopt structured-focused comparison to undertake this analysis.[1] This method allows me to focus

1. To investigate the ideological positions and foreign policy preferences of Danish political parties, primary resources such as statements of party leaders and advisers are used alongside expert survey datasets on party positions such as the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party

TABLE 4.1. Probing the Explanations: Questions for Structured-Focused Case Analysis

	Explanation	Questions to Ask
Main Argument	Ideological Composition of the Coalition	**(1)** Which parties were included in the coalition at the time of the decision? **(2)** Where were these parties located along the left-right spectrum? **(3)** What were their policy positions regarding the foreign policy decision?
Alternative Explanations	Logrolling	**(1)** Were there any parties in the parliamentary opposition that gave support to the decision in return for side-payments? **(2)** Did the government offer office and/or policy concessions to pull the opposition closer to its preference point?
	Public Opinion	**(1)** Was the decision publicly popular at the domestic level? **(2)** Was the domestic public opinion influential on the regime's decision to commit or not?
	National Security	**(1)** Did the regime perceive the foreign policy problem as a threat to national security and survival?
	Political Leadership	**(1)** Were there any influential political leaders in the regime who hijacked the decision-making process and forced the government's hand into making/not making the commitment? **(2)** Were personal motivations (interest in the issue, personal convictions, tangible gains) involved in these commitment decisions, and to what extent were they influential?

on the most relevant explanations that might drive international commitments by asking tailored questions to assess the power of each explanation.

Positioning") and the Ray-Marks-Steenbergen dataset (Ray, "Measuring Party Orientations towards European Integration"; Steenbergen and Marks, "Evaluating Expert Judgments"). Inter-Parliamentary Union's PARLINE online database of national parliaments provides data on the partisan composition of the legislature. Evidence for logrolling, threats to national survival, and political leadership come from party leaders' statements and secondary accounts including news articles, the Danish Foreign Policy Yearbooks (Carlsen and Mouritzen, *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2004*; Hvidt and Mouritzen, *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2012*; Hvidt and Mouritzen, *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2013*), reports from the Danish Institute for International Studies (Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?"), scholarly books, and articles. Finally, the Economist Intelligence Unit's monthly reports on Denmark between 2001 and 2003 are utilized to trace the changes in the public opinion ratings of parties in the parliament as well as the other, more instantaneous developments in the country's foreign and domestic politics.

I pose the questions summarized below in table 4.1 to explore whether the explanations that are associated with them can shed light on the 1990 and 2003 decisions.

Why Denmark? The Political Landscape

Admittedly, Denmark is hardly the first country that comes to mind when we think of parliamentarism, coalitions, or European politics. It is, however, an excellent case for my purposes. For one, Denmark constitutes a "harder case" for this book. We expect Denmark, as a small state, to be a "net consumer" rather than a "producer of security," whose foreign policy should be constrained primarily by the nature of the international system.[2] Doeser calls this the "home-court advantage"[3] of international-level theories: foreign policy decisions of small states should be influenced more heavily by the system than by domestic-level factors, including coalition politics. Demonstrating that the nature of coalition governance in Denmark was the key driving force behind the decisions to commit to the Persian Gulf wars in 1990 and 2003 would therefore provide even stronger support for the main argument raised in this book. If it holds in Denmark, then it should have even greater traction in more powerful parliamentary democracies ruled by minority coalitions.

The characteristics and stability of the key institutions that are central to foreign policy making in Denmark also make this country a great case to assess the policy viability and fragmented opposition explanations. First, the locus of foreign policy is the governing cabinet as codified in the constitution, which often takes the form of minority coalitions.[4] Between 1971 and 1993, six of the thirteen minority governments were coalitions.[5] Echoing this trend, the dataset used in chapter 3 shows that all five Danish governments between 1994 and 2004 were minority coalitions.

Minority coalition politics is thus not an exception in this country and the coalition parties are the main actors in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. The 2 percent national electoral threshold in Denmark

2. Van Staden, "The Changing Role of the Netherlands in the Atlantic Alliance," 109. See also Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 72; Wivel, "Still Living in the Shadow of 1864?," 109–39.

3. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change," 583.

4. Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument," 295–317; Damgaard, "Denmark: The Life and Death of Government Coalitions," 231–64.

5. Elklit, "Party Behaviour and the Formation of Minority Coalition Governments," 63.

produces a highly fractionalized party system "with six to seven significant parties" that has defined the country's political landscape since 1973.[6] As with most party systems in Europe, Danish parties also fall along the classic left-right political spectrum. They include the left-wing Social Democratic Party (SD), "the largest party in parliament since 1924," the Social Liberal Party (SLP, formerly known as the Radical Liberal Party), and the Center Democrats (CD). Parties on the right include the Christian People's Party (CPP), the Liberal Party (L), the Conservative People's Party (Con), and more recently, the Danish People's Party (DPP).[7] These are joined by parties at the extreme right, such as the Progress Party, and, at the extreme left, by the Left Socialists, the Danish Communist Party, and the Socialist People's Party. Of these parties, the Social Democrats, Social Liberals, Liberals, Conservatives, and the Christian Democrats have historically been the most relevant parties for government formation.[8] The quantitative dataset used in chapter 3 shows that the Social Democrats were in four consecutive governing coalitions between 1993 and 2001, until the Liberals took over under the leadership of Anders Fogh Rasmussen following the parliamentary elections in November 2001.

Danish political parties elicit high levels of cohesion, which facilitates decision making.[9] The Chapel Hill Expert Survey data from 1999 to 2006 show, for instance, that internal dissent in the leadership of Danish political parties on the issue of European integration was noticeably low in 1999 and virtually nonexistent by 2006, supporting this claim.[10] In the absence of debilitating intraparty factionalization, Danish political leaders could avoid having to cater to multiple groups inside the party, which can make it harder to organize and develop a coherent policy front. For Danish governments, low intraparty factionalization thus means fewer internal barriers against policymaking; for the opposition parties, it similarly means an increased ability to mount a coherent position to challenge the government. Ultimately, this allows me to focus on the ideological and policy

6. Damgaard, "Denmark: The Life and Death of Government Coalitions"; Elklit, "Party Behaviour and the Formation of Minority Coalition Governments."

7. Damgaard, "Denmark: The Life and Death of Government Coalitions," 233–35.

8. Elklit, "Party Behaviour and the Formation of Minority Coalition Governments,"

9. Damgaard, "Denmark: The Life and Death of Government Coalitions," 232–35.

10. On a scale of 1 (complete party unity) to 5 (party leadership facing major opposition from the party activists), Danish political parties scored less than 3 in the 1999 iteration of the CHES dataset. In the 2006 iteration of the dataset, the internal dissent scale ranged from 0 (complete unity) to 10 (extreme divisions), where the party with the highest level of dissent on EU integration, the Socialist People's Party, scored 4.1 (Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning"; Steenbergen and Marks, "Evaluating Expert Judgments").

differences *between* parties to explore how the dynamics of coalition politics and executive-legislative relations in Denmark influence foreign policy making.[11] The stability of these key aspects of the Danish political system suggests that the foreign policy episodes I analyze in this chapter did not take place under unique institutional instances, thus lending greater confidence to my conclusions.

Second, the executive branch in Denmark "is constitutionally obliged to seek consent from the Parliament when it considers participating in operations involving the use of force beyond self-defense," and, since 1990, "all major troop contributions regardless of mission type are submitted to a vote in parliament."[12] Given the size vulnerability of minority coalitions in Denmark, they must thus pay close attention to the nature of their relationship with the parliamentary opposition, particularly when it comes to participating in overseas operations.

Finally, experts agree that the 1990 and 2003 decisions represent the most significant inflection points in Denmark's foreign policy.[13] As I show below, coalition politics can shape even the most dramatic foreign policy issues in a small state, illustrating why it is crucial that we study its role in international affairs.

Table 4.2 presents a summary of the cases. In the remainder of this chapter, I first present a brief overview of Denmark's foreign policy tradition and its post–Cold War transformation. Next, I move on to the case analyses. The first section analyzes the 1990 Gulf War decision, followed by the analysis of the 2003 decision to join the war in Iraq. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings and their implications.

From 'Defeatism' to 'Super-Atlanticism'

The Post–Cold War Turn in Danish Foreign Policy

Denmark was not always an active actor in international politics, and certainly not in military affairs. "What's the use of it?" asked Viggo Horrup, a member of the traditionally antimilitarist Social Liberal Party, as early as 1883, summarizing the country's deep-seated skepticism toward the utility

11. For this reason, I use the Chapel Hill Expert Survey's left-right party position data to capture with greater confidence the degree of ideological dispersion inside the coalition.

12. Jakobsen, "Contributor Profile: Denmark."

13. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?" 16; Wivel, "Still Living in the Shadow of 1864?"

TABLE 4.2. Government Composition and Commitment Intensity in Denmark: 1982–1990, and 2003

	TIMEFRAME for the 1990 GULF WAR CASE STUDY			IRAQ WAR 2003
	September 1982–January 1984	January 1984–June 1988	June 1988–December 1990	November 2001–January 2005
Coalition parties	Conservatives (KF) Liberals (V) Centre Democrats (CD) Christian People's Party (KRF)	Conservatives (KF) Liberals (V) Centre Democrats (CD) Christian People's Party (KRF)	Conservatives (KF) Liberals (V) Social Liberals (RV)	Conservatives (KF) Liberals (V)
Coalition type	Minority	Minority	Minority	Minority
Opposition parties	Social Democrats (SD)– Social Liberals (RV) Socialist People's Party (SF) Left Socialists	Social Democrats (SD) Social Liberals (RV) Socialist People's Party (SF) Left Socialists Progress Party (FP)	Social Democrats (SD) Socialist People's Party (SF) Centre Democrats (CD) Christian People's Party (KRF) Progress Party (FP)	Social Democrats (SD) Danish People's Party (DPP) Conservatives (KF) Socialist People's Party (SF) Social Liberals (RV) Unity List (EL) Christian People's Party (KRF)
Ideological dispersion (Center is crossed?)	0 (Pure right-wing coalition, left-wing opposition)	0 (Pure right-wing coalition, predominantly left-wing opposition)	1 (Center is crossed)	0 (Government cooperates with the DPP, achieves majority)
Caretaker or elected?	Elected government	Elected government	Elected government	Elected government
Commitment intensity	"*Footnote policy era*": Danish partnership with NATO is obstructed by the parliamentary opposition		Denmark sends naval ship to the blockade in the Persian Gulf, initiated by NATO members, in 1990	Denmark signs "the letter of eight," sends ship to participate in the war coalition

of military force.[14] Conceptualized by scholars like Rasmussen as Danish "defeatism" or "cosmopolitanism,"[15] Denmark's pacifist and nonmilitarist vision promoted "a politics of non-involvement, uncommitted alliance and restraints" in international politics.[16]

Danish foreign policy during the Cold War echoed this vision, which had been steered by the "Atlantic Consensus."[17] This tripartite partnership comprised the Conservative, Liberal, and the Social Democratic parties until the early 1980s. Although the Conservatives and the Liberals were relatively more supportive of NATO than their Social Democratic counterparts in this period, the consensus had given way to moderate and restrained relations with the alliance. None of the parties had "question[ed] alliance solidarity" but in order to preserve stability at home, they did not visibly commit to it either.[18] This noncommitment had shaped Denmark's foreign policy until the final years of the Cold War.

The "Atlantic Consensus" broke down by the early 1980s, throwing Denmark into a collision course with NATO and initiating the period known as the footnote politics era, pushing the country further away from the core of the transatlantic alliance.[19] A breakthrough would come with the 1988 elections, when a new minority coalition could begin to steer the country's relations with NATO and the United States toward greater international involvement and activism. This shift would ultimately lead to the decision to participate in the 1990 naval blockade in the Persian Gulf.

Danish foreign policy was on its way toward "active adaptation" in the post–Cold War period, promoting a new vision where activism would define the country's response to regional and international security challenges.[20] Indeed, the transformation of the international system brought along new security challenges for Denmark. A white paper released by the Danish Defense Commission stressed that in this new era "the 'indirect' threat to peace and stability in Europe was the most important Danish security concern," where NATO and the European Union assumed the greatest responsibility to provide security.[21] The country "had to undertake

14. Rasmussen, "What's the Use of It?," 67.
15. Rasmussen, "What's the Use of It?"
16. Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism," 342.
17. Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument."
18. Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument," 297.
19. Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument."
20. Due-Nielsen and Petersen, "Denmark's Foreign Policy since 1967," 11–55. See also Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism," 334.
21. Danish Defense Commission of 1997, "Defence for the Future, English Summary." Quoted in Rasmussen, "What's the Use of It?," 77.

new and independent initiatives as a means to make herself heard and thus compensate for her reduced status."[22] In other words, Denmark was willing to put itself on the map of European and transatlantic security. This entailed a reassessment of the country's relations with the EU and NATO, and especially with the United States.[23] The decision to participate in the 1990 gulf blockade was the first tangible projection of this new perspective. It was followed by a series of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions in the Balkans, including those in Yugoslavia in 1992, Bosnia in 1995, Albania in 1998, and Kosovo in 1999,[24] illustrating precisely Denmark's new, self-assigned role in security promotion and peacekeeping.

Over time, it became apparent that Danish foreign policy priorities were in closer alignment with NATO than with the European Union. "Although the EU is presented as the organizational point of departure and frame for Danish foreign policy . . . the bilateral relationship to the US/NATO remains crucial for the hardest security threats," argues Larsen, suggesting that in security matters, Denmark has chosen to anchor itself to the transatlantic alliance.[25] In hindsight, this is unsurprising since Denmark is the only member state that has opted out of the EU's Common Security and Defense pillar by signing the Edinburgh Agreement in 1992.[26] Ultimately, the EU has at best been a second resort for Danish foreign and security policy, both institutionally and politically. This was illustrated most dramatically in the aftermath of September 11 and in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq war, when then Danish prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen expressed his preference for US security capabilities: "Denmark's security is better guaranteed by a superpower in North America than by the fragile balance of power between the UK, Germany and France," he said.[27]

Gone were the days of "What's the use of it?" By 2003, Denmark's foreign policy apparatus had accepted "military force as an effective means in its own right."[28] The 2003 decision to join the Iraq war coalition should thus be observed in this light. It has replaced Denmark's "soft activism" with "hard activism" once and for all.[29] Some scholars call this shift "offensive Danish foreign policy," capturing the country's commitment to get

22. Branner, "Denmark Between Venus and Mars," 145.
23. Mouritzen, "Denmark's Super Atlanticism," 155–67; Rasmussen, "What's the Use of It?"
24. Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism."
25. Larsen, *Analysing the Foreign Policy of Small States in the EU*, 87.
26. Danish Ministry Defense, *EU—The Danish Defence Opt-Out*.
27. Quoted in Larsen, *Analysing the Foreign Policy of Small States in the EU*, 87.
28. Rasmussen, "What's the Use of It?," 82.
29. Branner, "Denmark Between Venus and Mars."

"directly engaged in the big defining issues in international politics and security."[30] Further, some consider the 2003 decision to be a dramatic demonstration of a new, "super-Atlanticist" approach in Danish foreign policy in light of its pivot toward transatlanticism.[31]

Like the 1990 decision to join the Persian Gulf blockade, the minority coalition's interaction with the parliamentary opposition was central to explaining Denmark's participation in the 2003 war, as I explain further below. The right-wing minority coalition government logrolled with the right-wing opposition Danish People's Party to garner support. Only as a result of this cooperation was Anders Fogh Rasmussen's government able to control enough votes in the parliament to pass the 2003 Iraq war bill.

No More Footnotes

Danish Commitment to the 1990 Gulf War

Within a few days of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent trade embargo sanctioned by the United Nations (UN) in August 1990, several NATO members began to prepare for a naval blockade in the gulf under the leadership of the United States. In the midst of a fierce debate among Danish political parties about the necessity of a UN mandate to join the operation, the blockade was sanctioned by the UN by the end of August 1990. The Danish government, seeing this as an opportunity to rebuild its reputation in NATO and particularly to mend the strained relations with the United States, decided to send the corvette-type ship *Olfert Fischer* to the gulf on September 12, 1990. The ship remained in the region after the war broke out in January 1991, but it did not actively participate in armed confrontation.[32] I argue that Denmark's decision to participate in the naval blockade against Iraq in 1990 was possible only because the footnote policy era that stymied the government's relations with NATO ended in 1988. It is therefore necessary to go back to the 1980s and understand the politics of the footnote era to explain Denmark's gulf commitment in 1990.

The footnote policy era is a fascinating "case study of minority

30. Larsen, "Danish Foreign Policy and the Balance between the EU and the US," 220. See also Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism."

31. Wivel, "Still Living in the Shadow of 1864?"

32. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change," 589–92.

parliamentarism"[33] and marks the end of the "Atlantic Consensus" that had shaped Denmark's foreign policy for nearly three decades until the early 1980s. The footnote era effectively began in 1982, when the Social Democratic Party joined the opposition ranks and was replaced by a minority coalition comprising the Conservatives and the Liberals alongside two other right-wing parties, the Center Party and the Christian People's Party.[34] Led by Prime Minister Poul Schlüter, this coalition occupied a total of 66 seats in the 179-seat Folketing, the Danish parliament, while the remaining seats belonged to the parties on the left, including the Social Democrats, Social Liberals, Socialist People's Party, and the Left Socialists. This government survived the 1984 elections[35] and continued its term until the elections in 1988.

Between 1982 and 1988, the Social Democrats spearheaded a fierce left-wing parliamentary opposition against the government. Known as the "alternative majority," this group could dominate the government's NATO policy through legislative motions.[36] "Footnoting" was their key practice; the opposition parties forced the government repeatedly throughout this period to add footnotes to the bilateral communiqués to convey their dissent against NATO policies, particularly regarding nuclear issues.[37] Doeser notes that during this six-year period, the alternative majority approved twenty-three parliamentary motions that contradicted the government's NATO policy.[38] These footnotes not only caused the government to decrease its political role and commitments in NATO, but they also invited backlash from the alliance and in particular disturbed the United States.[39]

The footnote policy era provides an excellent setting for assessing the policy viability explanation. It illustrates how an ideologically unified parliamentary opposition can obstruct the minority coalition's foreign policy behavior. The minority status of Schlüter's governing coalition in the parliament put it at a mathematical disadvantage and limited the cabinet's ability to build a stronger relationship with NATO. Figure 4.1 below illus-

33. Pedersen, "'Footnote Policy' and the Social Democratic Party's Role in Shaping EEC Positions," 637.

34. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change."

35. The government had become demonstrably more pro-NATO, especially after the foreign minister, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, was appointed as Liberal Party leader in 1984 (Petersen, "Footnoting' as a Political Instrument," 301).

36. Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument."

37. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change"; Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism."; Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument."

38. Doeser, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Change in Small States," 222–41.

39. Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism," 344; Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument."

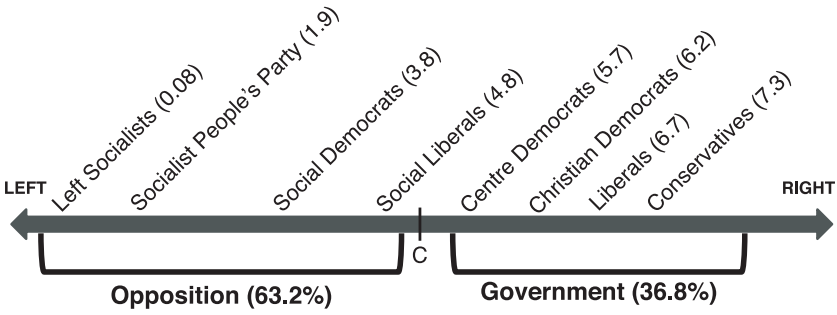

Figure 4.1. Danish Folketing, 1982

trates the distribution of parties in the Danish parliament by 1982, with the parties' left-right positions reported in parentheses. (The governing parties are displayed in black and the opposition parties are in gray.) The government's and the opposition's respective seat shares are also reported in parentheses.[40] As the figure shows, the ideological composition of the government as a pure right-wing coalition resulted in a similarly homogeneous opposition. The Social Liberals, which were actually supportive of the government's domestic policy, aligned firmly with the leftist alternative majority in the foreign policy domain, further consolidating the "alternative majority."[41]

The ideological composition of the minority coalition in Denmark therefore created a parliamentary opposition whose seats were *not* controlled by parties from different ideological backgrounds, as figure 4.1 shows. Instead, all the opposition parties from 1982 until 1988 belonged to the left of the political spectrum and were NATO-skeptic.[42] The ideological composition of the government resulted in an absence of policy viability and allowed opposition parties to easily come together and develop an even stronger response to the government's foreign policy toward NATO.

By 1988, the Conservative-Liberal coalition that had been in power since 1982 was becoming increasingly frustrated with the "alternative

40. The left-right party position values are from 1984 and come from the Ray-Marks-Steenbergen dataset (Ray, "Measuring Party Orientations towards European Integration"; Steenbergen and Marks, "Evaluating Expert Judgments"). The original values vary from 0 to 1, where 0.5 denotes the center. Consistent with the dataset used for the analyses in chapter 3, I multiply the values by 10. They now range between 0 and 10, where 10 denotes far right, 0 denotes far left, and 5 represents the center of the political spectrum.

41. Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument."

42. The exception to this was the far-right Progress Party, which joined the parliament following the 1984 elections.

majority" and its ability to block foreign policy and impede the government's willingness to commit, especially within the NATO framework. Indeed, the government was forced to call elections in 1988 precisely because the "alternative majority's" foreign policy obstruction jeopardized the country's future in the alliance. The parliamentary opposition was now forcing the government to explicitly ask NATO vessels to declare whether they carried nuclear weapons on board, which was not just against alliance decorum but also a clear signaling of distrust to Denmark's transatlantic partners.[43]

The elections were held in May 1988 and resulted in a three-party minority government including the Conservatives, the Liberals, and, most importantly, the Social Liberals. After cooperating with the "alternative majority" for six years, the Social Liberals left the opposition and joined the two right-wing parties to form the next coalition. Figure 4.2 below illustrates the ideological distribution of the parties in the parliament following the 1988 elections, where the governing parties are displayed in black and the opposition parties are in gray.

The new minority coalition between the center-left Social Liberals and the right-wing Liberals and Conservatives is crucial to explaining the end of the footnote policy era and the subsequent decision to send the naval corvette to the gulf; Prime Minister Poul Schlüter explained that "the only possibility for the Conservatives and the Liberals to *break up the parliamentary opposition and to put an end to the footnote policy* was to create a three-party government with the Social Liberals."[44]

The statement of the Conservative leader lends strong support for the policy viability hypothesis in explaining the government's 1990 commitment in the gulf: In order to weaken the capacity of the majority opposition that continuously opposed the government's foreign policy agenda throughout the 1980s, the ruling parties knew that they had to reach across the center of the political spectrum and cooperate with at least one of the opposition parties. Comparative politics scholars have also highlighted the ideological composition of this government and argued that the Conservatives and the Liberals were finally able to dismantle the alternative majority, particularly in the foreign policy realm.[45]

The footnote policy era thus came to an end in 1988. The Conservatives and the Liberals acted strategically as they formed the coalition with

43. Wivel, "Still Living in the Shadow of 1864?"

44. Schlüter, *Sikken et liv: Erindringer*. Reported in Doeser, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Change in Small States," 230. Emphasis added. See also Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change."

45. Elklit, "Party Behaviour and the Formation of Minority Coalition Governments," 80.

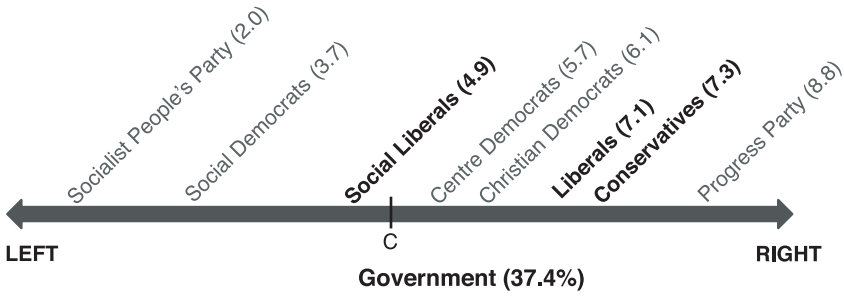

Figure 4.2. Danish Folketing, 1988

a leftist party that was closest to their respective ideological positions along the left-right political spectrum, as figure 4.2 shows. The Social Liberals were sympathetic to the coalition, as their position on the footnote policy had also evolved over time. The Social Liberal Party's spokesperson said in 1988 that "the previous years' politicization of foreign policy had not been beneficial . . . the improved superpower relations had created new opportunities for Denmark to act in the global arena,"[46] implying that the Social Liberals' were moving toward the Conservative-Liberal line.

Now that the alternative majority was defeated by the incoming minority coalition, Denmark's relations with NATO and the United States began to improve and take an activist turn. The coalition parties agreed that Danish activism in foreign policy was necessary. Still, it was still not an easy decision for the Social Liberals to accept the Conservative-Liberal proposal to join the gulf blockade in 1990. Although the right-wing members of the government argued for "the need to support the UN *and* the need to support the US in its conflict with Iraq,"[47] the Social Liberals were at best lukewarm toward the idea, emphasizing that the party would support the blockade only if it was sanctioned by the United Nations.[48] Luckily, the UN's blessing came through shortly thereafter and the coalition put its proposal to participate in the blockade in August 1990. Although the Social Liberal leader remained skeptical of Denmark's participation despite the UN mandate, the party did not go against the government line.[49] They chose to vote for the proposal in the parliament because they were in the government and did not want to cause a coalition crisis.

Meanwhile, in the opposition ranks, the Social Democrats were fiercely

46. Doeser, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Change in Small States," 231.
47. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?," 27. Emphasis in original.
48. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?," 28.
49. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change."

against participating in the blockade until the operation received the UN's mandate.[50] Once the UN sanctioned the naval blockade, however, the Social Democrats cooperated with the Social Liberals in the government and "emphasized the UN aspects of the operation" to convince the *other* opposition parties to vote for the government's proposal.[51] In other words, having the Social Liberal Party in the coalition helped the government to further penetrate the parliamentary opposition. The Social Democrats, in particular, found an ideologically familiar voice in the government with whom they could work in the run-up to the parliamentary vote. The UN mandate certainly came at the right time to facilitate this broad-based cooperation in the parliament. Still, the ability of the Conservative-Liberal front to ideologically fragment the opposition by adding the Social Liberals to its ranks was crucial to overcoming the political and structural barriers in the parliament that perpetuated the footnote policy era throughout the 1980s. The government's ability to break the "alternative majority" gave it policy viability and allowed for a smoother dialogue between the government and the opposition, enabling Denmark to contribute to the naval blockade.

Public Opinion: To what extent was Danish public opinion influential in the government's decision to participate in the gulf operation? By the end of the 1980s, the public had increasingly grown weary of footnote politics. One poll showed that those who strongly disagreed with the statement "We should leave NATO as soon as possible" had jumped from 54 percent in 1987 to 70 percent in 1988.[52] Half of the respondents who were affiliated with left-wing and historically NATO-skeptic parties also disagreed with the statement, indicating that the opposition bloc had lost steam even among its own constituency.[53] Most notably, 62 percent of Social Liberal voters were supportive of Denmark's NATO membership by 1988, which "was the highest value ever recorded" for the party's constituency in this issue area.[54] This increase in support for continued Danish membership in NATO likely gave the Social Liberals the public vote of confidence to leave the "alternative majority" and consequently support the naval blockade in the gulf as part of the governing coalition, which was initiated by the United States and with other NATO members' backing even before the UN mandate.

50. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?"
51. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change," 591.
52. Doeser, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Change in Small States," 235.
53. Doeser, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Change in Small States," 235.
54. Doeser, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Change in Small States," 234.

The public's support was not stable over time, however, as the 1990 election showed. Although the election was scheduled for 1992, it was held early following a parliamentary deadlock with the opposition Social Democrats over budget talks, resulting in the defeat of the governing Social Liberal Party.[55] Evidence suggests that the Social Liberals' loss was indicative of the declining public support for Danish presence in the gulf among left-wing voters. In a national poll conducted in the wake of the election, only 2.9 percent of the respondents reported that they had voted for the Social Liberal Party, although 72.4 percent of them agreed with the statement "Denmark should, as far as possible, make its views known and seek to influence development." In stark contrast, 31.2 percent of the poll's respondents reported that they had voted for the opposition Social Democratic Party in the 1990 election. Of those, 63.7 percent agreed with an alternative statement "Denmark should, as far as possible, refrain from interfering in such conflicts that do not directly affect us."[56] Among left-wing voters, the tide was thus turning against the Social Liberals and their position on the Persian Gulf operation.

Following the election, the Social Liberals—who had voted for Denmark's participation in the Persian Gulf as recently as three months prior—left the government and joined the parliamentary opposition, which began forcing the re-elected Conservative-Liberal minority coalition to withdraw the ship if war broke out.[57] The leftist alternative majority opposition was therefore reunited by the end of 1990, when the right-wing government lost its only left-wing partner. The incoming Conservative-Liberal coalition occupied fifty-nine seats, whereas the leftist majority opposition had ninety-one seats in the new parliament.[58] The ideological realignment of the opposition once again constrained the government, echoing the politics of the footnote era. The left-wing majority opposition limited the incoming Conservative-Liberal minority coalition's room for maneuver in the military operation, which resulted in the decision to keep the *Olfert Fischer* in the Persian Gulf *but* out of the war zone.

55. "IPU Parline Database on National Parliaments," 2019; Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change."

56. Ole Borre et al., "Danish Election Study 1990." Dataset available at "Danish Election Study 1990 Codebook."

57. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change," 592.

58. Seat distribution in the Folketing (179 seats) after the December 1990 elections was as follows: Social Democratic Party, 69 seats; Conservative People's Party, 30 seats; Liberal Party, 29 seats; Socialist People's Party, 15 seats; Progress Party, 12 seats; Centre Democrats, 9 seats; Social Liberal Party, 7 seats; Christian People's Party, 4 seats. *Source*: "IPU Parline Database on National Parliaments," accessed March 23, 2018.

The preceding discussion suggests that public opinion did not have an independent effect on the September 1990 decision to send the naval ship, nor did it single-handedly shape the Conservative-Liberal minority coalition's decision after the December 1990 election to keep it in the gulf but out of the war zone. Rather, the role of public opinion was observed most clearly in the context of the Social Liberal Party's behavior before and after the December 1990 elections, embedded in the context of the impending fight in the gulf. Increased public support for NATO and the Social Liberals' defection from the "alternative majority" went hand in hand with explaining the party's vote for the September 1990 decision to participate in the naval blockade. Similarly, the party's electoral loss in December 1990 resulted in its decision to leave the coalition and oppose further commitment in the gulf in the event that fighting broke out in Iraq. The government's decision to maintain a limited Danish presence in Iraq was fundamentally shaped by the left-wing alternative majority that reunited when the Social Liberals defected from the government and joined the parliamentary opposition after December 1990.

Threat to National Survival: Did Denmark approach the Persian Gulf operation as a response to a threat to survival that outweighed the effects of coalition governance on foreign policy? The short answer is no. Olesen contends that following the fall of the Soviet Union, Denmark visibly enjoyed a far more secure period in the early post–Cold War years.[59] The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was thus not an existential threat to Denmark that could have motivated the country's response and sidelined the effects of coalition politics. Nevertheless, the smaller extremist parties in the *Folketing* brought up terrorism as a threat, assessing the significance of the gulf operation in this context. A former leader of the far-right Progress Party at the time stated that "there is no doubt that terrorism is and remains enemy number 1 [*sic*] for the Progress Party and . . . we will do anything to prevent such terrorism from approaching NATO's southern flank."[60] This rhetoric was not picked up by the government, however, during its deliberations to participate in the blockade.

Political Leadership: As I argued in chapter 2, leaders are critical in the study of foreign policy, as their personal motivations, professional experience, or interest in the issue might drive them to challenge the institutional constraints of their domestic environment to pursue their foreign policy goals. Without a doubt, Danish foreign minister (later appointed as the

59. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?," 14.
60. Quoted in Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?," 29.

leader of the Liberal Party) Uffe Ellemann-Jensen was a central actor in the country's foreign policy apparatus in the wake of the footnote policy era and until the Conservative-Liberal government was voted out of office in 1993. How influential was Ellemann-Jensen in shaping Denmark's commitment in the Persian Gulf?

Scholars of Danish foreign policy characterize Uffe Ellemann-Jensen as the foremost supporter of Denmark's foreign policy activism during the early post–Cold War years.[61] Indeed, it was Ellemann-Jensen himself who coined the term "active internationalism," which experts still use to describe post-Cold War Danish foreign policy.[62] Several accounts suggest that Ellemann-Jensen made it his personal objective not only to end the footnote policy period and demonstrate Danish commitment in the gulf, but also to transform Denmark's foreign policy identity away from its social democratic, cosmopolitan roots into an active international actor that could easily be placed on the map in the post–Cold War international security environment.[63]

With Prime Minister Schlüter choosing to focus his attention on domestic political matters, Ellemann-Jensen was effectively the foreign policy tsar during the 1980s and the early 1990s.[64] To what extent Ellemann-Jensen was a game changer in the run-up to the decision to participate in the Gulf War, however, is open to debate. On the one hand, he was courageous enough to announce without receiving any formal support from his government that Denmark would send a naval corvette to the gulf to assist in the blockade. He therefore publicly committed his government, bypassing both his prime minister and the Social Liberals, who were left "infuriated."[65] In this sense, Ellemann-Jensen certainly seized the opportunity to shape the government's foreign policy in his own image.

On the other hand, the foreign minister had to compromise when the Social Liberals in the government and the Social Democrats in the opposition put significant constraints on his ability to maneuver.[66] Even though he wanted the government to make more intense commitments beyond merely sending the *Olfert Fischer* and thereby strengthen Denmark's relations with the United States and with NATO, he eventually backed down.

61. Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future," 101–20.

62. Petersen, "'Footnoting' as a Political Instrument."

63. Branner, "Denmark Between Venus and Mars."; Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change"; Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism."

64. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change," 588–89.

65. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change," 590.

66. Doeser, "Leader-Driven Foreign-Policy Change"; Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?"

He had to first wait for the UN mandate as emphasized by the Social Liberals in the government (and the Social Democrats in the opposition), and then seek support across both the coalition and opposition parties for the government's proposal to join the blockade. In sum, despite Ellemann-Jensen's strong personality and interest in changing Denmark's international profile into an active citizen of the international community, his efforts in pushing Denmark to participate in the gulf operation were only as decisive as allowed by the Social Liberals and Social Democrats in the policymaking process, precisely due to the structural vulnerability of his government in the parliament.

By dispatching the *Olfert Fischer* to the Persian Gulf, Denmark made a significant commitment to the operation effort and deployed material capabilities beyond its borders "for the first time in modern history."[67] My analysis concludes that the ideological composition of the minority coalition and its relationship with the parliamentary opposition was central to explaining Denmark's decision to both participate in the gulf blockade in September 1990 and to maintain a limited presence in the region afterwards. It was the partisan realignment in the parliament on foreign policy matters that shed light on the transformation of Denmark's international behavior in the wake of the Cold War. The decision to send the naval ship was fundamentally facilitated by the Conservative-Liberal coalition's ability to fragment the "alternative majority" in the parliament in 1988, include the Social Liberals in its ranks, and bring an end to the footnote policy era. The timing of the UN mandate certainly helped the government commit to the operation. The UN decision was instrumental, though, precisely because it smoothed over the partisan disparities both inside the government *and* between the government and the opposition; it alleviated the concerns of the Social Liberals, who were then able to reach out to the Social Democrats in the opposition for support.

In the same vein, the Conservative-Liberal coalition's room to maneuver in the gulf was constrained as soon as the Social Liberals left the government in December 1990 and joined the leftist majority opposition in the parliament, which further supports the policy viability and fragmented opposition explanations raised in chapter 2. While the assertive political leadership of Ellemann-Jensen was visible throughout this period and specifically in the decision to participate in the naval blockade, Denmark's commitment to it was made possible primarily by the participation of the Social Liberals in the right-oriented Conservative-Liberal coalition.

67. Branner, "Denmark Between Venus and Mars," 146.

Quid Pro Quo

'Offensive' Danish Foreign Policy and the 2003 Iraq War

> Only the Americans have the military strength to disarm Saddam and liberate Iraq. But we have an obligation to help. We cannot just sail under a flag of convenience and let others fight for freedom and peace. There has in fact been too much of that kind in the past in Denmark. If we mean anything seriously about our democratic values, then we should also be ready to make a small contribution to the international coalition.
>
> —Liberal Party leader and Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, March 26, 2003[68]

This chapter started with the assertion that Danish foreign policy in the post–Cold War era was marked by two major turning points. One of these was the decision to join the naval blockade in the Persian Gulf in 1990. Now that the footnote politics era was over, the gulf commitment decisively demonstrated the country's new "activist" vision in the international arena.

The second major shift in Danish foreign policy came with the country's 2003 decision to join the US-led war in Iraq, during which Denmark's foreign policy activism took a "super-Atlanticist"—and, according to some, "offensive"—turn.[69] Unlike the 1990 episode, however, the 2003 decision was made by a right-wing minority coalition that did not need to seek ideological fragmentation in the parliamentary opposition. Instead, the government *logrolled* with a right-wing opposition party to pass the war bill, eliminating the need to cooperate with left-wing parties in the parliament.

On March 18, 2003, the government, represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Per Stig Møller proposed to the Folketing the commitment of "a submarine, a corvette, a team of doctors as well as a small contribution of staff and liaison personnel" to the Iraq war coalition.[70] This proposal was accepted on March 21 by the parties in government, namely the Liberals and the Conservatives, as well as the right-wing Danish People's Party in the opposition, while the leftist opposition par-

68. Quoted in Laybourn, "Why Denmark Decided to Participate in the War Against Saddam Hussein."

69. Larsen, "Danish Foreign Policy and the Balance between the EU and the US"; Mouritzen, "Denmark's Super Atlanticism."

70. Møller, "Proposal to Folketinget by Minister for Foreign Affairs Per Stig Møller," 161–62.

ties collectively voted against it. The war bill ultimately passed with "a slim majority of 11 votes."[71]

The government that asked the Folketing for its support for Danish participation in the 2003 Iraq war came to power in November 2001 by defeating the Social Democratic minority government led by Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, who had occupied this post since 1993. The incoming minority coalition was led by the Liberal Party's new leader Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who took over from Ellemann-Jensen in 1998, and it included the Conservative Party as its partner. The 2001 election was a historical victory for the Danish right; the Liberals won 56 seats in the 179-seat parliament, the Conservatives won 16, and the Danish People's Party (DPP) won 22 seats. With outside support from the DPP, the Liberal-Conservative minority coalition could enjoy a pure right-wing majority in the parliament. In Pedersen's words, "for the first time in 70 years, it was possible to find a majority for foreign policy that did not have to include the Social Liberals and the Social Democrats."[72]

Ellemann-Jensen's "activist" vision continued to define the Liberal Party's foreign policy position under Anders Fogh Rasmussen's leadership. For one, the party lambasted the politics of the footnote era in the strongest possible terms. The party's foreign policy program in 2003 emphasized that the footnote era stood "as a monument of shame of Denmark's passive and ambiguous attitude to the Soviet threat."[73] Anders Fogh Rasmussen was particularly adamant about confronting the anti-Atlanticist tone of the Social Liberal–Social Democratic bloc, using words like "betrayal" and "treason" to describe their foreign policy position during the Cold War.[74] The Liberal Party's foreign policy position in the 2000s was therefore both ideologically confrontational at home but also authoritatively more activist abroad and visibly sympathetic toward the transatlantic alliance and the United States in particular.

The Conservatives followed the Liberals in lockstep. Having governed together between 1982 and 1993, the two parties' foreign policy visions were already convergent, championing a "more militant and more West-oriented foreign policy" compared to the leftist opposition in the parliament. Although Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller of the Conservative Party "argued in accordance with the traditional Danish foreign policy

71. Mello, "Parliamentary Peace or Partisan Politics?" 440. See also Kaarbo and Cantir, "Role Conflict in Recent Wars,"465–83.

72. Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism," 339.

73. Quoted in Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future," 112.

74. Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future," 106.

priorities when he stressed institutional rather than military activism,"[75] in the run-up to the 2003 decision, the Conservatives did not stray from their Liberal counterparts and voted for the war bill in March 2003. In sum, the Anders Fogh Rasmussen coalition "made activism the emblem of its foreign policy and equated activism with a close alliance with the United States."[76] The 2003 decision was a dramatic demonstration of this vision.

The parliamentary opposition's position on Iraq was not as homogeneous as that of the government. On the right side of the political spectrum, the DPP leader Pia Kjærsgaard argued just two days prior to the parliamentary vote that "I and the Danish People's Party feel clearly that it is much better to put our weight behind the US in connection with this mission, than France or Germany [who had opposed the war.]"[77] Kjærsgaard's statement was in response to the Social Liberal–Social Democratic position; echoing the 1990 episode, the leftist parties of the opposition emphasized the need first for a UN mandate for the intervention and also argued for a multilateral operation as opposed to a primarily US-led effort.[78] Indeed, "when the Prime Minister . . . chooses to join Washington's dictates . . . rather than the possibility of a dialogue through a joint response from Brussels, the term 'activism' becomes a false mark," said Mogens Lykketoft, the Social Democrats' new leader, criticizing the government's pro-United States position.[79] The Social Democratic and Social Liberal parties instead "focused primarily on Denmark being a good international citizen and preserving international unity," which would be best illustrated by the country's insistence on a UN mandate for the operation.[80]

The parliament was therefore divided along ideological lines on the question of Danish participation in the war. The right-wing parties of the government and the DPP in the opposition supported joining the war coalition alongside the United States, whereas the left-wing parties, particularly the Social Liberals and the Social Democrats—the usual suspects—were against it. The Liberal-Conservative-DPP bloc's historic win in the 2001 elections resulted in a right-wing parliamentary majority that effectively diminished the leftist opposition's ability to form an "alternative opposition" the way it did during the footnote era. In this sense,

75. Branner, "Denmark Between Venus and Mars," 160.
76. Rasmussen, "What's the Use of It?," 81.
77. Quoted in Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?," 56.
78. Pedersen, "Danish Foreign Policy Activism."
79. Quoted in Branner, "Denmark Between Venus and Mars," 158.
80. Kaarbo and Cantir, "Role Conflict in Recent Wars," 470.

however, one could argue that the minority coalition achieved "majority status in disguise."[81]

As I mentioned earlier, Danish governments need parliamentary support to participate in overseas military operations. Although the coalition parties were in agreement regarding Denmark's participation in the Iraq war, their minority status in the parliament remained a structural impediment. This is where the opposition Danish People's Party came into play. Even though Anders Fogh Rasmussen's minority coalition did not fragment the leftist opposition the way the Schlüter government did in the aftermath of the 1988 elections, it was still successful at garnering enough votes in the parliament without the need to cooperate with the leftist opposition parties, all thanks to its logrolling relationship with the Danish People's Party (DPP). Broadly speaking, logrolling entails "voting alliances" in the parliament and often involves the exchange of support across parties for each other's policies.[82] In the context of the 2003 Iraq war decision, the government's structural vulnerability in a parliament that had actually facilitated the formation of a right-wing majority created an opportunity for the Liberals, Conservatives, and the DPP to work with each other.

Logrolling took place precisely at this juncture. Although the three parties ultimately voted together on March 21, it took them some time to converge their policy positions. The Liberals had already been on board with the Bush administration's justification for the war, which emphasized liberal values, democracy promotion, and human rights concerns.[83] The DPP's platform, however, did not align with these principles. In effect, the DPP's support for the war "required some justification since the underlying principles were at odds with the traditional party line."[84] The coalition, under the leadership of the Liberal Party, thus consciously and gradually moved closer to the DPP line to secure the party's support in the parliament for the March 2003 war bill.

This movement occurred in two distinct ways. The first entailed a classic clipping together of policies and began to take place months before the March vote. Since the coalition needed the DPP's parliamentary support not just for foreign but also domestic policy, the latter used this vulnerability to its advantage by asking for side payments such as getting policy concessions on immigration and refugee laws, which were central pillars of

81. Strøm, *Minority Government and Majority Rule*, 61.

82. Lanfranchi and Luethi, "Cohesion of Party Groups and Interparty Conflict in the Swiss Parliament," 118. See also chapter 2 and Oktay, "Chamber of Opportunities," 104–20.

83. Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future."

84. Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future," 114.

the DPP platform.[85] In the run-up to the 2002 and 2003 budget decisions, the coalition agreed to cooperate with the DPP and passed more stringent legislation on immigration and refugees as well as taking additional measures to decrease public expenditure and taxes in exchange for the DPP's support.[86] Indeed, as early as in 2002, the DPP leader declared, "The Danish People's Party now runs all-round politics. We cannot be brushed aside as a single-issue party; we are now a government leading party, which is helping to secure the welfare state and is not afraid to carry out the necessary reforms of the Danish society (. . .) the Danish People's Party has placed itself at the centre [*sic*] of Danish politics."[87]

Second, the Liberal Party moved ideologically closer to the DPP's policy platform by altering the content of what is known as the "cultural war" in Danish politics.[88] This was crystallized in the run-up to the 2003 parliamentary vote and helped couch the justification for Denmark's participation in the war in terms that were more sympathetic to the DPP. Originally, the "cultural war" debate was introduced by the Liberals to ostracize the politics of the Social Democrats and Social Liberals. In the context of foreign policy, for instance, the "cultural war" meant upending these parties' understanding of Denmark as a "small state" and its noncommitment to the Atlantic alliance, such that participation in the Iraq war alongside the United States would be a gesture of solidarity with the Atlantic partners.[89] Soon, however, the "cultural war" began to dovetail with the DPP platform and to emphasize "restrictive immigration policy and legal practice (tough on crime) and a showdown with state-financed expert committees and the political correctness of the political elite."[90] Other experts called this overture the "values policy."[91]

In other words, the "cultural war" debate, which was originally directed against the Social Democrats and Social Liberals, was now being tailored intentionally to converge with the DPP's policy platform to close the ideational gap between the DPP and the Liberal-Conservative coalition. In so doing, the DPP was also brought closer to the notion that Denmark's par-

85. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Denmark, January 2002," 14.

86. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Denmark, February 2002"; Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Denmark, May 2002"; Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Denmark, January 2003."

87. Meret, "The Danish People's Party, the Italian Northern League and the Austrian Freedom Party," 100.

88. Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future."

89. Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future," 110–11.

90. Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future," 114.

91. Branner, "Denmark Between Venus and Mars."

ticipation in the Iraq war was part and parcel of this "cultural war" against the Social Democrats and Social Liberals.[92]

In sum, these two trajectories culminated in a much broader and more routinized pattern of legislative cooperation between the DPP and the Liberal-Conservative coalition, which completed the overarching context of logrolling for the March 2003 decision. This relationship between the coalition and the DPP over Denmark's Iraq policy continued after the March 2003 vote. Kaarbo and Cantir explain that "the Danish People's Party did indeed trade its votes for later deployment of peacekeepers in Iraq for concessions on asylum policies" as soon as May 2003, once the initial armed confrontation in Iraq was over.[93] Referring to the right's electoral victory, a DPP member said at the time that "the change in 2001 [was] not just a change in government, but a change of systems,"[94] suggesting the consolidation of a right-wing Liberal-Conservative-DPP bloc even though the latter chose to remain outside the government. International observers grew increasingly cautious of this relationship, fearing that it was polarizing the Danish political system.[95]

Public Opinion: Was the Danish public influential in the government's decision to join the war in Iraq alongside the United States? Jakobsen argues that traditionally, "the public at large favors Danish military participation in international operations."[96] As for the 2003 Iraq operation, however, the polls and the analysts' observations suggest that while a notable proportion of the public did not favor the government's proposal, this opposition was still not overwhelming enough to sway the government. A Gallup poll conducted three months prior to the March 2003 decision showed that a little more than 40 percent of respondents did not approve of Denmark's participation in the war at all, whereas about 45 percent supported it either "in the form of a UN operation" or as "carried out by the US and its allies."[97] Another EOS-Gallup poll conducted in January 2003 asked whether respondents would support "Danish participation in a military intervention without UN mandate." In that poll, 83 percent said such an intervention would be "unjustified."[98]

The Danes' opinions of the war thus varied dramatically in the run-up to the March vote, especially when a UN mandate was proposed as a

92. Pedersen, "Past, Present, and Future"
93. Kaarbo and Cantir, "Role Conflict in Recent Wars," 471.
94. Branner, "Denmark Between Venus and Mars," 161.
95. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Denmark, May 2002."
96. Jakobsen, "Contributor Profile: Denmark," 4.
97. Carlsen and Mouritzen, *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2004*, 250.
98. Hummel, "A Survey of Involvement of 15 European States in the Iraq War 2003," 12.

condition for participation. Their support for the parties that voted for the war bill in March 2003, however, remained stagnant. The combined public support for the Liberal-Conservative coalition and the DPP stayed within the 50–51 percent range between the November 2001 elections and February 2003.[99] In fact, the combined public support for the Liberals, Conservatives, and the DPP was as high as 51.5 percent one month after the war decision, which was only 0.8 percentage points lower than the share of votes these parties had collectively received in the November 2001 elections.[100] Even though the parliament was deeply divided over the Iraq proposal and the polls showed some opposition to Denmark's participation in the operation (particularly when the questions proposed the UN mandate as a condition), this public debate was not enough to sap the three parties' electoral support over time or sway the government's initial position to contribute to the war in Iraq.

Threat to National Survival: To what extent was the 2003 episode framed around a "threat to national survival," outweighing the effects of minority coalition governance on Denmark's decision to commit to the Iraq war? The evidence points to the conclusion that although the notion of "threat" was utilized more clearly by the parties on the right than those on the left, *when* it was raised and what it entailed varied from one party to the next. As a result, its role in explaining the commitment decision was little to none.

For the Liberal-Conservative government, the 2003 war represented the US-led global community's response to address new security threats like international terrorism, weak states, and weapons of mass destruction that emerged in the post–Cold War era, which could potentially challenge Denmark's national security. In an opinion piece published in September 2003—nearly six months after the bill was passed in the parliament—Frank Laybourn, the Liberal Party's foreign and security policy advisor, made this point clear. He stated that "international terrorism is a threat to our peace and security, and can strike any country and any population group—including Denmark and the Danes."[101] This, however, was not the government's only, or even its primary, argument. Rather, it was one of the reasons it used to justify joining the war, along with the Iraqi regime's human rights record and, importantly, the "duty" to stand by the United States, which "has come to our help on numerous occasions."[102]

The notion of a "threat" was also used by the Danish People's Party,

99. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Denmark, April 2003."

100. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Denmark, July 2003."

101. Laybourn, "Why Denmark Decided to Participate in the War Against Saddam Hussein."

102. Laybourn, "Why Denmark Decided to Participate in the War Against Saddam Hussein."

but in different terms and long before the debate began over the country's participation in the Iraq war. Most notably, the threat for the DPP was primarily domestic and ideational, and its real expression was September 11. Although the party argued in October 2001 that 9/11 would shape the party's defense policy in the future, the attack resonated much more strongly with its anti-immigrant platform.[103] The DPP leader Pia Kjærsgaard commented at the time that the threat was "everywhere in our midst." Pointing out that "some" of the perpetrators of 9/11 "[were] described as ideal immigrants. But each one turned out to be a demon on commissioned work,"[104] the party was signaling in obvious terms that it interpreted the "threat" in terms of Denmark's own Muslim immigrant community rather than a remote Middle Eastern dictatorship.

The parties on the left, especially the Social Democrats, were the most ambiguous about their use of the language of a "threat." Then Social Democratic leader and former prime minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen stressed in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks that it was necessary to see that "it is a different world we now live in,"[105] referring to the new international security challenges. Interestingly, he adopted a more hawkish tone during the November 2001 parliamentary elections, stating: "We do not want to give up our way of life, our democracy, our values, our safety . . . our future is common—our security is also that of NATO and the US,"[106] before the debate began over the possibility of joining a US-led military operation to topple Saddam Hussein. By 2002, however, both the Social Democratic[107] and Social Liberal parties "refused to accept the threat perception expressed by the Liberals and the Conservatives,"[108] drawing a clear line between themselves and the government. In sum, the political debate in Denmark over the 2003 Iraq war—or the broader post-9/11 security context that led to it—was only weakly influenced by the notion of a "threat to national security." Even when it was utilized by the key political parties, it failed to outweigh the policy divergences between them and forge parliamentary unity, as one would expect from a true national security threat.

Political Leadership: How powerful was political leadership in explaining the 2003 decision? For one, it is argued that the internal balance of power

103. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?"
104. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?," 45–46.
105. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?," 42.
106. Larsen, *Analysing the Foreign Policy of Small States in the EU*, 85.
107. Olesen ("Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?") argues that this shift in the Social Democratic position was due to the change in party leadership.
108. Olesen, "Two Danish Activist Foreign Policies?," 57.

between the Liberals and Conservatives in the coalition had elevated the leadership of Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen. International observers portray the relationship between the two governing parties as having "a big brother–little brother character" and explain that while Rasmussen and the Liberals had met their campaign promises, the Conservatives failed to do so under their leader, Bendt Bendtsen. This effectively allowed Rasmussen to "dominate the political agenda"[109] and put his leadership skills far ahead of his coalition partner.

Analysts unanimously agree that Rasmussen also played a key role in the run-up to Denmark's decision to join the 2003 war.[110] Bo Elkjær, an award-winning Danish journalist, reported that Rasmussen was personally convinced of the war's rationale as early as September 2002: "I am not in the slightest doubt that he possesses weapons of mass destruction and wishes to manufacture them," the prime minister said at the time.[111]

In a similar vein, Mouritzen argues that the prime minister "himself took the decision, after a phone call from President Bush," explaining how joining the war was his idea since the beginning.[112] Henriksen and Ringsmose provide a detailed account of the close personal relationship that Rasmussen and President Bush developed in the post-9/11 period and especially on the eve of the war to suggest that Rasmussen was personally invested in the decision.[113] There is ample evidence to support the argument that Rasmussen's powerful position in the coalition government, his conviction about the war, and his personal relationship with the US president jointly influenced the government's proposal to join the war in 2003.

Still, Rasmussen's leadership does not eliminate the role of coalition dynamics in explaining the 2003 episode. Since the decision to participate in the war constitutionally needed parliamentary consent, his coalition's minority status in the parliament required it to seek the opposition's support. The structural weakness of the coalition, in other words, simply compelled it to cooperate with the Danish People's Party to secure the

109. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Denmark, January 2003," 14–15.

110. Branner, "Denmark between Venus and Mars," 134; Elkjær, "Iraq Day by Day"; Larsen, "Danish Foreign Policy and the Balance between the EU and the US"; Mouritzen, "Denmark's Super Atlanticism."

111. Elkjær, "Iraq Day by Day," 10. Elkjær later revealed that the government had introduced the war proposal based on evidence that was less than fully supportive of the claim that Iraq had an active weapons program and was involved in terrorist activity with Al Qaeda.

112. Mouritzen, "Denmark's Super Atlanticism," 160.

113. Henriksen and Ringsmose, "What Did Denmark Gain?," 157–81. Speculations abound as to whether Rasmussen's appointment as the NATO secretary-general in 2009 could be interpreted as America's token of appreciation in response to his efforts to bring Denmark into the Iraq war coalition (See Branner, "Denmark between Venus and Mars"). Henriksen and Ringmose ("What Did Denmark Gain?") argue that this is impossible to tell definitively.

parliamentary vote for the war decision. It should be noted, however, that Rasmussen's leadership was instrumental here as well; he was the one who used the "cultural war" frame to bring the DPP closer to his government's preference point, as I explained earlier.

Therefore, from the perspective of the policy viability and fragmented opposition explanations, the 2003 decision defies expectations. Denmark should not have been able to join the US-led war in Iraq since the minority coalition that made the proposal to the parliament was purely right-wing. Unable to reach across the aisle like the Schlüter coalition had done following the 1988 elections, Rasmussen's Liberal-Conservative coalition allowed an ideologically unified leftist parliamentary opposition to challenge its foreign policy agenda and impede its ability to make international commitments. Yet the parliamentary vote was secured in March 2003. My analysis suggests that the logrolling relationship that took place between the right-wing minority coalition and the DPP remains the main explanation for Denmark's 2003 decision to join the war, despite Rasmussen's assertive leadership. The alignment that took place between the coalition and the DPP both in terms of clipping together each other's policy interests and the formation of a unified front against the Social Democratic–Social Liberal bloc culminated in a right-wing parliamentary voting majority that resulted in the war decision.

In sum, the 1990 and the 2003 cases illustrate the conditions under which minority coalitions make commitments abroad. The 1990 decision to join the Persian Gulf blockade demonstrates the power of the policy viability and fragmented opposition explanations, for which the quantitative analyses reported in chapter 3 found support. The 2003 decision, on the other hand, constitutes a deviant case and shows that logrolling provides a strong alternative explanation for commitment behavior when the ideological composition of the minority coalition fails to fragment the opposition. Although minority coalitions suffer from a constant size disadvantage in the parliament, the 2003 decision illustrates that they actively seek and adopt strategies to overcome their disadvantaged position and tip the scale in their favor. Policy-based cooperation with opposition parties constitutes a key strategy to that end. Even when it is placed in the context of public opinion, national security threats, and political leadership, the dynamics of coalition politics continue to be the key explanation for both of these cases. These dynamics demonstrate how minority coalitions can act decisively abroad even though we often expect their structural weakness in the parliament to prevent them from doing so.

FIVE

When Foreign Policy Spills Over

Dutch Support for the 2003 Iraq War

Coalitions are far more varied than we assume them to be. In this book, I have argued that the factors that pertain to the composition of coalition governments generate this variance; namely, these include the coalition's type, ideological cohesiveness, and its relationship with the parliamentary opposition. Consequently, these factors influence the coalition government's commitment behavior in the international arena. In the previous chapter, I have contextualized the quantitative findings presented in chapter 3 and focused on minority coalitions, which have been mostly overlooked in the study of foreign policy, to show how the nature of this government type had shaped Danish foreign policy in the post–Cold War period. Focusing on Denmark's behavior during the two Iraq wars—first in 1990 and then in 2003—I demonstrated how minority coalitions can commit to overseas military operations even though their exposure to the parliamentary opposition leaves them structurally vulnerable.

I now shift my attention to the oft-studied variants—coalitions that assume a majority in the parliament—to investigate the dynamics that lead them to commit abroad. I start with minimum-winning coalitions in this chapter. These governments are the smallest of all possible majority coalitions: the government is composed of only those parties that can collectively carry it over the legislative majority threshold, but no more. Each party is therefore vital to the coalition's survival. In effect, each party in a minimum-winning coalition possesses veto power to prevent the rest of

the government from moving forward with a policy choice. The parties also have the maximum incentive to use their veto power because they are integral to maintaining the coalition's majority status in the parliament. Without them, there is no majority, and losing majority support often signals that there will soon be no government. This is a crucial piece of information for the coalition parties that impacts their behavior in a minimum-winning arrangement, and, in turn, the government's policy outputs.

An important question is why any governing party would want to use its veto power unless it disagrees with the other partners. In minimum-winning coalitions, therefore, the degree of partisan incongruence among the partners becomes a key condition that would prompt them to take advantage of their veto power. Only when parties disagree with each other and fail to achieve a convergent position would they be willing to resort to their veto advantage to steer the decision-making process. I have discussed this logic in chapter 2, hypothesizing that the commitment behavior of minimum-winning coalitions should be weaker and less assertive when they lack ideological cohesion. The parties' veto power and their incentives to use it prevent the coalition from acting assertively abroad in order not to upset any partner, especially if they do not share convergent preferences to begin with. The hypothesis continues then that minimum-winning coalitions that suffer from ideological disparity are therefore particularly susceptible to diluting their foreign policies and taking more moderate actions in the international arena for the sake of keeping the government stable at home.

The quantitative analyses in chapter 3, however, defeated this hypothesis. Although the results in chapter 3 show that, on average, international commitments are weaker when coalitions lack ideological cohesiveness (thus supporting my baseline expectation), they also show that greater ideological fractures inside a minimum-winning coalition lead to *more* assertive commitments, not less. This finding runs against the veto player argument and requires an in-depth exploration of the dynamics that lead to it.

In this chapter, I explore this puzzle. What explains the commitment behavior of minimum-winning coalitions, and how is it possible that the ideologically dispersed ones end up committing more than expected? Importantly, I ask a key question that the veto players logic omits: what other factors, if any, can override the parties' veto incentive and make it inconsequential? Doing so, I seek to correct for the veto players logic in coalition foreign policy by probing the conditions that discourage the partners from taking advantage of their veto power, which then enables the coalition to commit more assertively than it otherwise would.

To answer these questions, I turn to the Netherlands. Once again, I take up the 2003 war in Iraq; this time I investigate the factors that had led this country to first give political support to the war and then gradually provide military contributions to it. Echoing the previous chapter, I situate the coalitional dynamics in the context of systemic, domestic, and individual-level factors by asking the same set of questions that guided my analysis in chapter 4 (table 4.1), as the method of structured-focused comparison advises. The method as well as the case itself allow me to take a *between-case*, cross-country comparative approach to demonstrate how these European democracies reached their decisions to commit in Iraq.

As I emphasize below, minimum-winning coalitions are the norm in the Netherlands, which provides the necessary institutional consistency to analyze how the nature of these governments shapes their commitment behavior. Furthermore, the small power status of the Netherlands makes it another *hard case* for this book. The country is often dubbed "the greatest of the smaller powers, or the smallest of the great powers."[1] Like Denmark, then, the foreign policy decisions of this country should be impacted more by international considerations than by its domestic politics. If I can illustrate that coalition dynamics in the Netherlands were visibly more influential than international systemic security concerns or great power relations in the country's decision to commit to perhaps the most controversial military operation of a generation, then this book's argument would clear a much higher hurdle.

The Dutch case also highlights how intertwined domestic and foreign policy can be. International relations scholars often consider the national government to play a static role in foreign policy decision making. We take government stability as a given when we study puzzles such as the effects of public opinion or elite consensus, or the framing influence of the media, on an impending foreign policy problem. In other words, the effect of these factors is often studied as though they refract through a government that stays stable and uninterrupted on the domestic political stage.

What happens when the government itself is in flux? The 2003 decision was a fascinating foreign policy episode for the Netherlands because it unraveled during an early election season and in the middle of a tumultuous government formation period that followed. The decision to commit

1. Herman, "The Dutch Drive for Humanitarianism," 859; Verbeek, "The Bigger of the Smaller States." This line of thinking is also evident in the language of Dutch decision makers in issue areas like development assistance as they invoke the country's colonial past and its commercial-maritime power status in the 1600s. See Breuning, "Configuring Issue Areas"; Breuning, "Culture, History, Role."

TABLE 5.1. Government Composition and Dutch Commitment to the 2003 Iraq War

	July 2002–January 2003	January 2003–April 2003	April 2003–May 2003
Coalition parties	CDA-VVD-LPF	CDA-PvdA	CDA-VVD-D66
Coalition type	Minimum-winning	Minimum-winning	Minimum-winning
Ideological dispersion (St. dev. from coalition mean)	1.15	1.48	1.40
Caretaker or elected?	Elected government (caretaker after October 2002)	Government in-the-making	Negotiated coalition Formed May 27, 2003
Commitment intensity	Political support (first discussed November 2002)	Political support (March 2003) Material support provided later as fait accompli	Political support Material support (stabilization force deployed in June 2003)

in Iraq had thus spilled over to three minimum-winning arrangements: an outgoing coalition, a coalition-in-the-making that ultimately failed to materialize, and an incoming coalition that was successfully negotiated and officially began its term by mid-2003. Table 5.1 provides a summary of the domestic political setting in the run-up to the 2003 war and the types of support the country provided it. As I demonstrate below, the Netherlands' contributions to the war were very much predicated on the dynamics that brought together the potential and eventual parties to constitute and participate in these coalitions, thereby weakening their incentives to veto these decisions.

The Dutch case is informative also because it facilitates *within-case* examination, where we trace commitment decisions from one coalitional arrangement to the next. I repurpose the design of structured-focused comparison such that while I ask the same questions to probe the contextual factors, I devote special attention to the shifts between coalitions to highlight how the quid pro quo between the parties determined the country's commitment to the war. Indeed, the country's commitment to the war was contingent on the dynamics of coalition formation. The key factor that explains Dutch behavior in Iraq, *despite the disagreements between the parties*, is *logrolling*. Specifically, the junior partners on the left of the spectrum—Labor and D66—gave in to the center-right Christian Democrats' position to support the war in order to enjoy seats at the executive table, even

though they could have vetoed the Christian Democrats' overtures given their critical position to make or break the government. Before moving on to illustrating these relationships, I start below with an overview of the domestic political scene in the Netherlands and its post–Cold War foreign policy orientation.

From Consensus to Competition: The Dutch Political Landscape

Politics in the Netherlands is characterized by the interaction of multiple political parties in an electoral system based on proportional representation, which produces highly fragmented parliaments. Andeweg and Irwin capture this diversity in their report that "since 1967, in any given election, 20 or more parties have generally submitted lists at the elections and up to 14 parties were successful in getting candidates elected."[2] Echoing most other west European political systems, parties in the Netherlands can be mapped onto a two-dimensional plane, comprising an economic left-right dimension and a progressive-conservative dimension.[3]

Of these parties, only a few have historically defined Dutch politics by participating in coalitions or by having "the power of intimidation."[4] These include mainstream parties such as the conservative-liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), the center-right Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), and the left-wing Labor Party (PvdA).[5] The CDA, for instance, was the party of the prime minister in ten of the twelve governments that had served between 1977 and 2007. The VVD often enjoyed the junior "kingmaker" status by cooperating with the CDA as well as the Labor Party; it was a junior coalition partner in fifteen of twenty-seven governments between 1945 and 2007.[6] At the time of this writing, the party's leader, Mark Rutte, presides over the government, with CDA as one of the junior partners. Finally, the Labor Party (PvdA) has performed as the first resort of the social democratic electorate in the Netherlands since the end of the Second World War. The party's successful streak of

2. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 46.

3. Pennings and Keman, "The Dutch Parliamentary Elections of 2002," 6.

4. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 46.

5. According to the 2002 Chapel Hill Expert Survey dataset, the VVD was given a score of 7.4, CDA 6.1, and PvdA 4 along the general left-right spectrum, which ranges from 0 to 10, with 5 denoting the center. See Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys."

6. Andeweg, "Coalition Politics in the Netherlands: From Accommodation to Politicization," 259.

electoral victories (gaining anywhere between 20 and 27 percent of the votes) through the 1990s ended in 2002 after its eight-year incumbency.[7] Notwithstanding its more recent electoral defeats (the party received a meager nine seats in the 2017 elections), the PvdA had frequently participated in coalition governments since 1945 as the largest partner.[8]

The center-left progressive-liberal Democrats '66 (D66), the left-wing Greens (GreenLeft, or GL), and the populist right-wing party List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) joined these mainstream heavyweights by the early 2000s as other relevant junior parties in Dutch politics.[9] Indeed, the LPF formed a coalition with CDA and VVD in July 2002 following the results of the election in May 2002.[10] The party had suffered from a long-standing internal leadership crisis, however, ultimately weakening the coalition and bringing it down.[11] As I will explain below, it was the breakdown of this coalition, the elections that followed in January 2003, and the coalition talks that took place until the formation of a new coalition government in May 2003 that provided the political background to the Dutch decisions to provide first political and then military support to the US-led war in Iraq.

Dutch politics was consensus-based until the mid-1960s, a period during which the country's political parties had reflected the major societal pillars, or what the Dutch call *zuilen*. Capturing a range of sociopolitical institutions including political parties, churches, schools, trade unions, civil society organizations, and the media, the pillars represented the major cleavages in the Dutch political landscape.[12] The consociational nature of this system steered the elites away from domestic political conflict, where governments were characterized by consensus and accommodation, colle-

7. "European Election Database (EED)."

8. Andeweg, "Coalition Politics in the Netherlands: From Accommodation to Politicization."

9. The 2002 Chapel Hill Expert Survey assigns a score of 2.5 to GL, 4.6 to D66, and 8.4 to LPF on the general left-right scale, which ranges from 0 to 10, where 5 denotes the center of the spectrum. See Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys."

10. The LPF's rise and fall was quite dramatic. It showed unprecedented success in the first general elections in May 2002, mere months after its establishment under its charismatic leader and namesake, Pim Fortuyn. See Mudde, "A Fortuynist Foreign Policy," 210. Championing new issues such as the cultural integration of ethnic groups with the "Dutch way of living" (see Pennings and Keman, "The Dutch Parliamentary Elections of 2002," 2.), the party won a surprising twenty-six seats in the parliament despite Fortuyn's assassination less than two weeks prior to the May 2002 elections. See Van Holsteyn and Irwin, "The Dutch Parliamentary Elections of 2003." The LPF dissolved in 2008.

11. Van Holsteyn and Irwin, "The Dutch Parliamentary Elections of 2003."

12. Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles*, 59.

giality, and collectivism.[13] Consensus politics gave way to greater competition among parties by the late 1960s, however, which politicized coalition governance and decision making, including in the foreign policy domain.

This transformation was dubbed "depillarization," namely, "the erosion of the consociational system of separate social, religious, and political blocs" represented by the political parties and their supportive civic institutions.[14] Depillarization introduced more fierce competition among the political parties, thereby politicizing and polarizing all aspects of policymaking in the Netherlands. For instance, since the watershed year of 1967, cabinet hopefuls have been expected to have several years of parliamentary experience under their belts.[15] This trend suggests the governments' desire to have greater political, not bureaucratic, skill around the table and indicates a preference for political savvy over technical competence.

The transformation of the political system was also observed in the structure of the government. With depillarization, coalition agreements became critical pacts for parties to eagerly negotiate. As a result, oversized coalitions were replaced with minimum-winning coalitions. Polarization and domestic contest have made parties far more hesitant to share the government pie with unnecessary actors they now considered to be their rivals. Andeweg and Irwin's observation attests to the competitive effect of depillarization on coalition formation: "Between 1946 and 1967 the country was governed 86 per cent of the time by larger-than-necessary [oversized] coalitions; between 1967 and 2003 this percentage declined to around 26 per cent."[16] Similarly, except for a minority government in the early 1980s and Wim Kok's oversized coalition that ruled between 1998 and 2002, all Dutch governments have been minimum-winning coalitions since the 1970s.[17]

Greater cohesion inside political parties was another outcome of the increased competition and polarization that was caused by depillarization.[18] Some experts report that in the wake of depillarization (specifically during the 1967–1971 legislative term), party unanimity—that is, the lack of intraparty dissent during parliamentary proceedings—remained at 92 to

13. Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles*, 60; Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands*, 123.

14. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 73.

15. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 126.

16. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 121.

17. Pennings and Keman, "The Changing Landscape of Dutch Politics since the 1970s," 159.

18. Andeweg, "Coalition Politics in the Netherlands," 272.

98 percent.[19] Others echo these observations. Rochon argues that Dutch parliamentarians "view themselves primarily as representatives of their party's voters, and consequently feel bound to vote the party line under most circumstances,"[20] suggesting not only strong party discipline but also greater ideologism. For a decade starting with 1998, only less than one-half percent of the total votes that the MPs took in the Dutch parliament had defected from their respective parties.[21] Bloc voting in the parliament thus makes it imperative for analysts to investigate the parties' policy positions in relation to their size in the parliament. As I have suggested in chapter 2, this is a particularly acute condition for minimum-winning coalitions, where any junior party can pull the plug on the government by exiting it. To the extent that Dutch parliamentarians follow their parties in lockstep, the seat shares of the governing parties thus become as critical for shaping the government's policy as how distant these parties are from each other along the political spectrum.

The connection between cabinet ministers and their political parties in the parliament has also become stronger in the post-depillarization era, further affecting the nature of coalition governance. In a survey of Dutch parliamentarians, nearly 70 percent of the respondents agreed that "government policy is formed in close consultation and cooperation with the parliamentary parties in the governmental majority."[22] The same survey also concluded that nearly 90 percent of the MPs believed "more than in the past, the government is dependent on what the parliamentary parties in the governmental majority want."[23] It is evident that the ties between cabinet ministers and their political parties have become far more visible and stronger in the Netherlands following depillarization. Andeweg portrays the close relationship between the party in the parliament and in the government by arguing that "if a minister is forced to withdraw from the Cabinet, his party is likely to withdraw from the coalition."[24] In effect, the day-to-day political competition and ideological disparities between political parties began having much greater impact on coalition policymaking, influencing the outputs of these governments. Those with a seat in the cabinet have also begun interacting with their parties more frequently to

19. Wolters, "Interspace Politics," 182–85. See also Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2014), 175.

20. Rochon, *The Netherlands: Negotiating Sovereignty in an Interdependent World*, 114.

21. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2014), 175.

22. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 140.

23. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2014), 175.

24. Andeweg, "Coalition Politics in the Netherlands," 272.

maintain partisan consistency in the decision-making process. This practice flies in the face of the Dutch procedure that members of the parliament, once appointed to the cabinet, vacate their seats in the legislature.[25]

How has this national political overhaul brought upon by depillarization influenced foreign policy making in the Netherlands? As it is often observed in parliamentary systems, the locus of foreign policy is the cabinet in the Netherlands.[26] Prior to depillarization, however, the Dutch had long considered foreign policy to be an elite affair and rarely paid attention to it.[27] True to the country's consensus-seeking past, it was immune to public reaction and, more importantly, to domestic political infighting. Depillarization changed all that. As it transformed the nature of coalition formation, cabinet governance, and the relationship between parties and governments in the legislature, depillarization also impacted how the elites and masses viewed foreign policy. "Security and defense policy-making has become more politicized and domesticated," Kaarbo explains, highlighting a trend that continues to this day.[28] Security and defense policy could even break down governments. A CDA-led coalition collapsed in February 2010 precisely because the junior coalition partner, the PvdA, insisted on its opposition to continuing the Dutch mission in Afghanistan.[29]

Where does the legislature stand in Dutch foreign policy making? The Dutch parliament is considered a powerful actor in foreign policy in terms of its war powers, even though some experts argue that it comes second after the cabinet in terms of its influence over foreign policy, followed by bureaucrats and the diplomatic corps, and political parties.[30] Although a parliamentary vote is not constitutionally required, the government is expected to inform the parliament of its plans to contribute to international military missions. This practice, over time, has given the parliament "a *de facto* veto on any dispatch of the armed forces abroad."[31] In a fragmented political system, where governing coalitions are ever closer to and under the influence of their parties while the parliamentarians toe their

25. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 115; Andeweg, "Coalition Politics in the Netherlands."

26. Baehr, "The Dutch Foreign Policy Elite," 235.

27. Baehr, "The Dutch Foreign Policy Elite." See also Verbeek and Van der Vleuten, "The Domesticization of the Foreign Policy of the Netherlands," 361.

28. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 73.

29. "Dutch Government Collapses after Labour Withdrawal from Coalition."

30. Baehr, "The Dutch Foreign Policy Elite," 235; Dieterich, Hummel, and Marschall, "Bringing Democracy Back In."

31. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 4. See also Mello, "Parliamentary Peace or Partisan Politics?"; Oktay, "Chamber of Opportunities."

party's line, foreign policy thus serves as yet another domain for politicized decision making in the legislature. The nature of Dutch politics both in the executive and the legislative branches therefore makes the country's minimum-winning coalitions particularly exposed to the effects of partisan contestation on foreign policy.

In sum, there are powerful reasons to focus on coalition governance to assess the Netherlands' international commitments. The foreign policy prerogative rests with the governing cabinet, which over the decades has become increasingly politicized and competitive. This transformation, coupled with the high intraparty cohesion that Dutch political parties enjoy, compels me to zoom in on the rifts *between* the coalition parties rather than those *within* them. In the context of a competitive national political system, highly cohesive and disciplined parties, and tighter relationships between cabinet members and their political groups in the parliament, it is no wonder that foreign policy decisions are strongly influenced by partisan considerations and political gains. It is against this national backdrop that we must assess the post–Cold War foreign policy of the Netherlands and its decisions to contribute to the 2003 war in Iraq.

Balancing Act: Dutch Foreign Policy in the Post–Cold War Era

"Peace, Profits, and Principles" have historically constituted the three cornerstones with which the Dutch define their international presence.[32] "Profits" capture the country's "maritime commercialist" roots dating back to the East India Company, while "Principles" reflect its commitment to "internationalist idealism" and being home to key legal institutions such as the International Criminal Court. Echoing the "Principles," the "Peace" dimension has, for a long time, represented the country's "neutralist abstentionism" in dealing with systemic power dynamics.[33]

True to these three P's defining the country's position in the international system, the Netherlands had situated itself as a neutral country until the Second World War. The war and the Nazi invasion forced the country to "unequivocally abandon" this tradition and pivot to Atlanticism.[34] Following the war, the Netherlands joined NATO in 1949 to counter the Soviet threat, thereby cementing its Atlanticist turn. Writing nearly thirty

32. Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles*. See also Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.

33. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 205–6, 215.

34. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2014), 13.

years later, Baehr concluded that the country had deemed the transatlantic alliance a valuable asset during the Cold War.[35] Although its relationship with NATO took a notable hit by the early 1980s due to its indecision over the stationing of the cruise missiles (see chapter 1), Dutch relations with the alliance and the United States remained mostly steadfast. The United States, in particular, continued to receive strong support from its Dutch ally during the Cold War; the Dutch considered the United States "absolutely reliable" for its national security.[36]

While the Cold War certainly posed a hostile security environment for a small country like the Netherlands, it had also provided some degree of predictability where NATO represented both a source of security and a reliable entity for the country's self-realization. The end of the Cold War dismantled that certainty and the sense of where the Netherlands stood in the international system. Verbeek and Van der Vleuten emphasize that one of the key factors behind the structural change in Dutch foreign policy by the early 1990s was "the disappearance of communism as the long time enemy."[37] Just like Denmark, the Netherlands was now facing an existential crisis in a post-Soviet epoch. It began focusing on the new "international context where humanitarian interventions were becoming a major topic."[38] Indicative of this change was Dutch participation in a series of multilateral humanitarian missions in the Balkans and in Africa throughout the 1990s, as well as the country's continuing emphasis on humanitarian and development aid provision.[39] Some argue that these missions were part of a broader Dutch "strategy to gain and exercise soft power"[40] in the new international system, where its position as a western European bastion of transatlantic security was no longer viable.

The end of the Cold War also constitutes a critical systemic shift for contextualizing how the Netherlands perceived the ongoing European plans to build a regional security and defense framework. The Dutch have always been an integral part of an "ever-closer" Europe. It is one

35. Baehr, "The Dutch Foreign Policy Elite."

36. Baehr, "The Dutch Foreign Policy Elite," 242; Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 3.

37. Verbeek and Van der Vleuten, "The Domesticization of the Foreign Policy of the Netherlands," 358.

38. Verbeek and Van der Vleuten, "The Domesticization of the Foreign Policy of the Netherlands," 363. See also Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 210.

39. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 69; Breuning, "Words and Deeds."

40. Verbeek and Van der Vleuten, "The Domesticization of the Foreign Policy of the Netherlands," 366.

of the initial six members of the European Coal and Steel Community that ultimately became the European Union in 1991 following the Maastricht Treaty. For a long time, however, the country had considered the EU only an economic project.[41] Given its early and long-time membership in NATO, the Netherlands "served almost as an American proxy in the European Union" when the rest of Europe debated the establishment of a European defense structure to replace the regional security umbrella provided by the transatlantic alliance.[42]

The Netherlands' resistance to developing European defense capabilities began to subside in the aftermath of the Cold War. For instance, De Wijk explains that the coalition government led by the PvdA supported the EU's 1998 St. Malo process, which resulted in the establishment of the European Rapid Reaction Force to promote a common European defense framework.[43] In 1999, the government "even concluded that European defense should be emphasized,"[44] suggesting a departure from the country's strictly Atlanticist tradition. Even so, this was far from a complete abandonment of the country's preference for and adherence to the United States and NATO for security and defense. In multiple instances even prior to the St. Malo summit, the country found itself stuck between its American and European partners. For instance, the government "sided with the Americans by objecting to a last-minute mediation effort of the EU" in the run-up to the 1991 Gulf War.[45] Still, when it was time to decide on how to contribute to the war itself, the Netherlands ultimately committed ships and navy units under the Western European Union's umbrella as opposed to actively participating alongside the United States.[46] The Netherlands was putting on a balancing act to appease both its American and European allies.

Dutch foreign policy seems to have favored Atlanticism more visibly into the 1990s. The country participated in the 1999 military operation in Kosovo alongside NATO as well as in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in 2001.[47] The latest installment in this string of military operations was the 2003 war in Iraq, to which the country had provided

41. Baehr, "The Dutch Foreign Policy Elite"; Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq."

42. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2014), 253.

43. De Wijk, "Seeking the Right Balance," 153–54.

44. De Wijk, "Seeking the Right Balance," 154.

45. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 214.

46. Verbeek and Van der Vleuten, "The Domesticization of the Foreign Policy of the Netherlands."

47. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (2005), 209.

both political and, later on, military support.[48] Dutch governments had also pronounced their support for NATO "as the cornerstone of foreign policy" in the early 2000s, thus reinforcing the Atlanticist undertones of their foreign policy.[49]

All in all, the Dutch foreign policy landscape and its broader systemic orientations were more ambiguous than Denmark's in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War. The Netherlands was as Atlanticist as Denmark in terms of its adherence to NATO and the United States as key partners. Unlike Denmark, however, it was not categorically opposed to the idea of establishing a truly European security and defense capability. This has traditionally forced the Netherlands to integrate European and American viewpoints far more delicately when devising its own foreign policy in the post–Cold War era. The country's balancing act remains an important takeaway especially in the context of its commitment to the US-led war in Iraq.[50]

Commitment, But How Much? Dutch Support for the 2003 War

Unlike Denmark's swift and decisive choice to join the US-led war coalition in Iraq, it took the Netherlands several months and subsequent iterations to clarify the substance of its support. The decisions came incrementally, unfolding between November 2002 and June 2003, in the midst of Dutch parliamentary elections that took place in January 2003. The country initially committed to providing "political, but not military" support to the war. Within months, however, Dutch decision makers began providing logistical support to the military effort in Iraq by allowing American military equipment to transit the Netherlands, sending military equipment to Iraq to strengthen the US-led coalition forces, and ultimately deploying troops to the Iraqi province of Al Muthanna to assist the stabilization effort.[51]

Three minimum-winning coalition arrangements were involved in the process to determine Dutch involvement in the war throughout this period: an elected government that came to power in July 2002 comprising the CDA, VVD, and the LPF (but taking on a caretaker role by Octo-

48. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq."

49. De Wijk, "Seeking the Right Balance," 156. See also Wessel, "The Netherlands and NATO."

50. See, for example, Jockel and Massie, "In or Out?"

51. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*; Ten Cate and Zaalberg, *A Gentle Occupation*.

ber 2002; see table 5.1); a coalition-in-the-making forged between the re-elected incumbent CDA and the PvdA immediately following the January 2003 elections; and a third coalition that was successfully formed between the CDA, VVD, and D66 by May 2003 following the eventual breakdown of the previous round of negotiations between the CDA and PvdA.

The process leading up to the initial decision to provide political support for the war in Iraq began as early as August 2002, a few weeks after the CDA-VVD-LPF minimum-winning coalition was formed under the premiership of Jan Peter Balkenende of the Christian Democrats.[52] The United States soon reached out to the Netherlands to seek its support for the Iraq operation. Washington's official invitation to the Netherlands to join the war coalition came in November 2002,[53] but the invitation arrived after the tripartite coalition had collapsed in October 2002 due to an infighting that broke within the LPF's ranks. The LPF had been going through a leadership crisis since Fortuyn's death in May 2002, and by October 2002 the party's internal crisis had finally found "its way into the cabinet," to the point where two cabinet ministers from the LPF stopped communicating with each other. Although the two ministers resigned on October 16 to salvage the government, the LPF's senior coalition partners, VVD and CDA, declared that they had lost trust and confidence in their junior partner. The two parties therefore decided to break down the coalition and called for early elections.[54] Balkenende remained at the helm of the now-caretaker government.[55]

Parliamentary elections were renewed in January 2003. The Christian Democrats (CDA) came out victorious once again, although falling short of securing a parliamentary majority given the fragmented nature of the Dutch political system: it won 44 out of 150 seats in the Tweede Kamer. The Labor Party (PvdA) came in second, capturing 42 seats. Seeking to bridge a wide political gap across the spectrum, the two major parties began coalition negotiations. In the meantime, Balkenende announced his outgoing caretaker government's decision on Iraq. The prime minister declared in March 2003 that "the absence of a further [UN Security Council] resolution has consequences for the national support (*draagvlak*) for further Dutch involvement. Consequently, the Netherlands will not give an active military contribution with respect to Iraq" but would support the

52. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq."
53. "Davids Commission Report," 524.
54. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, December 2002," 12–13.
55. "Squabbling Dutch Government Collapses, Forcing New Election."

war politically.[56] The parliament voted for this resolution on March 18.[57] Meanwhile, coalition talks continued between CDA and PvdA until April 2003, but ultimately failed to produce the next government.[58] During that time, the Netherlands had already begun intensifying its support for the war: in April 2003, the country provided military equipment to supplement the war coalition's efforts in Iraq, followed by the deployment of a submarine and a frigate. These contributions took place even though the CDA's prospective coalition partner, the social democratic PvdA, was explicitly opposed to Dutch commitment in the war.

Following the collapse of the CDA-PvdA talks due to differences in the parties' approach to economic policy, the CDA began pursuing its old governing partner, the VVD, which had won 28 seats in the January 2003 elections. In need of a third coalition partner to secure a parliamentary majority, the CDA turned to a distant competitor on the political spectrum, D66, and sought to add its six parliamentary seats to the new government. The negotiations among the three parties began in April 2003 and were finalized in May, producing a new tripartite minimum-winning coalition by the end of that month.[59] Less than two weeks later, on June 6, the new Balkenende government decided to go beyond supporting the war politically. It agreed to contribute militarily by declaring its decision to deploy 1,100 Dutch troops to strengthen the SFIR—the war coalition's peacekeeping force—in the Iraqi province of Al Muthanna by August 2003.[60]

In sum, the Netherlands took incremental steps toward contributing to the US-led war in Iraq. Most importantly, the nature of the country's commitments intensified—from political support to military support—even though the parties that were involved in these actual and prospective coalitions grew further apart from each other along the political spectrum. Clearly, this episode defeats the veto players logic. But what explains it?

Let us start by looking at the initial decision to "politically support" the war. After losing its electoral mandate in October 2002, the CDA-VVD-LPF caretaker government was in a precarious position. But did the government's precarious position constitute a challenge to its intentions to join the war? Was this decision a deliberate choice or was it forced on the government given the circumstances? In other words, was

56. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 9.
57. "Davids Commission Report," 522.
58. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, June 2003."
59. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, June 2003," 12.
60. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 10.

the decision to politically support the war merely a result of the government's caretaker status?[61]

Several accounts reflect on this question. On the one hand, an Economist Intelligence Unit report released as early as December 2002 points out that the country "seem[ed] prepared to provide military hardware to support the US in the region,"[62] implying that some form of military participation could well be possible *despite* the government's caretaker status. Clearly, some international observers considered the coalition politically capable of committing the Netherlands to the Iraq campaign not just on paper but also by sending military assistance. Others disagree, on the other hand, emphasizing the government's precarity. De Wijk, for instance, agrees with *The Economist*'s rapporteurs that government intended at the outset to officially join the war coalition like Denmark, but that its caretaker status likely prevented it from following through: "during the [Iraq] crisis the country was run by the outgoing Cabinet which lacked the power to make firm policy decisions. As a result, the government was unwilling, probably politically incapable to co-sign the letter of the 'gang of eight,'" De Wijk argues.[63] Everts takes a less definitive position. He notes that the prime minister's statements in 2002 were clearly signaling Dutch support for the war, but the form of this support was left open to speculation: Balkenende "announced that the Netherlands would 'support the US' if it came to a war," but he "did not in this context mention military support

61. Some readers might question whether LPF leader Pim Fortuyn's assassination in May 2002 can be separated from the decision-making process that led to the Dutch commitment in the 2003 war, and, as a result, whether the assassination makes this case a unique event that cannot be analyzed solely through the framework of coalition politics. Although the assassination was certainly an unusual disruption to Dutch politics, it did not have a direct impact on the Dutch behavior in Iraq. For one, the official request from the United States to join the war had arrived in November 2002, five months after Fortuyn's death and one month after the government had collapsed. Public support for LPF plummeted during this time: the party had won twenty-sox seats in May 2002, but polls indicated that it would win only four seats if elections were to be held in October 2002. See Van Holsteyn and Irwin, "The Dutch Parliamentary Elections of 2003." Further, Balkenende's statement on providing political support for the war came in March 2003, nearly six months after the government's caretaker term began. As I explain later in this chapter, the LPF criticized the decision to provide political support. The party was strongly in favor of supporting the war militarily. But because it did not have veto power anymore, the LPF's preference had no impact. Most importantly, the debate over Dutch commitments in Iraq continued even after the LPF lost its relevance as new governments were being negotiated after the January 2003 elections. So even though the Fortuyn assassination was a unique event that potentially forced the government to collapse in October 2002, the discussion over Dutch contributions were not shaped by that event and, in fact, continued to evolve long after that event.

62. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, December 2002," 7.

63. De Wijk, "Seeking the Right Balance," 157.

specifically."[64] It seems that there was no consensus among analysts over whether "political support" was a consequence of the coalition's caretaker status.

For some observers, the more pressing constraint on the Dutch decision makers was the country's historically delicate position between the United States and the European Union. Balkenende was aware of the balancing act he had to perform vis-à-vis his European partners; he was cautious not to antagonize the antiwar bloc in the EU, specifically France, Germany, and Belgium.[65] According to a March 2003 report of the Economist Intelligence Unit, this was the reason why Balkenende was reluctant to fold the Netherlands into the core of the war coalition by signing the "letter of eight."[66]

The strongest case against both "caretaker-ism" and "European-ism," however, came just prior the January 2003 elections from the caretaker government's own ranks. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was also held by the CDA, took a decidedly[67] Atlanticist position, articulating that "war was unavoidable and that, if and when it came, the Netherlands should side with the American politically as well as militarily."[68] This was perhaps the clearest indication that neither the government's caretaker position nor its relations vis-à-vis its European partners were tying its hands.

Others might argue that the government was not constrained internally by way of its caretaker status or due to its relations with the EU, but externally through its commitment to international law. After all, Balkenende's statement in March 2003, where he announced his government's political support for the war, had underscored the lack of a UN mandate. The answer to this question came several years later. In 2009, Balkenende requested an independent investigation to clarify and account for the government's decision-making process leading up to the war.[69] A "Commission of Inquiry into the Decision-Making on Iraq," also known as the "Davids Commission," was formed in response, and its final report

64. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 8.

65. Jockel and Massie, "In or Out?," 172.

66. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, March 2003," 15.

67. Despite the original willingness displayed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide military support, a retrospective investigation concluded that the government's position did not include an "offensive contribution to the US plans"—military participation in the war—unless independent investigators could prove that Iraq was failing to fulfill its obligations as mandated by the United Nations. "Davids Commission Report," 524.

68. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 7.

69. "Davids Commission Report," 519.

was published in 2010.[70] One area of emphasis in the report concerned the extent to which the debate over the necessity of a UN mandate for the war influenced the government's decision.

The Davids report concluded that "from the outset, the [Dutch] administration took the view that a new Security Council mandate for the use of force was politically desirable, but not legally indispensable. The basis for this stance was the so-called 'corpus theory': the belief that, taken as a body, the various Security Council resolutions on Iraq passed since 1990 constituted a mandate for the use of force, which was still valid in March 2003."[71] In other words, the lack of a UN mandate specifically targeting the 2003 operation was not an impediment for Dutch decision makers: they could have invested in the war militarily even in the absence of it. In this sense, the caretaker government's "political support" decision seems to be one of choice, not of necessity based on international law.

In sum, existing accounts suggest that the initial decision to support the Iraq war "politically, but not militarily" was a deliberate choice. As far as the normative dimension—the "Principles"—is concerned, the absence of an exclusive UN mandate was not a major obstacle preventing the government from joining the war coalition, although it would certainly have further legitimized a potential decision to contribute militarily. The Netherlands' ties to both the United States and the European Union could have had some constraining effect on the form of support that the country initially provided. "Political" support signaled the country's commitment to the United States without risking its relations with the European partners. Still, it seems this was hardly the key reason behind the government's decision, especially considering the intensification of commitments in the subsequent months. For this same reason, we can conclude that the government's caretaker status was not a major source of constraint either.

This brings us to the crux of the Dutch case. To understand why the caretaker government led by the CDA chose to commit only politically in March 2003, one has to look closer at the broader domestic political context. Specifically, we must situate this decision—as well as the subsequent decisions to send military equipment to Iraq and the ultimate troop deployment—in the process of government formation that had been simultaneously taking place first between the Christian Democrats and Labor, and then between the Christian Democrats, the VVD, and the D66. Why

70. The commission was led by the former president of the Dutch High Court W. J. M. Davids. The Davids report is now often used as a key source of evidence for investigating the Dutch decision to support the war in Iraq. See Jockel and Massie, "In or Out?"

71. "Davids Commission Report," 524.

did the initial decision preclude military support? How was it possible for the Netherlands to make more assertive commitments toward the Iraq campaign over time, even though the parties' ideological differences were growing?

Ideological Composition: As table 5.1 above summarizes, the three coalition arrangements across the volatile 2002–2003 period were remarkably different from each other in terms of their ideological composition. In fact, the CDA-VVD-LPF coalition was the most compact of the three, given the individual locations of the political parties on the left-right spectrum and how far each party was situated from the overall mean ideological position of the coalition. For the other two coalition arrangements, there was greater dispersion given the parties' ideological placements. These differences had to be reconciled in order for these arrangements to work out. Therefore, the ways the parties chose to reconcile these differences should have had a profound effect on decision making, including the decisions regarding Dutch involvement in the Iraq war.

First, consider the positions of the parties participating in the short-lived Balkenende government, namely the CDA, VVD and LPF, which came to power in July 2002. All these parties are situated on the right side of the political spectrum, and because they enjoyed parliamentary majority at the time, they had no reason to compromise to garner the parliamentary opposition's support (or fragment it) in the run-up to the war even though they were in caretaker status. Further, these governing partners all had strong Atlanticist positions regarding Dutch foreign policy, which would reliably signal that they were willing to commit the Netherlands militarily. For instance, LPF had argued later in March 2003 that the "political support" decision was a disappointment. The party's leader reportedly said that "Holland would leave its most important ally, the United States, isolated by refusing military support."[72] The VVD has always been a proponent of Atlanticism in Dutch foreign policy, and along with the LPF, they had "wanted nothing less than full military support for war."[73] The CDA took a more risk-averse approach. The party "suggested that the Netherlands should seek to replace US forces elsewhere,"[74] which still indicated their interest in committing militarily, but also seeking to minimize potential losses by stationing the troops away from the conflict's ground zero.

The opposition parties disagreed with these preferences. Labor had a

72. "Crisis in Dutch Cabinet Formation over Iraq."

73. De Wijk, "Seeking the Right Balance"; Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 10.

74. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 10.

position of "total rejection of a war in Iraq," including any form of Dutch support for it, military *and* political. The Greens argued that the country was betraying its "principles" and "contributing to the violation of international law by giving its political support to the US."[75]

In sum, all the parties in the CDA-VVD-LPF minimum-winning coalition government at the time were supportive of participating in the war at some military capacity, while the opposition parties were against it, but the Netherlands ended up declaring its "political, but not military support" for the war. Why was that?

Logrolling: It was the prospect of participating in a new government, which was being negotiated between the CDA and the Labor Party by March 2003, that compelled the existing CDA-led coalition to commit less decisively than it had originally intended. One CDA leader reacted to the PvdA's hard opposition against the Iraq campaign as "sad."[76] The Christian Democrats left it at that, though. Their anticipation of having the Labor Party in the incoming government was an important reason why they did not antagonize it further. Instead, they ended up diluting the outgoing government's original preference for providing military support. Some existing accounts emphasize just that. According to Everts, "Mr. Balkenende could have insisted and persisted in his real conviction that Netherlands' clear interest was to fully join the 'coalition of the willing.' The fact that he did not should (also) be seen in the light of his wish to keep the door open to the PvdA as a new coalition partner."[77] In a similar vein, Verbeek notes that Dutch policymaking over Iraq was "constrained by the coalition talks between Christian-Democrats and Social Democrats (PvdA)," where "the latter party had a strong international law abiding policy resisting any war without authorization by a new Security Council resolution."[78] For the CDA-led government, then, it was less about Dutch compliance with the international law per se than about accommodating the PvdA's strong preference for a UN mandate that led to the "political support" decision.

So far, this outcome echoes the "compromise" solution as predicted by the veto players logic. Although the outgoing tripartite coalition had the capacity to commit militarily, the CDA's difficult position between the outgoing and the incoming coalitions forced it to compromise to keep the

75. "Crisis in Dutch Cabinet Formation over Iraq."

76. "Crisis in Dutch Cabinet Formation over Iraq." See also Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 105.

77. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 26.

78. Verbeek, "Does Might Still Make Right?," 209–10. See also Ten Cate and Zaalberg, *A Gentle Occupation*, 33.

PvdA somewhat content with regards to Iraq.[79] The "political support" decision was not assertive enough to disrupt the talks with the PvdA, but was still good enough to appease the VVD and the LPF on the one hand[80] and maintain stable relations with the United States on the other. It was a middle-of-the-road foreign policy as Elman calls it. This also corroborates the argument that Kaarbo raises in her analysis of the decision.[81]

What took place after the declaration of political support on March 18, however, illustrates where the veto player explanation falls apart. It brings us to *logrolling*, specifically, in this case, clipping together policies with office perks. This mechanism explains how Dutch commitments intensified first during the CDA-PvdA talks and then on the eve of the new CDA-VVD-D66 coalition, even though the parties involved in both of these arrangements were ideologically further away from each other, and had more divergent positions on the Iraq war, than the outgoing CDA-VVD-LPF coalition.

Let us take a closer look at the CDA-PvdA negotiations to see how the more intense war commitments were possible under these circumstances. The talks between the two parties began on February 5, 2003.[82] By March, the PvdA leader argued that "given the absence of a UN mandate, the PvdA would not support the war."[83] An Economist Intelligence Unit report from the same month argues that in the process of negotiations "the parties [CDA and PvdA] have clashed several times over the Iraq issue, which could prove a breaking point in the event of a US-led war against Iraq without UN authorisation."[84] Recall that Balkenende's March 2003 statement echoed exactly this position: that in the absence of a UN mandate it was difficult to sustain *draagvlak*, and therefore, the Netherlands would only support the war effort politically.

The Dutch government, however, soon began taking steps to defy this position. First, it authorized the deployment of military equipment to Turkey. Specifically, the country sent Patriot missiles to Turkey in February 2003 to defend the NATO ally against any escalation in Iraq.[85] To respond to criticisms framing the deployment as active military participation in

79. Ten Cate and Zaalberg, *A Gentle Occupation*, 33.

80. This strategy did backfire though, attracting criticism from both VVD and LPF.

81. Elman, "Unpacking Democracy," 99; Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.

82. Van Holsteyn and Irwin, "The Dutch Parliamentary Elections of 2003," 162.

83. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 22.

84. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, March 2003," 3.

85. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 8–10.

the war, "the government labeled these weapons 'defensive.'"[86] The PvdA agreed on the missile deployment once the French, Belgian, and German governments also "dropped their objections" in response to Turkey's official request.[87] Some observers concluded that this was not a big issue and that the two political parties simply "agreed to disagree."[88] The PvdA's change of heart over the deployment of Patriot equipment, however, was particularly perplexing. The party's leader, Wouter Bos, had said in March 2003, "There should be no Dutch political or military support for the war. No people, *no equipment*."[89]

Despite the PvdA's "no equipment" position, the CDA-led caretaker government continued to intensify its commitments and "provided military hardware to support the US in the Gulf region"[90] after March 2003. This material contribution to the war took place as the CDA was still negotiating with the PvdA. By this time the PvdA had "accepted the war (as a fact of life) but rejected any military participation of the Netherlands."[91] But when the government sent "a submarine and frigate to the Middle East under US military command," thus now explicitly making resource commitments to the war, "Labor balked, arguing that this action violated the agreement because it went beyond political support."[92] The accounts suggest, however, that the PvdA neither rejected any of these moves nor left the negotiation table in protest. To the contrary, Labor and its leader, Wouter Bos, came around within a week. In a dramatic turn of events, he and Balkenende "agreed that the Netherlands was part of the US-led coalition and that the US intervention was justified under UN resolution 1441."[93]

Recall that the decision to provide political, but not military support was taken in March 2003 specifically in anticipation of a possible PvdA partnership in the new government. Within weeks, the CDA-led caretaker government revised its initial position, openly providing far more explicit support for the Iraq war. Meanwhile, the senior partner of this coalition had been negotiating with a prospective governing partner (namely, the PvdA) who was strictly opposed to any form of support for this war. What

86. "New Invasion Report: Dutch Government Misrepresented Case for Iraq War."
87. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, March 2003," 15.
88. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, April 2003," 1; See also Jockel and Massie, "In or Out?," 170–71.
89. Quoted in Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 105. Emphasis added.
90. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, April 2003," 1.
91. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, March 2003," 15.
92. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 106.
93. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 106.

explains this increase in commitment intensity in the face of such high levels of policy incongruence between the CDA and the PvdA?

The answer had to do with the prospect of assuming executive office. Labor was eying a seat at the government and was willing to logroll with the Christian Democrats for it. Van der Meulen and Soeters suggest that the interaction of the PvdA with the CDA despite their deep disagreements over the war "did leave open their [PvdA's] chances of participating in a new center-left government."[94] PvdA continued the negotiations despite the intensification of commitments in Iraq because it did not want to forgo the opportunity to join the new governing coalition. The party did not quit the negotiations, for instance, even though it was opposed to the deployment of the Patriot missiles in Turkey.[95] In fact, the party "dodged the issue" when the CDA almost jokingly criticized it for being "ambiguous" on Iraq a week before the coalition talks formally began.[96] Clearly, the real reason behind PvdA's acquiescence had to do with participating in the new governing coalition. Everts notes that "the PvdA, *which was keen on becoming a governing party* (again), did not want to encumber [coalition] negotiations by making too much trouble over the dispatch of Patriot missiles to Turkey."[97] Perhaps most dramatically, it was revealed months later that the PvdA had even agreed during the negotiations to send Dutch marines to Iraq after the war.[98] In short, rather than imposing the status quo (as proponents of the veto players logic would expect), or trying to pull the CDA toward its own preference point (as proponents of the hijacking logic would expect), Labor conceded to the CDA's efforts to more assertively commit the Netherlands to the Iraq war in return for a seat in the government.

The coalition talks between the two parties ultimately collapsed in April 2003 due to disagreements over government spending.[99] Logrolling continues to explain the intensification of Dutch commitments in Iraq after this date, however, as the CDA began negotiating with the VVD and the D66 to form the new government.

We know that the centrist VVD had governed alongside the CDA in the caretaker government, and its historically Atlanticist approach to foreign policy was already congruent with the CDA's position on Iraq. A

94. Van der Meulen and Soeters, "Dutch Courage," 557.
95. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 8.
96. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 20.
97. Everts, "The Netherlands: Procurement without Debate," 564. Emphasis added.
98. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Netherlands, September 2003," 15.
99. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 106.

majority coalition between the two would thus have been the best option for these parties to pursue their assertive foreign policy preferences in Iraq. This was impossible, however, given their combined seat share in the parliament following the January 2003 elections. They needed a third partner. The center-left D66 was a viable candidate, but it stood further away from the CDA and the VVD. The D66 was originally opposed to Dutch involvement in Iraq. During the final parliamentary debate on Iraq on March 18, 2003, the leader of the party, Boris Dittrich, stated, "This is not our war. We think that the government should give neither political nor military support."[100] Despite their disapproval, the D66 formed a minimum-winning coalition with the CDA and VVD in May 2003. In June, this government agreed to deploy Dutch troops to Iraq.

What explains the D66's shift from an all-out opposition to Dutch involvement in Iraq to agreeing to station troops there? Just like the PvdA, the D66's desire to be a part of the governing coalition trumped all else. Kaarbo's interview with Jan Hoekema, a member of the D66, is telling. Hoekema explained that the party "had strongly opposed the war but agreed to concede the issue *in exchange for a role in the government*."[101] Even though the D66 was a pivotal junior party in this minimum-winning coalition with blackmail potential, it chose to forgo its veto power and did not try to pull the government toward its own preference point (that is, no further involvement in Iraq). In August 2003, 1,100 Dutch peacekeepers were sent to southern Iraq to replace the US marines in the region with the consent of this new tripartite minimum-winning coalition.[102] Clearly for the D66, the party's involvement in the government was far more important than the country's involvement in the war. Although this coalition was far more ideologically dispersed than its predecessor from 2002, it was able to commit far more assertively because the junior partner chose to logroll with it.

In conclusion, the deep ideological divisions between the Dutch political parties and the corresponding disagreements on the Iraq war were mitigated by the pivotal junior partners' greater desire to participate in the government. Aspiring to join the new governing coalition, both the PvdA and the D66 dropped their determined opposition against Dutch involvement in Iraq and conceded to the initiatives taken by the outgoing government, particularly the CDA. As a result, these ideologically dispersed minimum-winning coalitions were able to commit more assertively than expected.

100. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 23.
101. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 106. Emphasis added.
102. "Dutch Send 1,000 Troops to Iraq."

Public Opinion: To what extent was the Dutch public opinion influential on the initial decision to give political support and the subsequent decisions to deploy equipment and troops to Iraq? Did it have a large enough impact to outweigh the effects of the coalition arrangements between 2002 and 2003? Polls suggest that the Dutch were by and large against the war in Iraq. One study found that by March 18—the day of the parliament's "political support" decision—33 percent of the respondents supported the war whereas 63 percent were opposed to it.[103] When asked about their support for their country's possible military participation in the war, a slim majority (51 percent) of these respondents noted that they were against military involvement, including the option to "replace American troops elsewhere," which was an option considered by the CDA in the run-up to the final decision.[104]

I pointed out in chapter 2 that isolating the direct effect of public opinion could be a difficult task in itself. Another way to gauge its influence on policy is by looking at how the decision makers utilize public opinion to assert their own positions. Do decision makers refer to the mood of the public to justify their preferences? The frequency with which the political parties refer to public opinion polls—emphasizing the negative polls—in their statements to rationalize their opposition to the war should help us understand how prevalent public opinion was in the Dutch political landscape. Using this measure, Everts concludes that "public opinion did not act as a direct constraint," but rather it "was interpreted, mediated, and instrumentalized by the various parties in parliament"[105] to limit the commitment options of the government. Public opinion was utilized by the decision makers to further legitimize their positions, including those who *wanted the Netherlands to join the war*. On March 17, the day before the parliamentary vote, Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende stated, "Nationally there is no broad support for active participation by the Netherlands in actions against Saddam." He added, "I am referring to the feelings in society, as well as to the level of support within parliament. Therefore, the cabinet has decided that it can politically back-up action against Iraq, but that it will not provide any military contribution."[106] We now know, though, that the government did provide military support afterwards. This was enabled by the PvdA and D66, which conceded to the CDA in exchange for a role in the government. Clearly, the Dutch did not support the war in

103. Everts and Isernia, "The War in Iraq," 316–17.
104. Everts and Isernia, "The War in Iraq," 316–17.
105. Everts, "The Netherlands and the War on Iraq," 19–20, 25.
106. Van der Meulen and Soeters, "Dutch Courage," 548.

Iraq. The country's politicians used this information strategically to justify their decisions, both for and against involvement in Iraq.

Although one can argue that public opinion was one of the reasons the Balkenende government limited its commitment to providing political support, we now know that it was not at all a hard constraint. The caretaker government sent military equipment soon after its political support decision, despite the consistent public disapproval. Further, its successor coalition decided to send troops to Iraq later in June 2003, even though only 38 percent of the Dutch had agreed with the deployment decision—41 percent were against it, and 21 percent had no opinion.[107] More remarkably, although the public was appreciative of the Dutch contingent in Iraq, the operation itself was much less popular than the country's scandalous and tragic involvement in Srebrenica between 1994 and 1995.[108] Following the news of a troop casualty about a year after the deployment, in "May 2004, a majority of around 55 percent did not want to prolong the mission, not because of the first casualty, but rather because of a negative judgment about how things were going in Iraq."[109] Despite the strength of public opposition against Dutch presence in Iraq, the mission did not officially end until March 2005.[110]

In sum, public opinion was hardly a constraint on the commitment behavior of the Netherlands during the war in Iraq. Although the Dutch had been strongly and consistently against the war itself as well as their country's military involvement in it, the political parties participating in the three minimum-winning coalitional arrangements—the outgoing caretaker government, the CDA-PvdA coalition-in-the-making, and the incoming CDA-VVD-D66 coalition—all opted for supporting the Iraq war in increasing degrees of commitment. The parties' interests in governing together trumped all else.

Threat to National Survival: Were the Dutch commitments to the war motivated by perceptions of national threat? A "national threat" explanation expects that partisan differences will be put aside in making commitment decisions to protect the nation. If the commitment decisions were made primarily out of concerns regarding national security in the Netherlands, then logrolling among the ideologically diverse parties would lose its explanatory power.

International terrorism and the historically belligerent behavior of

107. Ten Cate and Zaalberg, *A Gentle Occupation*, 11–12.
108. Ten Cate and Zaalberg, *A Gentle Occupation*, 11–12.
109. Van der Meulen and Soeters, "Dutch Courage," 557.
110. "Dutch FM Admits That Looking Back Invasion of Iraq Was 'Not Wise.'"

Saddam Hussein were raised frequently by world leaders to frame military operations in the post-9/11 environment, certainly including the Iraq war.[111] The Dutch government, too, resorted to these arguments. They pointed toward "international sources of threat" and "terrorism" to justify the intervention and to stand in solidarity with the United States. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the prominent CDA politician and minister of foreign affairs in the CDA-VVD-LPF caretaker coalition, had repeatedly emphasized this viewpoint. During a parliamentary session in September 2002, he stated the coalition's opinion that Hussein was "a life-sized threat to the region and beyond."[112] In an op-ed he published in the US media less than a year later, De Hoop Scheffer would argue that "the world is a dangerous place, and we can only deal with these dangers by working together," adding that "to effectively counter the threats facing us, coalitions of the willing may be sometimes necessary."[113]

These overtures failed to resonate among the public, though. Mass perceptions of threat could have had a "rally 'round the flag" effect, inciting public support around the war effort and allowing the Dutch decision makers to commit with greater confidence. Although some argued that several European countries, including the Netherlands, had considered Iraq under Saddam's leadership a threat, "much more diverse was the range of opinions on the question of what to do about that threat."[114] Among those opinions, direct military involvement was not an option for the Dutch electorate.

In short, there was neither an overwhelming use of threat rhetoric among Dutch political parties to justify their decisions toward Iraq, nor did this framing appeal to their electorate. In fact, the country's commitments got *more* intense, not *less*—from political to military support—as the war progressed. If national security was a key reason, then we would have expected Dutch commitments to be at their most intense when the threat was at its highest during the initial stages of the fighting (when Saddam's capabilities were more credible) rather than at the tail end of the operation.

Political Leadership: To what extent did the political leaders in the Netherlands influence the country's commitment decisions? I have explained in chapter 2 that leaders' personal interest and dispositions on the foreign policy problem might intrude into the domestic decision-making process, thus exerting a greater influence on the policy choice than expected.

111. Ten Cate and Zaalberg, *A Gentle Occupation*.

112. Quoted in Ten Cate and Zaalberg, *A Gentle Occupation*, 31.

113. De Hoop Scheffer, "A New NATO Needed." See also De Wijk, "Seeking the Right Balance," 156.

114. Everts and Isernia, "The War in Iraq," 273.

Existing research encourages me to investigate the effect of individual leadership on the Dutch decisions regarding Iraq. In his analysis of twelve foreign policy cases during the Cold War, Everts finds that leaders' personal involvement influences the country's foreign policy choices as a motivating factor, if not as a direct explanation of its commitment behaviors.[115] "It does help," Everts concludes, to see the implementation of a foreign policy, "but it is not essential if the minister is personally committed to the issue in question."[116] The post–Cold War period is decidedly less constraining for small states like the Netherlands, however, which should allow national politicians to exert more influence on foreign policy decisions. Further, when it comes to wars of choice like the 2003 Iraq war, there is greater reason to expect individual convictions to sway the decision-making process. Dyson illustrates this dynamic in his assessment of British prime minister Tony Blair's leadership in the run-up to the war.[117] I want to answer if the Dutch decision was also swayed by certain individuals in the national political scene.

To do so, I focus on the prime minister, Jan Peter Balkenende, and the minister of foreign affairs, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. Although the prime ministerial post is institutionally weaker in the Netherlands than it is elsewhere in Europe, it has gotten stronger and more influential in recent years.[118] Kaarbo concludes that in the post–Cold War era, the visibility of the Dutch prime minister in foreign affairs has even "result[ed] in competition with the foreign minister and more politicization of foreign policy."[119] The foreign minister has also been considered a dominant actor in Dutch politics, from whom "most initiatives in the realm of foreign policy originate."[120] Even though Rochon argues that the bureaucratic influence of this post has declined in recent years,[121] it is reasonable to expect that the person holding this position—alongside the prime minister—still holds more power in foreign affairs than most other individuals in the cabinet.

What does the evidence suggest? Were the prime minister and foreign minister influential in committing the Netherlands to the war in Iraq? Evidence suggests that the prime minister's role was nearly nonexistent, espe-

115. Everts, "The Politics of Persuasion."

116. Everts, "The Politics of Persuasion," 132.

117. Dyson, "Personality and Foreign Policy."

118. Andeweg and Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands*, 2005; Andeweg, "Coalition Politics in the Netherlands."

119. Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*, 78.

120. Baehr, "The Dutch Foreign Policy Elite," 226; Baehr, "Trials and Errors."

121. Rochon, *The Netherlands: Negotiating Sovereignty in an Interdependent World*. See also Kaarbo, *Coalition Politics and Cabinet Decision Making*.

cially compared to Denmark's Anders Fogh Rasmussen (chapter 4). The Davids Commission's report on the Iraq war concludes that "the Prime Minister took little or no lead in debates on the Iraq question. He left the matter of Iraq entirely to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Only after January 2003 did the Prime Minister take a strong interest in the issue. However, by that time, the stance defined by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was firmly established as government policy."[122] In other words, neither the decision-making process that technically began in the last quarter of 2002 nor the deliberations on the possibility of Dutch commitment in the war had been driven by Balkenende, even when he became a more central actor in the process after the January 2003 election.

This leaves the foreign minister, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, as the only key individual in the foreign-policy-making environment in this period. If the government's policy was indeed driven by the ministry's position on Iraq, as the Davids report has concluded, then it is likely that the person controlling this portfolio had significant influence on it. And it seems that he did, especially early on. Verbeek observes that Balkenende's "preoccupation with domestic politics allowed Minister of Foreign Affairs Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to take the lead over Iraq."[123] The Davids report explains that the foreign minister began to inquire about the Iraq campaign as early as August 2002, three months prior to Washington's official inquiry to the Dutch for assistance.[124] By the time de Hoop Scheffer gave his first statement on the issue to the Parliament in September 2002, "neither the Cabinet, nor Prime Minister Balkenende, nor Defence Minister Korthals were previously consulted about [its] content."[125] Considering that Dutch cabinets act collectively when taking critical foreign policy decisions, it seems the foreign minister had attempted a fait accompli by drafting a position ahead of and in isolation from his cabinet.[126]

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer became NATO's secretary-general in January 2004. Certainly, his ascendance to the zenith of the transatlantic alliance prompted speculations. Perhaps his op-ed in the US press was a signal of his ambition to earn credit among decision makers in Washington; after all, he could have taken his views to a Dutch newspaper but chose not

122. "Davids Commission Report," 529. Quoted in Pijpers, "The Truth about the Dutch Involvement in the Iraq War," 50.

123. Verbeek, "Does Might Still Make Right?," 209.

124. Pijpers, "The Truth about the Dutch Involvement in the Iraq War," 53.

125. "Davids Commission Report," 529. Quoted in Pijpers, "The Truth about the Dutch Involvement in the Iraq War," 50.

126. Sobel and Shiraev, *International Public Opinion and the Bosnia Crisis*, 290.

to. Some argued that the Dutch decision to give "political but not military" support "turned out to be a brilliant move" for him to earn this appointment,[127] suggesting that the minister's personal motivations were influential in shaping this decision. The Davids Commission's findings, however, concluded otherwise, saying that his personal ambition was not a driving factor.[128] Although Jaap de Hoop Scheffer had influence on shaping the Dutch response in the early stages of the war, and even though his leadership might have earned him the secretary-general position in NATO, there is no conclusive evidence to substantiate the claim that the country's involvement in Iraq was driven entirely by him and his career motivations. More importantly, the subsequent decisions to deploy military equipment and, later, troops to Iraq were not driven by the minister himself.

Conclusion

The Dutch involvement in the 2003 Iraq war speaks to the broader debates on coalition foreign policy in important ways. First, it provides a good window to observe how assertive commitments are possible in the contexts where we least expect them. The case study presented in this chapter shows where the veto players logic falls short of explaining the commitment decisions of minimum-winning coalitions, especially when they suffer from ideological disparities.

Logrolling provides a strong alternative explanation to make sense of this finding. It allows parties from diverse political backgrounds and with different policy positions to still commit decisively in foreign affairs, including high-profile military operations. Existing research often understands "logrolling in the context of bargaining for the formation of coalitions where side-payments are only instruments for entering the majority coalition."[129] The immediate anticipation of joining the government forces junior partners to concede the same foreign policy issues on which they originally had firm positions, a major "side-payment" to the senior partner, indeed.

This remains the strongest explanation for the Dutch decisions between 2002 and 2003 despite the public's disapproval of the war and the visible

127. De Wijk, "Seeking the Right Balance," 158.

128. Davids Commission Report," 533. Quoted in Pijpers, "The Truth about the Dutch Involvement in the Iraq War," 54.

129. Parisi, "Votes and Outcomes," 184. See also McGann, "Logrolling and Coalitions," 452.

assertiveness of the foreign minister, especially at the earlier stages of the national debate on the country's involvement in the war. While the Netherlands' historical relationship with the United States constituted a hospitable environment for its decision to provide political support for the war, the evidence presented here shows that its incremental increase in commitments, despite the lack of a UN mandate, was made possible by the dynamics of coalition politics.

Second, and relatedly, the Dutch episode defeats a possible alternative mechanism, namely, junior party hijacking. Junior parties assume a pivotal role in minimum-winning arrangements. The survival of the coalition depends on them because only with them can the coalition clear the majority threshold in the parliament. This gives junior parties disproportionate influence in the decision-making process. Their ability to blackmail the other partners with withdrawal allows them to hijack the coalition and pull it closer to their own preference point. The Dutch case, however, shows the weakness of such a decision by shedding light on the gray zones of government. Had any of the parties in either of the three minimum-winning arrangements wanted to prevent the Dutch commitments in the Iraq war, they were in a perfectly suitable position to do so. That these commitments took place, then, can be explained primarily by the conscious decisions of the political parties, specifically the PvdA and the D66. Although the PvdA, and later on the D66, were pivotal to the survival of their respective coalitions, these parties were also forced to make their own decisions regarding the Iraq war in the thick of the government formation process. They were put in a difficult position by having to choose between getting a seat at the executive table and playing "principled politics" by maintaining their opposition against Dutch involvement in the war. When it was time to make a decision, both of these junior parties chose office over principles. The competitive nature of domestic politics that generates minimum-winning coalitions in the Netherlands was responsible for this behavior.

These observations are certainly facilitated by the fact that the Iraq decisions spilled over to different coalition arrangements between 2002 and 2003. In this sense, analyzing the Dutch involvement in the Iraq war makes a good case for moving beyond the snapshots of "events" and contextualizing the quantitative findings with qualitative evidence. Office gains constitute a relatively long-term goal for all political parties, especially where extragovernmental mechanisms of influence on the policymaking process are weak. These long-term interests may mitigate the likelihood of deadlock and policy paralysis among ideologically contentious parties, facilitating more assertive foreign policy commitments than we expect. As

we shall see in the next chapter, the prospect of participating in future governments is important for smaller parties in oversized coalitions too. When the structure of the government obfuscates the mechanisms of responsibility attribution vis-à-vis the electorate, political parties end up in an environment favorable for following their office-seeking instincts rather than representing the opinions of the public.

SIX

Loyal to Whom?

Finland's Decision to Join the Eurozone

In the previous two chapters, I demonstrated how minority and minimum-winning coalitions could make foreign policy commitments even though the odds were seemingly stacked against them. In Denmark, the two minority coalitions were structurally vulnerable in the parliament, yet they were able to commit their country to the military operations in Iraq both in 1990 and then in 2003. How? Because they were able to either ideologically divide the parliamentary opposition, or, when such fragmentation was not possible, they were able to logroll with it. In the Netherlands, as the decision to join the 2003 Iraq war spilled over across multiple coalitional arrangements, the ideological distance and policy difference between the parties posed an obstacle. Yet the Dutch ultimately committed to the war effort as the reluctant coalition partners ended up lending their support to it in exchange for office seats.

As I theorized in chapter 2 and quantitatively demonstrated in chapter 3, not all coalitions face these kinds of impediments. Surplus majority (oversized) coalitions, in particular, do not suffer from the structural constraints that minority coalitions do in the parliament since they enjoy a substantial and comfortable majority of seats. Similarly, oversized coalitions are not as hard-pressed by the "junior partner" veto as are minimum-winning coalitions precisely because they include more parties than they need to maintain their parliamentary majority. In effect, veto power is distributed unevenly in oversized coalitions, where "surplus" junior par-

ties lack the "blackmail potential"[1] that all junior parties otherwise have in minimum-winning contexts. If these surplus parties disagree with the government's policy, there is not much that they can do to change its course.

In the absence of such structural constraints, the foreign policy pursuits of oversized coalitions are influenced by another mechanism instead, namely, responsibility diffusion. These governments can better circumvent electoral accountability due to their size and can impede the voters' ability to identify whom to blame for unpopular foreign policy behavior when it is time for re-election. If diffusion works, these parties should barely lose voter support in subsequent elections. Anticipating that they will retain votes regardless of these unpopular policies, parties in oversized coalitions might therefore choose to remain loyal to the other governing parties instead of to their constituents. This way, parties maintain their role as credible coalition partners and maximize their chances of joining possible future governments. To demonstrate how these dynamics take place, I turn to Finland's decision to adopt the European Union's common currency by joining the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

Some readers might question my case selection in this chapter, asking if I am comparing apples to oranges: why do I shift the policy domain from security (chapters 4 and 5) to political economy, and what value does this shift add to my theoretical argument? This is a fair question that deserves a discussion.

First, the EMU decision constitutes yet another "hard test" of my theory, demonstrating its robustness. In chapters 4 and 5, I argued that the dynamics of coalition politics shaped foreign policy making and the strength of the Danish and Dutch commitments abroad even when the issues at hand (security, international threats, and alliance relationships, particularly with the United States) were the types of issues where we often expect domestic political factors to take a back seat. Importantly, the role of public opinion remained muted both in the Danish and Dutch decisions to join the 2003 Iraq war as well as in the Danish decision to contribute to the 1990 Iraq war, either because public opinion was fluctuating (e.g., Denmark in 1990), divided (e.g., Denmark in 2003), or because it was used strategically by politicians to justify their actions (e.g., Netherlands in 2003). The absence of public pressure during these episodes would remind some readers of the notion that security and defense issues are of "second-order" and less worthy of the public's scrutiny, therefore less consequential

1. Kaarbo, "Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making"; Kaarbo, "Influencing Peace Junior Partners in Israeli Coalition Cabinets."

for policy as well as for the electoral prospects of incumbents. Politicians perhaps do "waltz before a blind audience" when it comes to these issues.[2]

If this is a plausible explanation for the muted effect of public opinion on security and defense, then a robust test of the responsibility diffusion hypothesis requires an issue area where public opinion is far more salient and powerful. After all, the ability of surplus majority coalitions to evade negative public opinion is precisely the mechanism that undergirds the diffusion thesis to explain their international commitments. Therefore, explaining the commitment behavior of surplus coalitions on a foreign economic issue such as the EMU should be a much harder test of the diffusion hypothesis. If I can demonstrate that the EMU decision moved forward because of the nature of surplus coalition dynamics in Finland even though it was a highly salient issue of foreign economic policy that received major public backlash, this should provide stronger support for my argument. If the surplus majority coalition in Finland was able to diffuse responsibility and circumvent electoral backlash for a key commitment such as joining the EMU, then these types of coalitions should have a much easier time diffusing responsibility and engaging in international commitments concerning second-order issues of security and defense.

Second, the events dataset that I utilized in chapter 3 already includes events pertaining to the economic relationships between states themselves as well as between states and international organizations. The target sectors of nearly 15 percent of the foreign events in my dataset are recorded as businesses, markets, monetary units, and the like, indicating that economic issues were among the tally of international interactions, as they should be. Therefore, it is befitting to demonstrate qualitatively that coalition governance similarly shapes the foreign policy of economic relationships, not just security and defense. In other words, I am not shifting the domain per se, but rather holding a bigger flashlight toward foreign policy to reveal its breadth and diversity beyond security and defense.

The EMU decision was a major international commitment for Finland for two reasons. First, joining the EMU would mean replacing the Finnish markka with the common European currency—the euro—as well as integrating Finland's monetary policy to the European Union's. Second, the EMU decision quickly became a sign of the country's commitment to the EU itself. Finland's then prime minister, Paavo Lipponen, transformed the EMU decision into a broader debate concerning Finland's membership in the EU. He swiftly raised the stakes by arguing that if Finland stayed

2. Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida, "Foreign Affairs and Issue Voting."

out of the EMU, it might consider leaving the EU altogether "even if this meant decoupling Finland's fate from that of its closest partner within the EU, Sweden."[3] In a subsequent interview, Lipponen stated that this was "a foreign policy issue," which "in many respects . . . link economic and political issues in a totally new way."[4] As a result, the EMU decision was framed and understood as a major foreign policy commitment for this country.

Finland also provides an excellent setting to study the foreign policy behavior of oversized coalitions. Since the country's independence in 1917, no single party has been able to assume a parliamentary majority.[5] Instead, Finland has been governed by majority coalition governments since the 1970s[6] and by surplus majority coalitions since 1987,[7] suggesting that this coalition type is not at all an exception in Finnish politics.[8] Furthermore, the 1990s mark a period of visible transformation of the political system in Finland from semipresidentialism to parliamentarism. As I explain below, the supremacy of the president in foreign policy had not only weakened substantially throughout the 1990s but was replaced entirely with the parliamentary government, especially in EU matters. This institutional transformation was finally codified into the country's new constitution in 2000. It is against this backdrop that the EMU decision took place. In 1998, despite the strong and consistent public opposition among the Finns against joining the European Union's common currency zone, the five-party oversized coalition led by Paavo Lipponen not only went ahead with the proposal and secured parliamentary approval but also got re-elected a year later to serve for another full term, until 2003. How was that possible?

In answering this question, this chapter diverges from the previous two chapters in a number of ways, but at the same time it complements and strengthens the book's coalition politics framework to explain foreign policy commitments. First, as I have discussed earlier, Finland's EMU membership decision does not belong to the conventional security and defense policy domain, but in illustrating how coalition politics influence foreign economic policy, the case expands the applicability of the theo-

3. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, November 1996," 7.

4. Prime Minister's Office, "Finland and the EMU," 17. Quoted in Novack, "The Different Approaches of Two Neighbors," 1.

5. Arter, "From the 'Rainbow Coalition' Back Down to 'Red Earth'?," 153.

6. Sundberg, "Finland," 971.

7. Raunio, "Europe and the Finnish Parliamentary Election of March 2003."

8. Between 1945 and 2000, thirty-three of the thirty-seven Finnish governments were coalitions; twenty of those coalitions were surplus majority. See Aylott, Blomgren, and Bergman, *Political Parties in Multi-Level Polities*, 91; Hobolt and Karp, "Voters and Coalition Governments."

retical framework to other, more diverse areas of foreign affairs. For this reason, security-related and geopolitical considerations do not receive as much emphasis in this chapter as they did in the previous two chapters.

Second and relatedly, I pay far more attention to the role of public opinion and electoral behavior in foreign policy commitments in this chapter than I did in chapters 4 and 5. The diffusion explanation for oversized coalitions rests fundamentally on the government's ability to pursue unpopular policies and still get re-elected; therefore, I must highlight specifically the relationship between the governing parties and voters in Finland in the context of the EMU decision not as an alternative explanation, but as a key observable that helps demonstrate my main explanation. Still, in addition to focusing more carefully on the role of public opinion, I continue to investigate the effects of other alternative explanations including political leadership, logrolling, and the EU's legal framework in the run-up to the EMU decision.

To do so, I utilize the Economist Intelligence Unit's monthly country reports to track the domestic political debates surrounding the EMU decision as well as the changes in public opinion. I also rely on the Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy (EILEN) of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs to capture what took place in Finnish domestic and foreign policy at the time. Funded by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, among others, EILEN includes archival material on Finnish foreign policy as well as the detailed chronologies of foreign policy developments since 1973. I complement these sources with the academic literature on Finnish domestic and foreign policy, as well as analyses of the country's relations with the EU and EMU. In the remainder of the chapter, I provide an overview of Finland's domestic political system and foreign policy. Next, I present the political debate around the EMU as I analyze the government's decision to join the eurozone in the face of public opposition.

Parliamentarizing the System: Domestic Politics in Finland

Just like Denmark and the Netherlands, Finland's proportional representation rule generates a fragmented party system. The parties are located across the ideological spectrum, with the economic left-right and urban-rural cleavages defining the political landscape.[9] Raunio explains that the Finnish party system is characterized by corporatism and consensus-based

9. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 230.

politics, with three major parties historically holding the largest shares of votes.[10] These "Big Three" parties include the center-left Social Democratic Party (SDP), the rural-agrarian Center Party (KESK), and the conservative right-wing National Coalition Party (KOK).[11] The Big Three have generally captured between 50 and 65 percent of the national vote between 1945 and 2007.[12] Since the 1980s, it has become an informal rule for the formateur party (often one of the Big Three) to offer coalition partnership to a second member of the Big Three to minimize the possibility of a strong parliamentary opposition.[13] Indeed, this echoes the "fragmented opposition" hypothesis introduced in chapter 2.[14]

In addition to these three parties, the left-wing Left Alliance (VAS), the center-left Green League Party (VIHR), and the right-wing Swedish People's Party (RKP) often gain seats in the Finnish parliament, the Eduskunta. The VAS had been particularly successful in the period that I focus on, as it gained a seat in the government for the first time in 1995 and remained there for two full consecutive terms until 2003. The RKP, representing Finland's Swedish-speaking population, has been a governing party since 1979.[15] Along with the Christian League, these four minor parties often gain between 4 to 11 percent of the total national vote and have consistently participated in the parliament since the 1980s.[16]

Broad coalitions are considered the name of the game in this country given its fragmented political system.[17] Although parliamentary seats are allocated to parties based on their vote shares, the Finnish electoral system is candidate-centered, in that the voters can vote for individual candidates on party lists.[18] That being said, Finnish parties enjoy high levels of cohesion among their cabinet and parliamentary groups, which "effectively prevent any disagreements" inside them.[19] Observed in the run-up to the

10. Raunio, "Finland: One Hundred Years of Quietude."

11. Nurmi and Nurmi, "The Parliamentary Election in Finland," 798.

12. Arter, "From a Contingent Party System to Party System Convergence?," 227.

13. Arter, "From the 'Rainbow Coalition' Back Down to 'Red Earth'?," 154.

14. See also Raunio and Wiberg, "The Eduskunta and the Parliamentarisation of Finnish Politics," 589.

15. Arter, "From the 'Rainbow Coalition' Back Down to 'Red Earth'?," 160.

16. Soderlund and Kestilä-Kekkonen, "Economic Voting in Finland before and after an Economic Crisis," 402.

17. Raunio, "Europe and the Finnish Parliamentary Election of March 2003," 4.

18. Raunio, "Europe and the Finnish Parliamentary Election of March 2003," 2.

19. Raunio and Wiberg, "The Eduskunta and the Parliamentarisation of Finnish Politics," 590. As Aylott, Blomgren, and Bergman, *Political Parties in Multi-Level Polities*, 112, explain, party groups in Finland are "more or less monolithic entities" when it comes to policy. Therefore, the Finnish parliament "should primarily be understood as a body effectively split into a number of autonomous and competing parliamentary parties" (See Wiberg, "The Partyness

EMU decision as well as elsewhere, the party leadership sets the tone for the party and "can wield considerable influence among the rank and file, persuading them to follow the elite opinion."[20] Intraparty factionalism is thus curtailed through discipline across the ranks, as I show later on, which allows me to focus on the behavior of the parties as unitary actors instead of the specific factions inside them. In addition to the presence of broad surplus coalitions, the candidate-centeredness of the electoral process further dilutes voter accountability at the party level.[21]

What role does the parliamentary government play in Finnish politics? Finland's political system had been dominated by the president and was considered semipresidential up until the 1990s. By the early 1990s, the balance of power began to change in favor of the government and accelerated especially with the country's membership in the European Union. Prior to the 1990s, the president could appoint the formateur and had substantial influence over this actor's cabinet picks. At times, the president could even override the decisions of the formateur regarding coalition partners. For instance, in 1987, "President Mauno overruled a coalition between the Centre Party and the National Coalition, indicating that a coalition between the National Coalition and the Social Democrats was preferable."[22] Other strong leaders such as the former president Urho Kekkonen, who had dominated the Finnish political scene for nearly three decades from 1956 to 1982,[23] enjoyed these prerogatives to the fullest. He had "selected prime ministers, pushed parties into coalitions, forced governments to resign, appointed non-partisan presidential cabinets and dissolved parliaments."[24] The first constitutional amendment in 1991, introducing the parliamentary vote of investiture, was enacted as a reaction to "the excesses of the Kekkonen era"[25] and marked the beginning of what would become a profound transformation in Finnish politics toward parliamentarization. Arter confirms that the president used to be a "veto

of the Finnish Eduskunta," 165). Quoted in Aylott, Blomgren, and Bergman, *Political Parties in Multi-Level Polities*, 112. "Using the Rice index (0–100), party cohesion in Finland in 1995–6 varied from 84.9 (the Greens) to 91.5 (Social Democrats) and the overall score was 88.6." See Jensen, "Party Cohesion," 218. Quoted in Aylott, Blomgren, and Bergman, *Political Parties in Multi-Level Polities*, 112.

20. Raunio, "Facing the European Challenge," 141. See also Wessels, "Evaluations of the EC"; Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe."

21. Soderlund, "Candidate-Centred Electoral Systems and Change in Incumbent Vote Share."

22. Raunio, "The Changing Finnish Democracy," 136.

23. Raunio, "Finland: One Hundred Years of Quietude," 473.

24. Nousiainen, "From Semi-Presidentialism to Parliamentary Government," 101.

25. Raunio, "Finland: One Hundred Years of Quietude," 473.

player" in government formation prior to 2000, and a governing party would strictly follow the president's policy preferences, thus making it "the president's party."[26] Today, experts argue that Finland is effectively a parliamentary system, where the government is situated at the center of the executive branch.[27]

The uneven distribution of power between the government and the president in favor of the latter prior to 1991 had been observed vividly in the foreign policy domain. The 1919 constitution stated that "the relations of Finland with foreign powers shall be determined by the President."[28] Whereas the president had full authority to conduct Finland's relations prior to 1990, "foreign policy issues entered internal party debates" soon after, signaling greater partisan interest in this area.[29] Berglund explains that the "individual candidates" running for office "focused on foreign policy to a hitherto unparalleled extent" in the run-up to the 1991 general elections, signaling this change in interest among those eyeing the parliamentary seat.[30] A second constitutional amendment in 1993 further weakened the powers of the president in foreign affairs. It stipulated explicitly that the parliament would "take part in the national preparation of matters to be decided in international bodies."[31]

The European integration process has also altered "the situation to the advantage of the government and the *Eduskunta*," effectively parliamentarizing the country's EU policy and removing the president's veto power in this domain.[32] In a subsequent amendment, EU affairs were separated "from the President's mandate and stipulated that the Government is responsible for Finland's EU policy (including foreign and security policy)."[33] In matters pertaining to the EU, the government was thus given primary authority to lead Finland's policies. Up until 2000, non-EU foreign policy issues were governed by the president. The new constitution that went into effect in 2000 has also revised this division of duties, where the president would conduct foreign policy in consultation with the government. Except for certain foreign policy engagements (such as official state visits), the gov-

26. Arter, "From a Contingent Party System to Party System Convergence?," 234.

27. Raunio, "Finland: One Hundred Years of Quietude." See also Bowler, Farrell, and Katz, *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Government*, 238; Raunio and Wiberg, "The Eduskunta and the Parliamentarisation of Finnish Politics."

28. Forsberg, "One Foreign Policy or Two?," 4.

29. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 231.

30. Berglund, "The Finnish Parliamentary Election of March 1991," 336.

31. Raunio and Wiberg, "Building Elite Consensus," 65.

32. Raunio and Wiberg, "Building Elite Consensus," 65.

33. Forsberg, "One Foreign Policy or Two?," 4.

ernment would now assume visible competency in foreign policy decision making in addition to having primary authority over EU matters.[34] As I will demonstrate, the parliament and the government were responsible for Finland's decision to join the eurozone; the Finnish president was hardly an influential actor in the process.

For simplicity's sake, the EMU decision is generally referred to as "joining the EMU" or "joining the eurozone" in the literature; in fact, the 1998 decision captures the "third" and final stage of the broader process that integrated the first set of EU member states to the European Economic and Monetary Union. The first stage, which took place between 1990 and 1993, included policy harmonization toward the free movement of capital in the EU. Policy harmonization continued during the second stage (1994–1998) with the objective to ensure economic convergence among the member states. The third and final stage would introduce the euro as the EU's common currency, fixed exchange rates, and the single monetary policy along with the Stability and Growth Pact. The first two stages were preparatory policy stages, whereas the third stage called for the implementation of these policies, including an "irrevocable" shift in the monetary policies of the member states.[35] The third stage also involved the prospective EMU members' national ratification. In Finland, the parliament was responsible for ratification.[36] It is therefore meaningful and necessary to focus on the governing parties—which enjoyed a comfortable majority in the parliament—as the key actors behind the EMU decision.

"Moving Home": Finland's Post–Cold War Foreign Policy and Relations with the EU

Finland's Cold War foreign policy was complicated. Having fought against the Soviet Union more than once during the Second World War and sharing a lengthy border with it, the country had a complex relationship with

34. Still, this new arrangement created confusion in the context of the EU's "second pillar," namely the Common Foreign and Security Policy. The CSFP includes the conventional "high politics" foreign policy issues, which require attention at the presidential level. At the same time, though, this pillar is situated within the EU framework, prompting the prime minister and the government's active involvement. This duality has led to the "two plates policy," a colorful term that describes Finland's participation at both the presidential and prime ministerial levels in the EU summit. See Forsberg, "One Foreign Policy or Two?," 5.

35. "Official Website of the National Bank of Belgium"; European Central Bank, "Economic and Monetary Union."

36. Sitter, "To Structure Political Conflict."

its eastern neighbor and occupied a difficult position in Europe throughout the Cold War.[37] During this period, the country's foreign policy "resembled a balancing act between maintaining close—but not too close!—relations with the Soviet Union."[38] Although Finland considered itself a neutral country, it had still signed a Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance Treaty in 1948 with the Soviet Union.[39] "Finlandization" became a term meaning "subservience to the Soviet Union and a tendency to anticipate and comply with Soviet wishes even before they are formulated."[40] For instance, the Finnish president, who had actively shaped coalition formation up until 1987, would not allow the Conservatives (later known as the National Coalition Party or KOK) to join the government for "general reasons," which was "a code for *unacceptable in high places*," implying none other than the Kremlin.[41]

The final years of the Soviet Union had witnessed a disintegration of these practices. The tacit Soviet embargo on Finnish coalitions ended by 1987, when the Conservatives won the elections that year and were allowed to assume office thanks to Kekkonen's departure from the Finnish presidency and Mikhail Gorbachev's lukewarm reception of the party's victory.[42] With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, Finland had "abandoned neutrocentrism"[43] and dissolved the Friendship Treaty.

Like every other small state on the European continent, Finland too began its pursuit of a new foreign and security policy as soon as the Cold War ended.[44] Observing how Sweden—its neighbor to the west—pivoted toward the EU and applied for full membership in 1991, Finland quickly followed suit.[45] The political elites in Finland were by and large united on the country's membership. Except for the Left Alliance and the Greens, which remained indecisive, and the Christian League, which was against membership, the other political parties supported joining the EU.[46] Finland became a member of the European Union on January 1, 1995.[47] Fors-

37. Forsberg and Vaahtoranta, "Inside the EU, Outside NATO," 70.
38. Raunio and Wiberg, "Parliamentarizing Foreign Policy Decision-Making," 65.
39. Arter, "Small State Influence Within the EU."
40. Singleton, "Finland between East and West," 325. See Browning, "Coming Home or Moving Home?," 52.
41. Arter, "From a Contingent Party System to Party System Convergence?," 229. Emphasis added.
42. Arter, "From a Contingent Party System to Party System Convergence?," 234.
43. Ferreira-Pereira, "Inside the Fence but Outside the Walls," 104.
44. Blomberg, "Finland's Evolving Security."
45. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe."
46. Raunio, "Facing the European Challenge," 145.
47. Ferreira-Pereira, "Inside the Fence but Outside the Walls," 104.

berg and Vaahtoranta argue that a key reason for Finland's decision to join the EU was security; specifically, to distance itself from Russian influence once and for all in the aftermath of the Cold War.[48] Some have explained in dramatic terms that Finland was "moving home" to the West, expressing that "the historical parenthesis of the Cold War" was closed with its entry into the EU.[49] The country was particularly enthusiastic about the European Union upon becoming a full member precisely because it did not want to be known as the "belated European."[50]

The end of the Cold War therefore removed two key constraints on Finland's domestic politics and foreign policy. First, the Soviet Union's influence over Finland's international relations had disappeared, allowing the country to act without systemic constraints and to recalibrate its foreign policy objectives in the direction of the European Union. Second and relatedly, the Soviet influence over Finland's domestic politics had also disappeared and the country's sovereignty was no longer hostage to great power politics. Alongside the constitutional changes discussed above, one can conclude that Finland's decision to join the European Monetary Union was determined primarily by the country's own domestic political dynamics without any substantial interference from the international system.[51] Further, the parliamentarization of Finnish domestic politics and especially its foreign policy with respect to the EU gave much greater agency to the parliament and the surplus coalition government that came to power in 1995.

That said, Finland's foreign policy decisions were not entirely immune to regional considerations in the post–Cold War period. There was a lot of debate during the mid-1990s on whether Finland should join the EMU, especially when two of its closest trading partners at the time, Sweden and the UK, were not interested in the common currency zone. Indeed, between 1995 and 1998, Sweden and the UK were among Finland's top three largest trading partners alongside Germany, where their combined trade share was consistently twice that of Germany.[52] An Economist Intelligence Unit report from 1996—nearly three years prior to Finland's membership in the EMU—had speculated whether the country would want to be a eurozone member when "its second largest trade partner, Sweden"

48. Forsberg and Vaahtoranta, "Inside the EU, Outside NATO," 71; Aylott, Blomgren, and Bergman, *Political Parties in Multi-Level Polities*, 87.
49. Browning, "Coming Home or Moving Home?," 49.
50. Leruth, "Differentiated Integration in the European Union," 47.
51. Stein, "Constraints and Determinants." See also chapter 1.
52. World Bank, "World Integrated Trade Solution Website."

was "less likely to fulfill the criteria" to join the currency union.[53] Although the former governor of the Bank of Finland, Sirkka Hamalainen, emphasized by the mid-1990s that nonparticipation was not an option and that Finnish exporters could compete in the eurozone "irrespective of whether the UK and Sweden participated or not,"[54] her successor commented in an address a decade later that the hesitancy of these two countries was in fact a real concern for Finnish policymakers at the time.[55] The opposition Center Party was keen on this condition in particular; it had asserted that the party would be opposed to membership unless Sweden and Britain joined the currency union.[56]

These considerations did not have a lasting impact on Finland's foreign policy, however. If the Finnish government had not wanted to join the EMU, some of this reluctance may have been due to similar reticence on behalf of its Swedish and British counterparts. That the Finnish government was ultimately strongly in favor of EMU membership *despite* the lack of interest from Sweden and the UK suggests that concerns over regional trade were less central to the governing parties' decision-making calculus.

The 'Rainbow Coalition' Brings Finland into the Eurozone: What Explains?

The Finns went to the polls in March 1995 to elect their new parliament. The Social Democratic Party declared victory, receiving 28 percent of the national vote but falling short of a legislative majority.[57] The SDP's leader (and later prime minister), Paavo Lipponen, thus brought together four other political parties to form the next government. These included the conservative National Coalition Party (KOK), the right-wing Swedish People's Party (RKP), the Green League (VIHR), and the Left Alliance (VAS). Table 6.1 below summarizes the parties' share of seats in the two-hundred-seat parliament as well as their locations on the left-right political spectrum based on the Chapel Hill Expert Survey data.[58]

Looking at table 6.1, it is clear that the Lipponen government was a

53. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1996," 6.
54. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1997," 16.
55. Liikanen, "Speech by Mr Erkki Liikanen, Governor of the Bank of Finland, at the Economic Forum of Hospodarske Noviny Club," 2.
56. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1997," 3.
57. "IPU Parline Database on National Parliaments."
58. Steenbergen and Marks, "Evaluating Expert Judgments."

TABLE 6.1. Lipponen's 'Rainbow Coalition' (1995)

	No. of Seats (%)	L-R Ideological Placement (L: 0—R: 10)
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	63 (31.5)	3.4
National Coalition Party (KOK)	39 (19.5)	7.6
Left Alliance (VAS)	22 (11)	2.4
Swedish People's Party (RKP)	12 (6)	6.6
Green Party (VIHR)	9 (4)	3.8
Total (200)	145 (72.5)	

large surplus majority coalition. The Social Democrats joined forces with the National Coalition Party (one of the Big Three) and cleared the majority threshold with a total of 102 seats. In addition to enjoying majority control, the SDP-KOK axis in government also fragmented the parliamentary opposition. The three minor parties—VAS, RKP, and VIHR—were thus not vital for the coalition's survival and were considered surplus parties. This diverse coalition, which included those from the right as well as the left of the political spectrum, was dubbed the "rainbow coalition."

Archival records from EILEN suggest that in December 1997 the Lipponen government proposed a parliamentary vote to be held in 1998 to decide Finland's participation in the EMU.[59] The parliament began debating the government's EMU proposal by February 1998 and voted in April 1998 to dissolve the Finnish markka and be among the first group of countries to join the eurozone by January 1999. In the next national elections held in March 1999, the SDP would manage to maintain its leading position and form the new government with the same four coalition partners, again under Paavo Lipponen's leadership.

Ideological Composition: Let us go back to the mid-1990s and look more closely at Lipponen's first "rainbow coalition." Where did the coalition parties stand on the EMU proposal? Were they all supportive of abandoning their national currency and adopting the euro? Experts argue that Finnish political parties are hardly Euroskeptic and generally supportive of European integration.[60] The empirical evidence consistently suggests, however, that initially the coalition parties were far from unanimously supportive of entering the eurozone. Rather, they began to moderate their positions in favor of membership as the parliamentary vote approached. Whereas the major coalition partners were mostly for joining the EMU,

59. "Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy (EILEN)," December 1997.

60. Raunio, "Softening but Persistent," 199. See also Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe."

the minor partners, specifically the Green League and the Left Alliance, rejected the proposal for quite some time before they ultimately reversed their positions and converged with the rest of the coalition.

The senior coalition partner and the party of the prime minister, the SDP, had been an avid supporter of the EU project since Finland's application for full membership in 1991.[61] Analysts at the *Economist* observe that the Social Democrats are "deeply pro-European."[62] With regards to the EMU, however, SDP was not exactly in unison at first. In October 1996, the leader of the SDP's parliamentary group stated that the "EMU was premature for the EU as a whole and that it should be postponed for at least ten years."[63] Despite these credible specks of opposition inside the party, the SDP party congress held in September 1997 achieved "near unanimous" agreement in support for joining the EMU by the beginning of 1999.[64] This was an important affirmation of the influence the party leadership and Prime Minister Lipponen played, since it was reported only a few months prior to the congress that there were "a significant number" of SDP members "who [were] undecided" alongside "a small number who [were] firmly opposed" to the EMU.[65]

Like SDP, its junior coalition partner KOK also supported Finland's membership in the EMU, even though it was opposed to the prospect of a supranational, federal Europe.[66] KOK's party congress in June 1997 concluded that "in order to secure [Finland's] international position, it is in Finland's national interest to participate in the EU's inner core established as a result of the EMU."[67] The right-wing Swedish People's Party, one of the surplus parties in the government with twelve parliamentary seats, also declared support for the EMU during its party congress in June 1997.[68] The constitutional committee of the Finnish parliament concluded later that year that the government would need only a simple majority of votes to approve the EMU proposal in the parliament, as the *Economist* reported.[69] The support of these three coalition parties—SDP, KOK, and RKP—was therefore sufficient to fold Finland into the EMU.

61. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 235.
62. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, August 1996," 5.
63. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, November 1996," 7.
64. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 236.
65. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1997," 12.
66. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 237.
67. Raunio, "Facing the European Challenge," 148.
68. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 239. See also Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, August 1997," 11.
69. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, December 1997," 6.

Coming to terms with the EMU proposal was a lot more complicated for the two remaining (and left-wing) parties in the Lipponen coalition. Indeed, the Left Alliance (VAS) and the Green League (VIHR) had struggled to take a definitive position on Finland's EMU membership for quite some time.[70] For both parties, their presence in the Lipponen government was critical. It was the Greens' first executive experience following the party's establishment in 1987. Similarly, it was the Left Alliance's first government role since the party had revamped itself in 1991.[71] Although the party considered its senior partner, the National Coalition (KOK), "the most bourgeois or conservative of the large parties," VAS still decided to join the government upon SDP's invitation despite the risk of losing votes later.[72]

Initially, the Left Alliance was strongly opposed to the EMU proposal. "A majority of VAS members had historically been opposed to EU membership and the issue [the EMU] had the potential to split the party, paralyse [*sic*] it politically and possibly even lead to its removal from the government."[73] Several reports from the Economist Intelligence Unit had predicted throughout 1996 and 1997 that the party would leave the coalition government given its disagreement with the senior coalition partners.[74] Indeed, analysts observed that VAS still did not have a definitive stance on the EMU membership as late as December 1997. The chair of VAS, Claes Andersson, was supportive, while Esko Seppänen, a high-profile member of the European Parliament from VAS, was not.[75] The two men were pulling the party in opposite directions.

The Greens were similarly in disarray. The *Economist* expected in early 1996 that the party would leave the government because of its opposition to EMU, among other policy issues.[76] Although VIHR did not leave the government, it did diverge from the SDP and the KOK and declare in the summer of 1997 that it was against Finland's EMU membership. The party

70. VAS voters were, in fact, also noticeably skeptical of Finland's EU membership: only 24 percent of VAS supporters were in favor. The Greens were less Euroskeptic, but still only 55 percent of VIHR voters were in favor of membership. This stands in stark contrast with the experts' observation that "all Finnish parties are in broad agreement about national EU policy," which emphasizes integration. See Raunio, "Softening but Persistent," 198–99.

71. Jungar, "A Case of a Surplus Majority Government."

72. Dunphy, "In Search of an Identity," 40.

73. Dunphy, "In Search of an Identity," 42.

74. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1996"; Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1997"; Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1997"; Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, August 1997."

75. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, December 1997," 6.

76. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1996."

added, however, that this was not its final decision and that it would not have one until the end of 1997.[77]

By the early 1998, the Greens and the Left Alliance had neither torpedoed the parliamentary vote on the EMU nor leave the coalition in protest. Both parties held their party congresses in December 1997 and January 1998,[78] respectively, *after* the constitutional committee decided that a "simple majority" in the parliament would be enough to ratify Finland's membership in the EMU. In other words, the support of these two surplus parties was not necessary to secure the parliamentary vote. Still, both parties ultimately decided to support Finland's entry into the EMU during the parliamentary vote. The vote took place in April 1998, "with 135 MPs in favour, 61 against, one abstaining, and two absent."[79] This was a puzzling outcome given the extent of the public opposition in Finland against joining the EMU at the time.

Public Opinion: What impact did public opinion have on the EMU decision? As I show below, it seems it had no effect at all. But perhaps this was because the EMU was a complex policy issue on which opinion was just difficult for voters to formulate. Or perhaps it was not salient for the Finns at all because it was too technical. The evidence suggests otherwise. The EMU was by no means a peripheral policy debate for the country. It was extremely salient at both elite and mass levels. International observers comfortably claimed in 1996 that the issue would not only be the "focus of foreign policy"[80] and "dominate policy over the next two years" but that the Lipponen coalition would also "need to lobby hard to persuade a skeptical public of the benefits of a single currency."[81] And they were right. One year later, the EMU was still considered "the thorniest issue" for the government.[82]

The poll numbers explain it all. During the summer of 1996, 60 percent of Finns were opposed to joining the EMU.[83] President Martti Ahtisaari boldly commented at the time that "the negative attitude of citizens toward the EMU would have time to change before the elections."[84] More than a year later, the European Commission's November 1997 Eurobarometer

77. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, August 1997."
78. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1998," 3.
79. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 240. See also Sundberg, "The Enduring Scandinavian Party System."
80. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1996," 4.
81. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, November 1996," 1.
82. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1997," 7.
83. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, August 1996," 4.
84. "Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy (EILEN)," December 1996.

survey reported Finland as the country second most opposed to the EMU after Britain: 62 percent of the Finnish respondents did not support adopting the euro.[85] The leader of the opposition Center Party (KESK), Esko Aho, commented on the day of the parliamentary vote that "there was a lack of public support for EMU."[86] Indeed, only 40 percent of the Finns supported the EMU by April 1998.[87]

Table 6.2 presents how the government and opposition parties voted in the parliament in April 1998 and where their voters stood regarding the EMU. Clearly the governing parties were far away from their voters. Even KOK, the most pro-EMU party among them, barely reflected the preferences of its voters. The parliamentary group voted unanimously for the EMU even though only about half of their supporters were in favor of the currency union, as table 6.2 shows. The KOK leader and the coalition's finance minister, Sauli Niinistö, said afterwards that "none of the EMU decisions" was driven by the "information from opinion polls."[88] Similarly, Prime Minister Lipponen "insisted that it was more important to lead the discussion [on EMU] than to focus on public opinion."[89] Remarkably, 80 percent of the respondents believed as early as October 1997 that the government would join the currency union anyway, according to a poll conducted by the Center for Finnish Business and Policy Studies.[90] It seems the voters were right to anticipate this result given the statements of their decision makers. But how could these parties act so out of step with their voters and still commit to this foreign policy decision? Were they not concerned about its potential electoral consequences?

Responsibility Diffuses, Parties Prefer to Remain Loyal to Each Other: The Finns went to the polls again in March 1999 to elect their next parliament. Table 6.3 provides their vote shares in the March 1995 and March 1999 elections, as well as their electoral support by April 1998 when the parliamentary vote took place. Even though SDP lost a dozen seats in 1999, the party still received the most votes and formed the next government with the same four parties that made up the 1995 coalition and had voted in favor of the EMU one year prior. Despite the divergence of preferences between the coalition parties and their voters, the parties, especially

85. "Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy (EILEN)," November 1997.
86. Karttunen, "Evidence of Partisan Emphasis on EMU during 1994–1999," 78–79.
87. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 241.
88. Karttunen, "Evidence of Partisan Emphasis on EMU during 1994–1999," 117.
89. Karttunen, "Evidence of Partisan Emphasis on EMU during 1994–1999," 117.
90. "Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy (EILEN)," October 1997. See also Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, December 1997," 7.

TABLE 6.2. April 1998 Parliamentary Vote and Public Support for the EMU

	Total seats	Yes	No	Abstain	% Support for EMU among voters (Feb–Mar 1997)
SDP	62	60	1	1	45
KOK	38	38	0	0	56
VAS	19	16	3	0	22
RKP	12	12	0	0	N/A
VIHR	9	7	2	0	36
Opposition	59	2	55	2	21[a]
TOTAL	199	135	61	3	40[b]

[a] KESK voters only. *Source*: Leruth, "Differentiated Integration in the European Union," 76, and the Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1997." 12.

[b] All respondents regardless of party support, by April 1998. Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe," 241.

the VAS and VIHR—both of which had reversed their EMU positions in the run-up to the April vote—were not significantly punished in the 1999 national elections.

Together, tables 6.2 and 6.3 present some interesting figures. Although support for the EMU was nearly uniformly low across all partisans, it did not have a uniform effect on vote choice in the 1999 national elections. The Greens, after reversing their EMU position regardless of the low support among their supporters, ended up *gaining* seats in 1999. Equally remarkable is that SDP and the main opposition party, KESK, received almost identical vote shares. Observers at the *Economist* claimed at the time that this was a result of policy convergence among the SDP, KOK, and KESK,[91] which further made it difficult for voters to identify the differences between them. Indeed, even though KESK was visibly against the EMU in the run-up to the April 1998 vote, they declared during the general election season that they would not overturn the parliament's EMU decision should they form the next government.[92]

Describing the Finnish political landscape, Raunio explains that "partisan cooperation in multi-party governments . . . makes it harder for the voters to assess the performance of their representatives, particularly considering the lack of transparency which is characteristic of coalition government decision making."[93] As I explained in chapter 2, the diffusion of

91. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1999," 14.
92. Raunio, "Facing the European Challenge."
93. Raunio, "The Changing Finnish Democracy," 143.

TABLE 6.3. Party Support in Finland (%)

	Seat Change 1995–1999	National Election March 1999	Parliamentary Vote on EMU April 1998	National Election March 1995
SDP	–12	22.9	22.9	28.3
KOK	+7	21.0	19.8	17.9
VAS	–2	10.9	7.7	11.2
RKP	0	5.1	4.6	5.5
VIHR	+2	7.3	10.1	6.5
KESK	+4	22.5	24.7	19.9
Others	–2	10.3	10.2	10.7
Total		100	100	100

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1998," 11; Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, May 1999," 12.

responsibility among coalition parties impedes the voters' ability to punish them for unpopular policies. This is most pronounced in oversized coalitions, where the coalition is larger than necessary and not every coalition party enjoys a credible veto power it could use should the party disagree with government policy. In the absence of that veto threat, these parties choose to go along with the rest of the government because they can afford to do so: their voters will not be able to punish them anyway, and, true to their office-seeking instincts, they would rather stay inside the government than outside it.

In Finland, then, it seems that the surplus-coalitional nature of the government allowed the incumbent parties to ignore the low levels of public support for the EMU, commit to their decision, and still get re-elected. Neither the SDP's nor KOK's leadership considered the low public support for EMU a problem, as their statements illustrated, and they maintained their electoral ground. Voters not only failed to punish their incumbent parties and replace them with those in the opposition, but even some of those governing parties making "ideological U-turns"[94] ended up getting rewarded with more seats. Isaksson explains that "if a supplementary party acts too independently, it may be omitted from the next governing coalition."[95] If parties anticipate that they will get re-elected in the next elections despite having signed off on policies that contradict their platforms and ignore their partisans' policy preferences, then they might

94. Raunio, "The Difficult Task of Opposing Europe," 174.
95. Isaksson, "Party Behaviour in the Finnish Parliament," 106.

choose to remain loyal to their coalition partners in the hopes that they will get invited again to govern in the future.

This is what took place in Finland with regards to the EMU debate, and it resulted in the same five parties forming Lipponen's second "rainbow coalition." The governing parties prioritized peer credibility over voter responsiveness because the structure of their coalition allowed them to do so.[96] As a result, they were able to make foreign policy commitments despite the public's preferences. The nature of the surplus majority coalition (and, naturally, the weakness of the parliamentary *opposition* due to its being both structurally and situationally, as well as institutionally,[97] vulnerable) explains why coalition parties—especially the surplus partners—prefer to remain loyal to their government instead of to their constituents. Knowing that their departure would not upset the government's majority status in the parliament, these parties preferred remaining inside than out.

This explains why VAS and VIHR changed their initial positions. Soon after the Left Alliance and the Greens decided to support the EMU, analysts concluded that the parties had reversed their decisions in order to remain in the government.[98] Interestingly, the Left Alliance leadership combined their internal EMU vote with the question of whether to remain in the government or not precisely in order to force the party members to compromise on the former. The result was 52.4 percent in favor, indicating how precarious the leadership's position was.[99] Similarly, the Greens decided to support the EMU despite their voters' opposition to it (46 percent of them were against) because not doing so would weaken their minister's role in the cabinet.[100] Karttunen similarly concludes that the governing parties disregarded their constituents in this period.[101] They wanted "to develop into credible parties of government that would be more attractive

96. Raunio, "The Changing Finnish Democracy"; Johansson and Raunio, "Partisan Responses to Europe"; Jungar, "A Case of a Surplus Majority Government."

97. Until 1992, the parliamentary opposition in Finland had enjoyed a one-third minority veto, with which the government's ability to make policy would be substantially altered (Jungar, "A Case of a Surplus Majority Government"). The opposition has lacked this institutional prerogative since then, considerably weakening its influence in the policymaking process. The institutional impediments to influence policy from the opposition ranks thus further explain the junior partners' efforts to garner "government credibility" despite their doubts on policies such as the EMU. As Jungar ("A Case of a Surplus Majority Government") argues, influencing the decision-making process is much more possible for the surplus parties when they are inside the government than outside it.

98. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1998," 3, 6.

99. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1998," 10.

100. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1998," 11.

101. Karttunen, "Evidence of Partisan Emphasis on EMU during 1994–1999," 169.

to voters as well as to other government parties in the future."[102] Raunio also observes in the context of the EMU decision that "in order to be considered as realistic and trustworthy coalition partners, parties have adopted positions that have been at least partially contradictory to the preferences of their voters."[103] What needs to be highlighted here is that each incumbent party could take this risk only because each one expected to get reelected, and this was only possible because these parties were part of a bigger coalition that diffused the responsibility of an unpopular decision such as EMU membership. The distribution of votes and seats across 1995 and 1999 presented in table 6.3 supports this conclusion.

This is remarkably different from the Swedish experience, which presents a nice counterfactual to my argument. Sweden was also debating EMU membership in the 1990s, where public opposition to it was around 60 percent, just like in Finland.[104] Sweden, however, was ruled by a single-party minority government at the time, as it often is. Blame avoidance by responsibility diffusion was therefore not possible for Swedish prime minister Göran Persson's Social Democratic government. Instead, the government's structural constraints necessitated working together with the parliamentary opposition through logrolling. The opposition Center Party, which was the government's key ally in the parliament and helped it clear the majority threshold prior to the 1998 elections, was strongly opposed to the EMU. In order not to jeopardize its relationship with the Center, Persson and the Social Democrats had to shelve the EMU proposal.[105]

A spokesperson for the Finnish Social Democratic Party explained in an interview, comparing the political situation in two countries: "You just need to understand that we do not have a two-block system like in Sweden for instance. . . . You have to be prepared that two or three of the biggest parties might form the basis of the government."[106] Since Finnish parties always had to be prepared for interparty cooperation as a result of their oversized coalition tradition, and since they were able to avoid voter punishment precisely because of the structure of their coalitions, Lipponen's coalition in Finland was able to commit to the EMU decision while Persson's single-party minority government in Sweden could not. Experts con-

102. Jungar, "A Case of a Surplus Majority Government," 74. See also Leruth, "Differentiated Integration in the European Union," 75.

103. Raunio, "Finland: One Hundred Years of Quietude," 389.

104. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, November 1996," 7. See also Aylott, "Lessons Learned, Lessons Forgotten"; Lindahl and Naurin, "Sweden: The Twin Faces of a Euro-Outsider"; Leruth, "Differentiated Integration in the European Union."

105. Leruth, "Differentiated Integration in the European Union," 117.

106. Leruth, "Differentiated Integration in the European Union,"52.

tend that public opinion is more consequential in foreign policy making in Sweden than it is in Finland[107] and that legislators in Sweden prioritize public opinion whereas in their Finnish counterparts emphasize elite opinion.[108] From the perspective of responsibility diffusion, it is no wonder that the public opinion on EMU could easily be sidelined in Finland whereas the incumbents in Sweden did not have this option.

Political Leadership: Controlling a safe majority in the parliament, Lipponen's oversized coalition enjoyed comfortable room for maneuver in policymaking. Did it also give Lipponen himself the ability to shape the EMU process? How influential was his role in Finland's decision to join the currency union? Were there other individuals in the government who were able to pull the government toward a "yes" vote? How powerful was the effect of leadership, compared to the effect of coalition dynamics, on the EMU decision?

Cabinet ministers and the prime minister are influential actors in Finnish governments. While cabinet ministers have been exerting strong agency in policymaking for several decades, the prime minister has become a more visible actor in foreign affairs, especially after Finland's EU membership, as I have explained earlier. Experts comment that "the prime minister's office has already carved out a prominent role for itself, in particular in relation to the European Council summits."[109] Finnish officials corroborate this observation, explaining that "the prime minister has taken the lead in shaping the governments' positions on European integration" since the country's entry into the EU.[110]

Evidence suggests that Prime Minister Lipponen was quite influential in the EMU decision. For one, he had always been strongly interested in foreign affairs. He had "served as head of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. He has also consciously worked to make Finland an influential country in the core of Europe. This doctrine has become a cornerstone of Finnish foreign policy" throughout his prime ministerial tenure between 1995 and 2003.[111] Lipponen was unequivocally supportive of Finland's entry into the EMU. He had argued that "membership would be 'incontestably right' for the country and that participation in

107. Forsberg and Vaahtoranta, "Inside the EU, Outside NATO," 84.

108. Jungar and Ahlbäck Öberg, "Parlament i bakvatten? Den svenska och finländska riksdagens inflytande över EU–politiken," 61–63; Höjelid, "Finland, Sweden and the European Integration." See Raunio, "Finland: One Hundred Years of Quietude," 387.

109. Raunio and Wiberg, "Building Elite Consensus," 73–75.

110. Leruth, "Differentiated Integration in the European Union," 49.

111. Luukka, "Finnish Foreign Policy: Who Is Really in Charge?," 2.

the EMU was a logical extension of Finland's increasingly pro-European policy orientation."[112] Having "consolidated his position within the [Social Democratic] party," Lipponen was unchallenged.[113] This was perhaps most apparent in the party's decision to approve the EMU proposal prior to the parliamentary vote. Despite the opposing voices among party members, the SDP executive council voted 53 to 3 to support the EMU, largely thanks to him.[114]

In the government, the prime minister's pro-EMU rhetoric was similarly assertive. He had emphasized in 1996—months before VAS and VIHR reached their final decisions to ultimately support the EMU—that "the government's determination to join the single currency is in no doubt."[115] Later on, Lipponen argued quite brazenly that he was by no means "forcing Finns into EMU. . . . He said that public opinion does not consist solely of opinion polls, but includes opinions in the press, organizations, and political parties." According to him, there was "broad public support."[116]

Finance minister and KOK leader Sauli Niinistö was also quite influential in shaping Finland's EMU policy, and he echoed Lipponen's views.[117] He, too, was pro-EU and "firmly committed" to Finland's EMU membership.[118] Niinistö emphasized that postponing the decision (which was suggested by several MPs from VAS, VIHR, and SDP at the time) "would jeopardize [Finland's] credibility in economic policy."[119] Both leaders were aware of the public resistance against the currency zone, which is why they insisted that the EMU decision be taken by a simple majority vote in the parliament as opposed to a referendum.[120] Raimo Sailas, who served as permanent secretary to Niinistö in the ministry, explained in an interview that "EMU was personified by Paavo Lipponen and Sauli Niinistö" and that "they started to work systematically toward this goal [of EMU membership]."[121]

Given the nature of the coalition in Finland and the electoral leeway it provided the governing parties to avoid the negative public opinion

112. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, December 1997," 14.
113. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, August 1996," 10.
114. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, December 1997," 14.
115. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, November 1996," 7.
116. "Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy (EILEN)," December 1997.
117. Raunio, "Finland: One Hundred Years of Quietude," 384.
118. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1997," 6.
119. "Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy (EILEN)." May 1997.
120. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Finland, February 1997," 7.
121. Karttunen, "Evidence of Partisan Emphasis on EMU during 1994–1999," 104.

against EMU, it seems that Lipponen and Niinistö's influence was consequential only to the extent allowed by the structure of their coalition. Let us consider the counterfactual again. Had SDP (Lipponen) or KOK (Niinistö) led a minimum-winning coalition with VAS or VIHR as their junior partners, their leadership would not have been as critical precisely because these junior parties would use their veto power and quite possibly pull these leaders toward a compromise outcome, such as postponing the EMU decision, as opposed to doubling down on these leaders' preferences and voting for EMU membership. In the absence of this credible threat and given the anticipation that they would avoid electoral blame, the two parties went along with the rest of their governing partners. The nature of the surplus coalition government therefore provided the two leaders with greater room to assert their leadership.

Did the EU Law Predetermine EMU Membership? A final alternative explanation that the subject matter of this case study compels me to consider involves the EU's own legal procedures regarding integration. Some experts, and certainly Lipponen and Niinistö, had argued that Finland was already on the path to becoming an EMU member because of the EU's legal framework. Niinistö, for instance, claimed that the EMU decision was preordained because the country had already signed the EU's foundational Maastricht Treaty when it entered the EU and "thereby approved membership in the EMU if the Union's institutions decide to establish it."[122] So one could claim that the entire interparty struggle in Finland from 1996 to 1998 was for nothing, given the EU's own rules.

Once again, Sweden's experience with the EMU provides important insights that help me rule out this explanation. Although Sweden, too, had signed the Maastricht Treaty as it joined the EU alongside Finland in 1995, it chose to remain outside of the EMU. This suggests that EU member states are allowed to decide independently whether to abandon their national currencies or not.[123] Joining the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) was a required preliminary step to adopting the euro that involves pegging the exchange rates across the member states, but countries could join the ERM, pegging their currencies, without taking the next step of adopting the euro. Finland and Denmark joined the ERM in October 1996 and January 1999, respectively, but Denmark opted out of the euro while Finland adopted it. In other words, the EU's procedural requirements were

122. "Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy (EILEN)," October 1996.

123. Another well-known example, of course, was the United Kingdom pre-Brexit. That country joined the EU (then known as the European Economic Community) in 1973 but never adopted the euro, choosing to keep the British pound.

far from predetermining Finland's commitment to the EMU. It was a conscious decision made by the governing parties and one that was voted for in the parliament in the face of strong and consistent public opposition.

Conclusion

Writing in the wake of the parliamentary vote on Finland's EMU membership, Raunio summarized the governing parties' behavior as a "gamble."[124] According to him, the parties gambled by preferring to align with each other at the expense of their voters. They defied their constituents but still got re-elected despite the unpopularity of their decision. Further, they got to form the next government in 1999.

I have argued in this chapter that the nature of government in Finland explains how the incumbent parties were able to commit to the unpopular decision to join the EU's currency zone and return to government in the next elections. I therefore disagree with Raunio. The parties' behavior was far from a gamble; rather, it was a strategic behavior that was facilitated by their oversized coalition. Precisely because responsibility was diffused inside this government, the incumbent parties, especially those without veto power, wanted to remain on good terms with their counterparts. The parties anticipated two things. First, they expected to get re-elected because voter accountability was much lower in a large coalition like theirs than it would be in a single-party government (like Sweden) and that they would thus not be punished by the voters for their support for the EMU. Second, the junior parties in particular knew how the fragmented nature of the political system and the long tradition of surplus majority coalitions in Finland meant that the senior parties could consider them potential partners in the future. Since influencing policy from the opposition seats was difficult in this country (they could hardly influence it even from the inside, as this chapter has shown), the parties remained loyal to the other governing parties in order to maximize their chances of joining the next government.

It must be noted that what took place in Finland was different from *logrolling*. Since the players involved in logrolling need each other, such exchange entails mutual concessions. In chapter 4, I illustrated how logrolling occurred when the governing parties in Denmark had to offer concessions to an opposition party to secure their parliamentary support

124. Raunio, "Facing the European Challenge," 154.

for the Iraq war. In chapter 5, I showed how the D66's desire for seats in Balkenende's incoming coalition was powerful, but also that Balkenende (and his CDA) needed D66 to form a majority coalition. In Finland, however, there was no such reciprocity between the governing parties. Specifically, the surplus parties in Lipponen's coalition had no incentive to defect because they knew their defection would be inconsequential for policy. In this sense, what they engaged in was not logrolling; rather, it was a voluntary ceding of their policy position for the possibility that they would be potentially offered a seat in a *future* government by the bigger actors like KOK or SDP. Most critically, weak voter accountability allowed these parties to overlook public backlash against the EMU, reverse their policy position midway, and ultimately go along with their senior coalition partners.

A long pedigree of research in comparative politics has shown that performance voting is less effective when the political context obscures who is responsible for government policies.[125] As this chapter has demonstrated, in contexts like Finland where government responsibility is diffused inside oversized coalitions, incumbents can easily commit to unpopular foreign policy decisions and avoid their electoral consequences. While the assertive leadership of Prime Minister Lipponen and Finance Minister Niinistö was influential, particularly toward eliminating intraparty dissent, the evidence presented here gives us strong reasons to conclude that the structural opportunity provided by the oversized coalition was more central in explaining the governing parties' decision to commit to the eurozone than was the role of these individual leaders.

125. Powell and Whitten, "A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting"; Anderson, "Economic Voting and Political Context"; De Vries, Edwards, and Tillman, "Clarity of Responsibility Beyond the Pocketbook"; Oktay, "Clarity of Responsibility and Foreign Policy Performance Voting."

SEVEN

Governing Together, Abroad

Conclusions and Implications

This book has established that coalition governments show significant variation in how they engage with foreign policy. In the preceding chapters, I demonstrated that the ability and willingness of these governments to act assertively in the foreign policy domain depend fundamentally on their partisan composition. To do so, I introduced a theoretical framework that emphasized three factors related to this composition: (1) the type of the coalition, which captures the contribution of each political party to the coalition's strength and stability, (2) the degree of ideological cohesiveness among the coalition parties, and (3) the coalition's standing in relation to the parliament. I have argued that these factors together influence the assertiveness of the regime's foreign policy commitments.

This approach tapped into a gap that the existing literatures in international relations and foreign policy analysis have not addressed until now. In the opening chapter of this book, I stressed that research on the domestic-institutional determinants of international behavior has often taken a kitchen-sink approach to explaining a particular type of outcome, namely, interstate conflict. In so doing, this research has routinely ignored, first, the broad range of foreign policy behaviors beyond international conflict and, second, the nuances of the domestic institutions that constituted the key explanatory variables. Specifically, in the domain of parliamentary democracies, this meant the absence of a meaningful engagement with coalition politics and exploiting the variation *within* coalition governments to understand how these regimes act at the international arena.

Several studies in the foreign policy analysis literature have offered much-needed theoretical and empirical contributions to this debate. Still, this line of work has demonstrated a need for a more rigorous theoretical framework that accounts for the ways in which coalition governments are organized vis-à-vis both their constituent parties and the parliamentary opposition, as well as the need for new quantitative analyses that speak to the post–Cold War systemic environment.

My starting point took these gaps to heart to argue that we could shed greater light on the literature's mixed findings on the relationship between coalition politics and foreign policy behavior by testing more fine-grained theoretical expectations on more recent, and thus systemically relevant, quantitative and qualitative data. Indeed, unpacking the distinct partisan configurations of coalition governments facilitates the development of a holistic theory of coalition foreign policy. Taking into account the structural and situational sources of variation among coalitions, as well as their standing vis-à-vis the legislature from which they stem, delivers more crisp, testable hypotheses about their commitment behavior. As a result, this leads to clearer conclusions about how foreign policy gets made in these types of governments.

To demonstrate this, in chapter 2, I presented a coalition politics framework to explain foreign policy commitments. Building on three well-established theoretical approaches from comparative politics—veto players, clarity of responsibility, and policy viability—I established that coalitions are neither categorically constrained nor enabled in foreign policy, precisely due to their partisan composition. In particular, my argument rested on the premise that some coalitions are more constrained than others by way of their organization and where they are situated vis-à-vis the parliamentary opposition, whereas others may enjoy greater room for more assertive foreign policies. If coalitions are big enough, they can diffuse responsibility and commit more effectively abroad. If they are too big and too incohesive, however, this should diminish their ability to arrive at assertive foreign policy choices. If the coalition does not command a parliamentary majority at all or if this majority is just big enough to get by, then the degree of ideological cohesiveness among the governing parties similarly becomes a crucial moderating factor that dampens the assertiveness of the government's foreign policy commitments. Specifically, coalitions with slim majorities in the parliament should be further constrained at higher levels of ideological dispersion since all the governing parties enjoy veto power status. Meanwhile, coalitions without a parliamentary majority could leverage their ability to

break the opposition ranks ideologically and prevent those actors from credibly challenging the government's foreign policies. Doing so should increase their ability to act assertively abroad.

I leveraged the standard coalition types utilized frequently in coalition theory—minority, minimum-winning, and surplus majority (oversized)—to capture precisely this structural variation among multiparty governments. The typology accounts not just for the contribution of each political party to the coalition's parliamentary size but also captures the standing of the coalition vis-à-vis the parliament. These are, indeed, two of the three key explanatory factors that the book's hypotheses are built upon. Moreover, I argued that the situational dimension—how ideologically cohesive the coalition is—should further shape the effects of coalition structure on foreign policy behavior.

In chapter 3, I tested these hypotheses quantitatively. The results of that chapter demonstrated that it is impossible to categorize coalition governments monolithically vis-à-vis single-party governments when it comes to explaining foreign policy behavior. Once their partisan configuration and relationship to the opposition are accounted for, coalition governments end up committing in different directions compared to single-party governments. The findings suggest, for instance, that only oversized coalitions commit more assertively than single-party majority governments, which is explained most convincingly by the diffusion of responsibility perspective. That said, oversized coalitions lose their edge at higher levels of ideological dispersion. When the governing parties are situated further away from each other along the political spectrum, their ability to make strong foreign policy commitments diminishes.

Chapter 3 provides two more important lessons about coalition foreign policy. First and foremost, the chapter addressed the unique case of minority coalitions for the first time in the literature and concluded that although they are structurally vulnerable in the parliament, they are not categorically constrained, especially when we consider their ideological composition. Supporting the policy viability/fragmented opposition hypothesis, the quantitative analyses in chapter 3 showed that minority coalitions make more assertive commitments when they include parties from both sides of the political spectrum. Preventing the formation of an ideologically cohesive opposition block in the parliament by reaching across the aisle allows them to act more decisively in the international arena. Second, chapter 3 surprisingly concluded that ideologically diverse minimum-winning coalitions act less constrained in foreign policy than we would expect. The expectations of the veto players logic did not find empirical support in

this respect, which required a deeper look into how these seemingly constrained coalitions end up engaging in more assertive foreign policies.

The quantitative findings presented in chapter 3 are useful and informative, as they provide a broad perspective toward identifying the relationships that exist between coalition governments and their foreign policy behavior. Chapter 3 also makes two key methodological contributions to the study of coalition foreign policy. First, the dataset used for the analyses provide detailed information to elucidate the partisan composition of governments in order to identify both the structural and situational variation among them. The dataset was thus the first empirical step to truly move us beyond the single-party versus coalition dichotomy toward a party-oriented approach in the study of coalition foreign policy. Second, the dataset focused exclusively on post–Cold War foreign policy events for the first time in coalition foreign policy literature. Systemic constraints (the most crucial of those being Cold War bipolarity) were no longer a major source of concern, which made it possible for me to focus more confidently on the domestic political factors behind international behavior.

A key question that chapter 3 did not address, however, concerned the processes through which the statistical associations are ultimately obtained. How are these commitment decisions made on the ground? What takes place during the decision-making process and enables us to ultimately reach the relationships that the quantitative analyses revealed in chapter 3? What insights about coalition foreign policy remain untapped in those statistical findings?

The mixed-method research design of the book addressed these questions. In the subsequent case study chapters, I was able to inquire further into the ways in which coalition politics played out in the foreign policy domain. The method of structured-focused comparison allowed me to systematically probe into the domestic, international, and historical background of the countries whose foreign policies I assessed. Through these case studies, in the second half of the book I was able to turn the rows of data I analyzed in chapter 3 into living, breathing processes of decision making.

The case study chapters highlighted the distinct mechanisms through which foreign policy commitments were made by each type of coalition government. Chapter 4 started off by showing how the minority coalition in Denmark had been stifled by the "alternative majority" in the parliament for several years. Only when the coalition government broke the opposition ranks ideologically was it able to put forth a more assertive stance in the transatlantic alliance, ultimately contributing to the 1990 naval block-

ade in the Persian Gulf. In fact, this episode was critical for exposing how the dynamics of coalition politics and the government's relations with the parliament were decisive in shaping a small European state's relationship with NATO, even though the systemic constraints imposed by the Cold War were still partly intact at the time. Chapter 4 has also demonstrated that in the absence of a fragmented opposition, minority coalitions could resort to alternative measures. In particular, logrolling with the opposition became a key mechanism through which the structurally vulnerable coalition achieved its policy objectives, as Denmark's participation in the 2003 Iraq war demonstrated.

Logrolling also explains how ideologically diverse minimum-winning coalitions end up making more, not less, assertive foreign policy commitments. This was demonstrated in chapter 5 with the case study of the Dutch participation in the 2003 Iraq war. Specifically, parties such as D66 (and previously Labor) were willing to compromise on their positions regarding the US-led military operation in Iraq in exchange for a seat in the coalition government.

Finally, in chapter 6, we saw responsibility diffusion at work. Finnish political parties ruling in an oversized coalition could easily overlook the Finns' opposition to adopting the common European currency because they anticipated getting re-elected, and they *did* get re-elected. This anticipation gave the leaders of the larger parties the confidence to simply sidestep public opinion in their public statements and gave the smaller parties the confidence to favor coalition credibility over voter accountability.

Qualitative case studies were also useful to probe possible alternative explanations behind the commitment behaviors under investigation. Logrolling turned out to be a major alternative explanation in those contexts where the veto player argument failed. National security concerns were raised in Denmark and the Netherlands regarding the situation in Iraq, but they had little teeth to drive the decisions forward. Key political leaders such as prime ministers or ministers of foreign affairs and finance were at times particularly outspoken about joining the war coalition or adopting the euro in their respective countries. Nevertheless, the analyses illustrated that the partisan dynamics of coalition governance were responsible for the foreign policy decisions despite the presence of persistent political leaders or the countries' international and historical settings.

Table 7.1 below presents a summary of the case studies. Together, these chapters contribute to the book's main argument by demonstrating the ways in which foreign policy gets made through diverse pathways across different types of coalitions. They challenge and improve our existing

understanding of coalition foreign policy by showing that not all coalitions are alike, and their foreign policies are not alike either.

In the remainder of this chapter, I discuss the ways in which this book adds to our understanding of coalition politics in international affairs. I highlight the potential for this book to bring different research programs in the discipline closer to each other. I also discuss a number of new puzzles this book raises for future scholarship, particularly concerning whether and how coalitional resolve influences the behavior of adversaries, the conditions under which logrolling fails, and the extent to which political leadership could affect its success or failure. Moving forward, I offer some takeaways for policymakers and discuss the potential of this book's framework to travel beyond Europe.

Implications for Theory

The conclusions of this book have a number of important implications for the study of international politics. First and most critically, I have established that focusing on the differences between single-party and coalition governments provides only an incomplete analysis of the effect of parliamentary politics on the international behavior of democracies. It is not just about whether the government includes one or many parties, but also about (a) how these parties contribute to the government's strength and stability, (b) whether these parties are closer to or further away from each other along the ideological spectrum, and (c) how capable they are of withstanding parliamentary opposition. These factors fundamentally shape the nature of coalition governments in parliamentary regimes and, in effect, the assertiveness of their international commitments. Once they are accounted for, the relationship between coalition governments and commitment behavior takes place in multiple different directions and follows diverse pathways. These conclusions align nicely with the burgeoning literature on the party politics of foreign and security policy, which has powerfully argued that partisan contestation hardly stops "at the water's edge."[1]

Second, the book's conclusions offer important empirical takeaways for the comparative politics literature. Coalition theory constitutes a vast research agenda in this subfield, but most of its research output concerns

1. Aldrich et al., "Foreign Policy and the Electoral Connection," 477. See also the 2020 special issue of the journal *Foreign Policy Analysis* on political parties and foreign policy, as well as Wagner, *The Democratic Politics of Military Interventions*; Joly and Dandoy, "Beyond the Water's Edge"; Hofmann and Martill, "The Party Scene."

TABLE 7.1. Summary of the Case Studies

	DENMARK		NETHERLANDS	FINLAND
	1990 Gulf War	2003 Iraq War	2003 Iraq War	1999 EMU Membership
Coalition type	Minority coalition	Minority coalition	1. Outgoing minimum-winning coalition (CDA-VVD-LPF) 2. Minimum-winning coalition in-the-making (CDA-PvdA) 3. Incoming minimum-winning coalition (CDA-VVD-D66)	Oversized coalition
Ideological dispersion	Center crossed	Pure right-wing	Increases over time	Center crossed
Threats to national survival	Weak	Weak	Weak	None
Public opinion	Divided	Divided	Against	Against
Political leadership	MFA Ellemann-Jensen assertive and committed, constrained by government and opposition parties	PM Anders Fogh Rasmussen is assertive and committed, constrained by opposition	PM has no role in the planning stages of the decision, MFA de Hoop Scheffer's personal motivations open to speculation	PM and finance minister assertive and committed
Commitment behavior	Join the naval blockade in the Persian Gulf	Sign "the letter of eight" Send military resources Participate in war coalition	Early political support for war Incremental military resource commitment later	Join EMU in January 1999
Mechanism	Fragmented opposition	Logrolling	Logrolling	Responsibility diffusion

the relationship between coalition politics and public policy. My book's theoretical framework hinges firmly on the comparativist scholarship but applies its frameworks to the foreign policy domain. In this sense, the book not only brings the study of coalition politics closer to the study of international relations, but also illustrates how the foreign policy domain can be utilized to further apply the insights of coalition theory for future research in comparative politics.

Third and quite naturally, the book's most immediate implications lie in the coalition foreign policy research agenda. In a previous work, I have argued that there is fertile ground for cross-pollination between the "second generation" research in democratic peace theory and the "decision-units" framework in foreign policy analysis to develop the coalition foreign policy literature.[2] The book's theoretical framework and its empirical tests in subsequent chapters demonstrate that such an exchange between two seemingly distinct literatures is possible and provides valuable insights. Untangling the structural and situational variation among multiparty governments informs the coalition foreign policy research by showing precisely the relationship between key coalitional variables and their effects on foreign policy behavior. It also allocates a distinct terrain for minority coalitions, which have remained understudied in the literature until now. I hope this book leads to a renewed interest in the study of minority governments and foreign policy, the implications of which would spill over on a range of adjacent debates including democracy, representation, and bargaining with policymakers both at home and abroad.

Social science is valuable not just for the questions it answers, but also for the questions that those answers raise. In addition to those above, I assess this book's contributions also by the questions it generates toward future work in international relations and comparative politics.

One broad question this book raises relates to the burgeoning literature on resolve and international politics. This research program builds on the audience costs debate in IR and investigates to what extent the verbal statements of leaders communicating their "stick-to-it-iveness"[3] change the adversary's behavior and increase the likelihood of victory for the issuer of those statements.[4] This book's key dependent variable captures resolve in its different manifestations. Statements of resolve are one way we can think of verbal forms of commitment. For instance, McManus explains

2. Oktay and Beasley, "Quantitative Approaches in Coalition Foreign Policy"; Oktay, "Coalition Politics and Foreign Policy."

3. Kertzer, *Resolve in International Politics*, 9.

4. Kertzer, *Resolve in International Politics*; McManus, "Fighting Words."

that the reluctance among US decision makers to issue a statement of "red line" regarding the Iranian nuclear program in 2012 was precisely because the administration did not want to commit itself to a costly future policy: "the policy community seemed to believe that such a statement could tie the hands of the US president and force the United States into military action."[5]

Although the recent empirical literature on resolve rests predominantly on the United States as the issuer of these statements, this book's conclusions offer interesting future research avenues to take this inquiry across the Atlantic. Do statements of resolve issued by foreign governments elicit different reactions from the United States when the issuer of these statements is a single-party government as opposed to a coalition? More broadly speaking, how are coalition governments perceived by other actors around the world? We know now that coalitions vary in their international commitments. The next step in this research agenda should focus on whether and to what extent foreign actors (a) are cognizant of this variation, and (b) act differently in response to that variation. Once again, starting with the United States makes sense considering the availability of data: to what extent does the administration perceive the domestic political constraints and opportunities facing coalition governments, and to what extent does it take into account their foreign policy making dynamics to formulate its own policy choices? The run-up to the 2003 Iraq war should offer a treasure trove of data and cases to take this inquiry further.

Moving closer to the domain of comparative politics, another future question concerns the conditions under which the coalition's ideological heterogeneity begins to work to its disadvantage. We have seen in chapters 3 and 5 that minimum-winning coalitions can commit more assertively even if there is some ideological disparity among the governing parties. The analyses presented in those chapters suggest that logrolling can alleviate such interparty disparity and give way to mutual compromise, ultimately facilitating commitment behavior. At what point, then, does ideological contestation disrupt the coalition's ability to commit? When should we expect foreign policy logrolling to fail? Carefully designed comparative case studies and process tracing techniques should shed greater light on these questions and help us identify the limits of logrolling.

A similar question should also be posed for oversized coalitions. We saw in chapter 3 that, as expected, higher levels of ideological dispersion

5. McManus, "Fighting Words," 726. See also Ignatius, "The 'Red Line' Herring"; Zakaria, "The Folly of a 'Red Line.'"

work against oversized coalitions' ability to commit. Chapter 6 showed that there was initially some disagreement among the coalition parties in Finland, but they ultimately decided to commit to joining the eurozone. In contrast, Israel's oversized coalition crumbled between 2003 and 2004 when the junior parties began to quit the government in response to Ariel Sharon's proposal to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza Strip.[6] If responsibility is diffused among the governing parties in an oversized coalition and get them off the electoral hook, then why did the Israeli coalition disintegrate? Why did the parties not go along with the withdrawal plan but instead choose to save face by quitting the coalition? In other words, at what point do policy disagreements really matter for oversized coalitions and impede their ability to act in the international arena? This book has not identified what that "inflection point" looks like and when policy disagreements thwart the decision-making process in these coalitions. Future work should study the conditions under which ideological heterogeneity inside the coalition stops being a constructive challenge for the parties to compromise and get things done (or pales in comparison to the coalition's ability to diffuse responsibility) and starts endangering the coalition's foreign policy making capability or even its survival.

Adjacent to this debate is the heterogeneity of preferences *inside* the political parties. I have started this book with the critical assumption that parties are unitary actors and that they enjoy preference homogeneity. Most parliamentary regimes in Europe have party systems with strong party discipline, which allowed me to make this assumption before constructing the quantitative measures of ideological dispersion in chapter 3. In the subsequent chapters, I pointed out that party factions were small to nonexistent in each case study, which, once again, facilitated my analysis of interparty dynamics. Critical assumptions are "features of the real world" that "approximate reality."[7] They are useful and realistic, but they simplify our reality. So they can be relaxed to shed greater light upon the complexity of political processes. To the extent that factionalism is not entirely absent in parliamentary politics, future work should relax this assumption to reach more granular findings about how coalition politics is influenced by factions inside the governing parties and how this relationship further shapes the government's foreign policy behavior.

Another future avenue concerns the role of individuals. The case studies in this book have shown that the political leaders who occupied

6. Spruyt, "Territorial Concessions, Domestic Politics, and the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict"; Oktay, "Chamber of Opportunities."

7. Rodrik, *Economics Rules*, 18.

some of the key cabinet positions in each country were quite outspoken about their preferences to commit to the foreign policy choice at hand. The analyses in those chapters gave us reasons to conclude that the ability of these individuals to influence the decision-making process were contingent on the constraints and opportunities provided by their respective coalitions.

We know, however, that some leaders are fundamentally more assertive and results-driven players in the foreign policy arena than others: Germany's Angela Merkel and Israel's Ariel Sharon were undoubtedly more influential prime ministers in the foreign-policy-making processes of their coalitions than were Tansu Çiller in Turkey or David Cameron in Britain. Perhaps the "alternative majority" would have continued to curtail Denmark's NATO policy into the post–Cold War period had Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, the Danish foreign minister, lacked the vision to break the government's ranks by coalescing with a leftist party on the other side of the political spectrum. What explains the leaders' ability to shape the foreign policy decision-making processes and outputs of their respective coalitions? Is it about the length of time in office; are veteran prime ministers better equipped to lead their coalitions toward committed foreign policy behavior than rookies? Is the prime minister's influence driven by their personality or by the institutional privileges of their office, or a combination of both? Are leaders with more assertive leadership traits better able to navigate the constraints imposed by their coalitions? Is logrolling between ideologically contentious coalition partners more likely when the prime minister is a pragmatist? Coalitions govern as long as the people who run them commit to governing. Incorporating an individual-level analysis to this book's framework should therefore tell us a lot more about how coalitions work and act in foreign affairs.

Implications for Policy

This book offers lessons for policymakers as well. Most importantly, it shows that coalition governments are not necessarily constrained and inefficient foreign policy players. Minority coalitions, for instance, can take surprisingly decisive steps in the international arena if they navigate their domestic political terrain effectively. Minimum-winning coalitions can similarly act assertively abroad if the governing parties can tap into the opportunities for mutual policy and office gains. Oversized coalitions can mitigate electoral punishment and enjoy greater room to maneuver in

foreign affairs. Coalitions, then, should not be dismissed by international actors simply because in these governments it takes at least two to tango.

As for policymakers in the domestic playing field, the evidence here suggests that the potential constraints on foreign policy incurred by coalition governance especially in structurally precarious contexts could be circumvented via several routes. Formateurs facing the prospect of forming a minority coalition, for instance, should consider reaching across the aisle and cooperating with parties from the opposite side of the political spectrum to thwart a strong opposition in the legislature when it comes to, say, military operations that require parliamentary vote. Leaders overseeing minimum-winning coalitions should consider bringing single-issue and niche parties into the foreign policy decision-making process to create opportunities for logrolling. We have more empirical evidence now to support the argument that single-issue and niche parties could be easier to appease when the coalition's eye is on the foreign policy prize.[8] Rasmussen's minority government in Denmark could convince the DPP to support the 2003 Iraq war in exchange for offering concessions on the latter's key agenda item, namely, immigration reform. Even though his original coalition partners had abandoned him, Ariel Sharon was ultimately able to follow through with the Gaza disengagement plan when he pulled in ultraorthodox political parties and conceded on narrow domestic issues such as marriage law to secure their support for the withdrawal.[9] It seems that when these junior actors in the domestic political landscape enjoy veto player status (they can make or break the government), coalitions can bring them on board a lot more quickly by offering them narrow concessions. How narrow, of course, is in the eye of the beholder: what is narrow for the senior coalition party could be the defining platform of a niche party. Logrolling would work particularly effectively in the foreign policy domain, then, if mainstream parties cooperate with niche parties for whom narrow concessions can be quite valuable policy achievements.

Precisely for this reason, the rise of populist parties in Europe is a fascinating phenomenon not just for the study (and the future) of liberal democracy but also for understanding coalition foreign policy. It could just be easier to co-opt these parties than others to accomplish bigger, broader foreign policy goals. For instance, the Northern League in Italy assumed a more assertive role as a junior coalition party in the Berlusconi government especially when the foreign policy issue at hand offered tangible

8. Spruyt, "Territorial Concessions, Domestic Politics, and the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict." See also Spruyt, *Ending Empire*.

9. Oktay, "Chamber of Opportunities."

returns on its policy priorities (e.g., immigration). In contrast, the party was more muted in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq war, when the coalition was debating Italy's level of participation in the operation.[10] Strictly speaking from a rationalist perspective, populist parties on the right might be useful partners in right-wing minimum-winning coalitions, or for minority coalitions seeking parliamentary support, to get things done in international relations. For left-wing coalitions, cooperating with green or progressive parties should yield similar results on a range of policy arenas including efforts to curb climate change, increase development aid, and join peacebuilding operations. When these single-issue junior parties are brought on board, it is likely that they will cooperate with their coalition government on foreign policy, a domain where we do not expect them to have strong policy preferences.

Governing . . . Elsewhere

Although the framework of this book and its empirical analyses are rooted in the European political context, the discussion presented so far gives us reasons to expect that its takeaways can be applied to other parliamentary democracies. As I have so far implied in this chapter, Israel should provide an excellent setting to study foreign policy making in oversized coalitions.

Parliamentarism exists beyond Europe and Israel, of course. Coalition governments are observed frequently in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, whose political systems share commonalities with their European counterparts and therefore provide suitable contexts to assess the external validity of the book's framework. The world's largest democracy with a parliamentary system is India, and its experience with coalitions spans decades but elicits significant differences compared to the European experience.[11] We already know that the effects of coalition politics in India are visible on policy domains such as economic development.[12] Can we apply this book's framework to diverse political settings such as India to predict the foreign policy commitments of these regimes?

With some necessary modifications, this is both possible and desirable. Focusing on the Global South and India in particular, Blarel and Van Willigen raise a number of characteristics that are unique to this part of the

10. Verbeek and Zaslove, "The Impact of Populist Radical Right Parties on Foreign Policy."

11. Blarel and Van Willigen, "Coalitions and Foreign Policy-Making."

12. Nooruddin, *Coalition Politics and Economic Development*.

world that should be accounted for when studying coalition politics and foreign policy. One of these concerns the ideological dimensions on which political contestation occurs. For instance, the absence of a "single left-right ideological axis" in the Indian political system mitigates our ability to capture the degree of ideological dispersion among India's regional and national parties.[13] That said, new debates in the research on party politics and foreign policy show that the left-right ideological spectrum is not the only axis on which contestation and preference formation takes place.[14] The applicability of this book's framework to Indian politics, as well as to other democracies ruled by coalition governments but lacking the left-right dimension, should be easier and more effective, then, especially when the ideological cohesion dimension is tailored to suit the political context to which it travels. Initial qualitative analyses of the domestic actors and their preference structures in these contexts should give us clues about how much preference homogeneity exists among them, especially when the ideological placements of parties along a unidimensional political spectrum is not as feasible as it is in the European context.

The participation of substate actors to national foreign policy processes is an equally unique and important feature of Indian politics to account for.[15] It is important to note, however, that this should not invoke an "exceptionalism" argument that makes systematic analysis infeasible. Rather than damaging the framework's applicability, I consider these nuances to be adding novel analytical layers to test its durability. Indeed, to the extent that substate actors are viable players in foreign policy, they can be integrated into the framework as veto players with their own, niche-party-like regional interests. This is precisely the argument that Blarel and Van Willigen raise to explain how regional parties participate in foreign policy making in a coalitional context.[16] Similarly, the proliferation of partisan actors at both the national and subnational levels should have implications for when and how responsibility diffusion works. These could be issue-specific instances that require qualitative, case-study-driven methodologies. They would help put the framework presented here to the test in creative ways.

• • •

13. Blarel and Van Willigen, "Coalitions and Foreign Policy-Making: Insights from the Global South," 508. The authors rightfully point out that much of the party politics literature in foreign policy analysis remains geared toward explaining the west European experience.
14. Haesebrouck and Mello, "Patterns of Political Ideology and Security Policy."
15. See, for instance, Blarel and Sarkar, "Substate Organizations as Foreign Policy Agents."
16. Blarel and Van Willigen, "How Do Regional Parties Influence Foreign Policy?"

This book has provided the reasons and the analytical tools to study the relationship between coalition politics and foreign policy in the universe of parliamentary democracies. In their landmark book on coalition politics, Jean Blondel and Ferdinand Müller-Rommel investigate how "Governing Together" unfolds in Western Europe.[17] This book has followed their footsteps, among others, to push this inquiry beyond the national borders and answer how governing together takes place abroad.

17. Blondel and Müller-Rommel, *Governing Together*.

Methodological Appendix

APPENDIX 1

Coding Commitment Intensity in the Dataset

The original *10 Million International Dyadic Events* (10MIDE) dataset includes millions of news events collected from Reuters that cover the period from 1990 to 2004 across a wide range of topics including sports and natural disasters.[1] To capture foreign policy events, I isolated the data to include only those events where the actors (initiators) are government agents or the national executives. This makes the substantive coverage of the dataset consistent with the purposes of the book. In the original dataset, the actors of the source country are coded as <NEXE> for national executive and <GAGE> for government officials, respectively.[2] I used these two codes to isolate the events. I exclude Switzerland from the analyses since the executive branch in this country is structured differently than the other parliamentary systems in Europe, where the federal government is a seven-member executive. Croatia had switched to parliamentarism in 2000; therefore, the data for this country begin in 2000.

To ascertain the democratic character of the central and eastern European countries, I follow Huntington's "two-turnover test,"[3] which assumes that democracies in transition show greater promise toward consolidation, especially when the first round of posttransition elections is completed with a peaceful transfer of power from one incumbent to the next. I therefore

1. King and Lowe, "10 Million International Dyadic Events"; King and Lowe, "VRA Documentation, 1990–2004.Pdf."

2. King and Lowe, "10 Million International Dyadic Events"; King and Lowe, "VRA Documentation, 1990–2004.Pdf."

3. Huntington, *The Third Wave*, 266.

TABLE A1.1. WEIS Event Types (McClelland 1978)

Code	Event Type
01	Yield
02	Comment
03	Consult
04	Approve
05	Promise
06	Grant
07	Reward
08	Agree
09	Request
10	Propose
11	Reject
12	Accuse
13	Protest
14	Deny
15	Demand
16	Warn
17	Threaten
18	Demonstrate
19	Reduce Relationship
20	Expel
21	Seize
22	Force

front-censored the time period so that my dataset starts at 1994 instead of 1990 to avoid the possibility of potential democratic deficits during the transition phase in the wake of the Cold War.

The twenty-two event types that McClelland introduced in the World Events/Interaction Survey (WEIS) dataset is listed in table A1.1 below.[4] An example line of data from the WEIS dataset reads, "NIGERIA SUPPORTED UNK [United Kingdom] POLICY IN RHO [Rhodesia] AFFAIR," which was recorded on January 11, 1966, and coded with the event code 4, denoting *approval*. "ISR [Israel] TROOPS FIRED ON JOR [Jordan] TROOPS" is another record in the dataset, recorded on April 9, 1969, with the code 22, indicating the *use of force*.

The event types listed in table A1.1 further branch out to yield sixty-three event categories. These categories are also provided in the original 10MIDE data. Similarly, Goldstein utilizes these categories to construct his commitment measure, providing consistency of convention. Table A1.2

4. McClelland, *World Event/Interaction Survey (WEIS), 1966–1978*.

provides the Goldstein scale, which I used to code the dependent variable in chapter 3.[5]

Using the same coding convention, the 10MIDE dataset extends the 63-category scheme of the WEIS dataset to 157 to introduce more nuance to the existing categories. The authors call these the "IDEA" categories, which "are intended to be congruent with preexisting WEIS categories."[6] Table A1.3 shows how the WEIS cues were parsed out to create the IDEA categories by examining the WEIS event code 06 as an example. Note that the first two digits of each IDEA code from the left correspond to the WEIS cue category 06, listed in table A1.1 above as *Grant*.

Several IDEA event category codes have a perfect, one-to-one correspondence with the event category codes that are present in Goldstein's study. For these perfect matches, I assigned the weights presented in Goldstein.[7] For those IDEA event categories that cannot be matched with Goldstein's categories, King and Lowe's documentation manual advises to "take the average score for the events within that cue."[8] Example: For the IDEA event category 2239, the manual tells us to average the weights of all events that belong to the WEIS (22) cue. I followed this procedure for all events in the dataset that were not captured by Goldstein's categories.

5. Modified from Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data," 369–85.

6. King and Lowe, "An Automated Information Extraction Tool for International Conflict Data," 621.

7. Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data."

8. King and Lowe, "VRA Documentation, 1990–2004.Pdf," 10.

TABLE A1.2. Goldstein Commitment Scale (Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data," 376–77)

Event Definition	Weight
Military attack; clash; assault	–10.0
Seize position or possessions	–9.2
Nonmilitary destruction/injury	–8.7
Noninjury destructive action	–8.3
Armed force mobilization, exercise, display; military buildup	–7.6
Break diplomatic relations	–7.0
Threat with force specified	–7.0
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; act to punish/deprive	–5.6
Nonmilitary demonstration, walk out on	–5.2
Order person or personnel out of country	–5.0
Expel organization or group	–4.9
Issue order or command, insist, demand compliance	–4.9
Threat without specific negative sanction stated	–4.4
Detain or arrest person(s)	–4.4
Reduce routine international activity; recall officials	–4.1
Refuse; oppose; refuse to allow	–4.0
Turn down proposal; reject protest, demand, threat	–4.0
Halt negotiation	–3.8
Denounce; denigrate; abuse	–3.4
Give warning	–3.0
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
Deny an accusation	–0.9
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	0.0
Ask for information	0.1
Surrender, yield to order, submit to arrest	0.6
Yield position; retreat; evacuate	0.6
Meet with; send note	1.0
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	2.0
Give state invitation	2.5
Assure; reassure	2.8
Receive visit; host	2.8
Suspend sanctions; end punishment; call truce	2.9

TABLE A1.2—*Continued*

Event Definition	Weight
Agree to future action or procedure, to meet, or to negotiate	3.0
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 other assistance	6.5
Make substantive agreement	6.5
Extend economic aid; give, buy, sell, loan, borrow	7.4
Extend military assistance	8.3

TABLE A1.3. WEIS-to-IDEA Categories[1]

IDEA	Definition
06	Grant
066	Release or return
065	Ease sanctions
0655	Relax curfew
0654	Demobilize armed forces
0653	Relax administrative sanction
0652	Relax censorship
0651	Observe truce
0632	Evacuate victims
064	Improve relations
063	Provide shelter
0631	Grant asylum
062	Extend invitation

[1] Modified from King and Lowe, "An Automated Information Extraction Tool For International Conflict Data," 617–42.

APPENDIX 2

List of Events in the Dataset

The IDEA codes come from the original 10MIDE dataset.[1] I assigned the Goldstein scores based on the rules described in appendix 1.[2] Note that the analyses in chapter 3 use the folded values of the Goldstein scores, such that the dependent variable extends from 0 to 10.

1. King and Lowe, "10 Million International Dyadic Events."
2. Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data."

TABLE A2.1. The List of Events in the Dataset

Class	IDEA code	WEIS code	Event Name	Goldstein Score
<ADIS>	1621	16	Armed force air display	–3
<AERI>	2239	22	Missile attack	–9
<AGAC>	82	8	Agree or accept	3
<AGRE>	8	8	Agree	4.8
<ALER>	161	16	Alerts	–3
<APOL>	44	4	Apologize	3.5
<ARES>	212	21	Arrest and detention	–4.4
<ASKE>	931	9	Ask for economic aid	1.6
<ASKH>	933	9	Ask for humanitarian aid	1.6
<ASKM>	93	9	Ask for material aid	3.4
<ASKP>	95	9	Request protection	3.4
<ASSA>	2232	22	Assassination	–10
<ASSR>	54	5	Assure	2.8
<ATSE>	824	8	Agree to settlement	4.8
<BANA>	1121	11	Impose restrictions	–4
<BEAT>	2221	22	Beatings	–9.6
<BFOR>	1822	18	Border fortification	–6.8
<BLAM>	121	12	Criticize or denounce	–2.2
<BLAW>	1133	11	Break law	–4
<BREL>	195	19	Break relations	–7
<BVIO>	2112	21	Armed force border violation	–6.8
<CALL>	94	9	Call for action	–0.1
<CLAR>	26	2	Acknowledge responsibility	–0.1
<CLAS>	2231	22	Armed battle	–7
<COLL>	83	8	Collaborate	4.8
<COMP>	13	13	Complain	–2.4
<CONC>	226	22	Crowd control	–9
<CONS>	3	3	Consult	1.5
<DECC>	21	21	Decline comment	–0.1
<DEFY>	113	11	Defy norms	–4
<DEII>	151	15	Demand information	–4.9
<DEMA>	15	15	Demand	–4.9
<DENY>	14	14	Deny	–1
<DERI>	159	15	Demand rights	–4.9
<DISC>	31	3	Discussion	1
<DMOB>	654	6	Demobilize armed forces	2.2
<DWAR>	198	19	Declare war	–4.5
<EASS>	65	6	Ease sanctions	2.9
<EEAI>	71	7	Extend economic aid	7.4
<EESB>	657	6	Ease economic sanctions	2.2
<EHAI>	73	7	Extend humanitarian aid	7.6
<EMAI>	72	7	Extend military aid	8.3
<EMPA>	43	4	Empathize	3.4
<EMSA>	658	6	Ease military blockade	2.2
<ENDO>	4	4	Endorse	3.5
<EVAC>	632	6	Evacuate victims	2.2
<EXIL>	20	20	Expel	–5
<FCOM>	132	13	Formally complain	–2.4

TABLE A2.1—*Continued*

Class	IDEA code	WEIS code	Event Name	Goldstein Score
<FORG>	45	4	Forgive	3.5
<GASY>	631	6	Grant asylum	–1.1
<GRAN>	6	6	Grant	2.2
<GRPG>	2235	22	Artillery attack	–10
<HAID>	1932	19	Reduce or stop humanitarian assistance	–4.5
<HALO>	194	19	Halt discussions	–3.8
<HALT>	1941	19	Halt negotiation	–4.5
<HIDE>	1131	11	Political flight	–4
<HOST>	33	3	Host a meeting	2.8
<HTAK>	2132	21	Hostage taking and kidnapping	–6.8
<ICOM>	131	13	Informally complain	–2.4
<IMPR>	64	6	Improve relations	5.4
<INCC>	1613	16	Security alert	–3
<INVI>	62	6	Extend invitation	2.5
<MALT>	1611	16	Armed force alert	–3
<MDEM>	182	18	Armed force mobilization	–7.6
<MDIS>	162	16	Armed force display	–3
<MEDI>	311	3	Mediate talks	1.9
<MOCC>	2111	21	Armed force occupation	–6.8
<MONI>	214	21	Covert monitoring	–6.8
<NEGO>	312	3	Engage in negotiation	1.9
<NMFT>	175	17	Other physical force threats	–6.4
<OCOM>	24	2	Optimistic comment	0.1
<OPEN>	1132	11	Disclose information	–4
<PASS>	222	22	Physical assault	–9.6
<PCOM>	22	2	Pessimistic comment	–0.1
<PDEM>	181	18	Protest demonstrations	–5.2
<PEXE>	2234	22	Small arms attack	–10
<POAR>	2121	21	Political arrests	–4.4
<PRAI>	41	4	Praise	3.4
<PRME>	521	5	Promise economic support	5.2
<PRMH>	523	5	Promise humanitarian support	5.2
<PRMM>	522	5	Promise military support	5.2
<PRMS>	52	5	Promise material support	5.2
<PROM>	5	5	Promise	4.7
<PROO>	51	5	Promise policy support	4.5
<PROP>	10	10	Propose	0.8
<PTME>	104	10	Offer to mediate	0.7
<PTMN>	103	10	Offer to Negotiate	0.7
<PTRU>	101	10	Offer peace proposal	1.5
<RAID>	223	22	Armed actions	–10
<RALL>	112	11	Refuse to allow	–4
<RATI>	46	4	Ratify a decision	3.5
<REDA>	193	19	Reduce or stop aid	–5.6
<REDR>	192	19	Reduce routine activity	–2.2
<REJC>	11	11	Reject	–4

TABLE A2.1—*Continued*

Class	IDEA code	WEIS code	Event Name	Goldstein Score
<RELE>	66	6	Release or return	1.9
<REQS>	9	9	Request	1.6
<REWD>	7	7	Reward	7.4
<RFIN>	934	9	Request an investigation	1.6
<RIOT>	224	22	Riot	–8.3
<RPMD>	1115	11	Reject proposal to meet	–4
<RPRO>	111	11	Reject proposal	–4
<RRPE>	661	6	Return, release person(s)	2.2
<RSAN>	653	6	Relax administrative sanction	2.2
<RWCF>	936	9	Request withdrawal or ceasefire	1.6
<SAID>	2	2	Comment	0.1
<SANC>	19	19	Sanction	–4.5
<SEEK>	91	9	Investigate	0.1
<SEZR>	211	21	Seize possession	–9.2
<SHEP>	63	6	Provide shelter	2.2
<SOLS>	92	9	Solicit support	3.4
<SRAL>	74	7	Rally support	7.6
<STRI>	196	19	Strikes and boycotts	–4.5
<THEN>	1721	17	Threaten to halt negotiations	–6
<THRT>	17	17	Threaten	–6.4
<TUNS>	171	17	Non-specific threats	–4.4
<ULTI>	174	17	Give ultimatum	–6.9
<VETO>	1123	11	Veto	–4
<VISI>	32	3	Travel to meet	1.9
<WARN>	16	16	Warn	–3
<YIEL>	1	1	Yield	1.1
<YORD>	11	1	Yield to order	0.6

APPENDIX 3

Coding the Ideological Positions of Government Parties

I use multiple datasets to code the ideological positions of the parties in government. As a basic rule, I use Ray's dataset (the data were collected in 1996) to code party positions.[1] This dataset allows me to capture party positions prior to 1999, when CHES was first introduced. I use the version of the CHES dataset that is the closest to the start year of the government for all governments in my dataset after 1999.[2]

The first iteration of CHES in 1999, however, primarily focuses on the most prominent western European countries. For this reason, if a country is not included in the CHES coverage—such as Malta or Iceland, as well as other central and eastern European countries that were not covered until CHES's 2002 iteration—I utilized the dataset that was chronologically the closest to the election date or the government start date in these countries. In other words, for those countries not included in either Ray or CHES (such as Malta and Iceland), I use the Benoit and Laver dataset (the authors had collected the data in 2003).[3] Here, I should acknowledge that unlike the western European countries for which expert datasets get updated periodically to reflect any temporal changes in their policy positions, this practice is generally absent for many central and eastern European coun-

1. Ray, "Measuring Party Orientations towards European Integration," 283–306.

2. Steenbergen and Marks, "Evaluating Expert Judgments," 347–66; Hooghe et al., "Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning," 687–703.

3. Benoit and Laver, *Party Policy in Modern Democracies*.

tries. As a result, the 2003 values from the Benoit and Laver dataset were used for all Estonian governments in this study, for instance, that began their terms in 1997, 1999, and 2003.

When there are pre-electoral alliances or mergers among parties: Some parties enter elections together and win seats jointly or they may merge to become a single party. In these instances, the policy positions of allied parties are averaged to yield a single left-right score. For example, in Poland, the SLD-UP (Alliance of Democratic Left–Union of Labour) was a pre-electoral alliance that ran together in elections.[4] Their policy position is coded as the average policy position of SLD and UP. Weighted averages (i.e., policy position of the new alliance weighted by the seat share each party separately received in the previous election) were not used for this measure since it would have been misleading to assume that the seat shares the parties had won in the previous election would directly affect the policy influence of the party in the alliance, and that this proportionality would continue throughout the alliance's lifetime. This assumption echoes the junior party influence in coalitions argued in the literature: junior parties often have more influence in a coalition than their seat share in the parliament would predict.[5] If, however, the left-right position data exist only for one of the allied parties (generally these alliances are made of two parties), then the left-right position of this party is used. An example is Lithuania, for which the left-right position of the TS (Homeland Union) is used to code for the TS-LK (Homeland Union–Lithuanian Christian Democrats), until the 2006 CHES dataset included this alliance in its coverage.

4. Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Poland, December 2001."

5. Clare, "Ideological Fractionalization and the International Conflict Behavior of Parliamentary Democracies," 965–87.

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