



Research Report

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Building Military Coalitions

Lessons from U.S. Experience

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Preface

This report documents research and analysis conducted as part of a project entitled *Coalition Interventions: Learning from the U.S. Experience*, sponsored by the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, U.S. Army. The purpose of the project was to identify insights from the historical U.S. experience with coalition interventions to inform U.S. operations and future planning, including potential signposts of the likelihood of allied or partner support and implications for the likelihood of achieving U.S. objectives.

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Summary

The research reported here was completed in October 2020, followed by security review by the sponsor and the Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, with final sign-off in August 2021.

The decision to use a military intervention to try to achieve a political goal is inherently risky. Although sometimes necessary, the use of military force abroad can bring with it large monetary costs, loss of civilian and military life, the potential for short- or long-term regional instability, and the possibility of political or violent backlash. To offset some of these risks, states sometimes seek to build coalitions made up of partner states that have similar objectives, can share some of the cost (in terms of personnel, materiel, and resources), and can increase the perceived legitimacy of the intervention. The United States, for example, has used coalitions in Afghanistan and in Iraq and joined coalitions for operations in Bosnia and Rwanda.

The United States has relied on coalitions more frequently in the post–Cold War period than it did in earlier periods, including the majority of its major military interventions of the past 20 years. Since the end of the Cold War, for instance, about 75 percent of U.S. interventions (not including disaster relief operations) have been conducted in coalitions. Looking to the future, the trend toward greater reliance on coalitions is likely to continue. Norms of noninterference in the affairs of sovereign states and increasing concerns over the costs (in money and lives) incurred by large-scale overseas military interventions make coalitions relatively more appealing. The major security threats that the United States is likely to face in the next 20 years will all require coalition partners. Threats posed by near-peer competitors, such as Russia and China, are likely to necessitate coordinated responses. As the United States considers what it would take to fight effectively in these contexts, military leaders and policymakers are considering what types of coalition support they can count on and how they can build the partnerships needed to support contingency operations.

Objective

This report has two objectives. First, we consider what factors seem associated with the U.S. decision to form coalitions and explore the factors that drive the decisions of partner states to join coalitions. We examined both qualitative and quantitative evidence in conducting this analysis, which builds on, updates, and extends past work on this topic. Second, we consider the question of which factors shape the success of coalitions. We examined the conditions under which U.S. coalition operations are more successful than unilateral ones at achieving U.S. political objectives. For this analysis, we used a broader set of objectives than most existing work on this topic has done, and so we provide a more complete view of factors that could support coalition success.

The report will be useful to policymakers and defense planners seeking to gain a better understanding of why coalitions form and when they are successful. The analysis and recommendations in the report can inform planning for future contingencies by providing insight regarding when states are most likely to join a military coalition and when these coalitions are most likely to advance U.S. interests. The report might be able to guide decisions about when to pursue the support of a coalition and when the United States might benefit from operating alone. This report also could help policymakers and planners make choices about coalition recruitment and participation by identifying which types of states might be most willing to join a given coalition and which might make the most-meaningful contributions to coalitions of different types.

Approach

For the purpose of this report, we define a *U.S. coalition intervention* as any ad hoc military intervention including the United States and at least one other country (in addition to the host) in pursuit of a common action. This definition follows the one outlined in Joint Publication 3-16.¹ We define *military intervention* to be any deployment of military personnel outside the home country comprising at least 100 *person-years* (i.e., 100 troops deployed for 12 months, or an equivalent size for shorter duration, such as 200 troops for 6 months or 1,200 troops for 1 month), or an equivalent contribution of naval or air personnel, for the purpose of carrying out a qualifying activity type. The foundation of our analysis is a dataset of 37 U.S. military interventions between 1946 and 2018 that met our definition of a coalition. We focus on the

¹ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Multinational Operations*, Washington, D.C., Joint Publication 3-16, March 1, 2019. Per this document,

A coalition is an arrangement between two or more nations for common action. Coalitions are typically ad hoc; formed by different nations, often with different objectives; usually for a single problem or issue, while addressing a narrow sector of common interest. Operations conducted with units from two or more coalition members are referred to as coalition operations. (p. I-1)

Table S.1
Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question	Hypotheses	Quantitative Analysis	Qualitative Analysis
When does the United States choose to work through coalitions?	• The United States is more likely to form coalitions when operational demands are high (burden-sharing)	X	X
	• The United States is more likely to form coalitions when the logistical challenges are significant (geography)	X	X
	• The United States is more likely to form coalitions when having international partners is important (international legitimacy)	X	X
	• This United States is more likely to join coalitions when required by domestic political concerns (domestic politics)	X	X
	• The United States is less likely to form coalitions when the threat is high and/or national security is at stake (degree of threat)	X	X
When do other states choose to join U.S. coalitions?	• States are more likely to join U.S. interventions when they have a close relationship with the United States (U.S. relationship)	X	X
	• States are more likely to join coalitions in their own regions (home region)	X	X
	• States are more likely to join coalitions when they have shared interests (shared interests–formation)	X	X
	• States are more likely to join U.S. coalitions when the intervention is sponsored or led by an international government organization, or IGO (IGO)	X	X
	• States are more likely to join U.S. coalitions when they seek status in the international system or to gain a reputation (status-seeking)		X
What factors favor the success of coalitions at achieving U.S. political objectives?	• Coalitions are more likely than unilateral interventions to achieve U.S. political objectives (success)	X	X
	• Coalitions are more likely to achieve U.S. political objectives in stabilization missions (stabilization)	X	X
	• Coalitions are more likely to achieve U.S. objectives when partners have a shared interest (shared interests–success)	X	X
	• Coalitions with past experience partnering (e.g., members of an alliance) are more likely to be successful (experience)	X	X
	• Coalitions with more partners are less likely to be successful because of coordination challenges (number of partners)	X	X

post–Cold War period as providing the most-relevant historical experience and consider what our findings might mean for future operational contexts.

We asked three research questions and used a combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses to explore each of 15 hypotheses derived from the literature across the three questions. Most hypotheses can be assessed using both qualitative and quantitative methods, providing two lenses on the same question. Others can be assessed using only one of the two approaches. Table S.1 lists the hypotheses by research question and indicates the methodologies we used to assess each.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Box S.1 summarizes the key findings for each of our 13 hypotheses. We discuss these findings and resulting recommendations for the Army in this section.

Why Does the United States Choose Coalitions?

We found strong support for two of our hypotheses regarding why the United States chooses to use coalitions, and we found mixed support for the other three. The United States has tended to use coalitions to offset the operational burden of an intervention and to build the coalition or legitimacy needed to carry out an intervention. These findings are consistent with existing literature. We found that logistical concerns related to geography are not irrelevant to coalition decisions but that the United States can often overcome the challenges associated with distance without entering into formal coalitions that involve the provision of forces. Domestic considerations related to the political support of the general public and of the political elite appear to matter in some situations—but not others, and not systematically. Finally, although the United States has tended since the end of the Cold War to use unilateral interventions when the immediate threat to the United States is high, our broader analysis suggests that operational burdens and considerations of legitimacy often mean that the United States is forced to rely on coalition support. Furthermore, we observed situations in which the United States expressed a willingness to intervene unilaterally if the costs of forming a coalition were too high.

These findings have implications for the planning of future interventions—and the future of coalitions, specifically. As the United States shifts to a focus on competing with and defeating near-peer adversaries, defense planners and policymakers must also consider what these conflicts might look like and how the United States will prepare for them. There are at least two possible directions, and each suggests something different about future trends in coalitions. First, if future conflicts are likely to be larger-scale confrontations with such adversaries as Russia and China, then the United States will likely be forced to rely more heavily on coalitions to help meet the operational demands of a major-power war. In such situations, the United States might

Box S.1 Key Findings Summary

Factor	Finding
Burden-sharing	Coalitions are more likely when operational demands are expected to be high.
Geography	The United States could use coalitions to gain access and sustainment or logistical support when interventions occur far from the United States, but they also rely on noncoalition partners and special agreements.
International legitimacy	Coalitions are more likely when the need for international legitimacy is higher.
Domestic politics	Domestic political considerations matter in some situations but are less relevant than other factors.
Degree of threat	The United States often prefers to act unilaterally when the immediate threat is high, but operational and legitimacy considerations mean that, even in high-threat situations, the United States sometimes has to rely on coalitions.
U.S. relationship	States with close ties to the United States are more likely (but not guaranteed) to join coalitions. States without close ties might join for other reasons.
Home region	States are more likely to join coalitions in their home region.
Shared interests	Shared interests are associated with a higher likelihood of joining a coalition, but states could also enter to pursue their unique objectives.
IGO	IGO sponsorship appears likely to increase willingness of states to join.
Status-seeking	States sometimes join coalitions to advance their status or reputation.
Coalitions more successful than unilateral	Coalitions can support success in some situations, but there is no systematic trend.
Coalitions more successful for stabilization ops	We found no consistent trend for this hypothesis.
Shared interests	Having some shared interest does seem to be associated with a higher likelihood of achieving U.S. objectives; shared threats seem especially important to coalition outcomes.
Experience	Experience with partners in the past provides some benefit but cannot overcome key coalition challenges.
Number of partners	Smaller coalitions can operate more efficiently, but sometimes larger coalitions are needed for legitimacy or burden-sharing.

wish to operate unilaterally because it faces a direct threat to national interests but be required to rely on partners because of operational requirements that exceed capacity. However, our analysis also showed that, during the Cold War (a period when the United States faced a major power adversary), conflicts tended to be fought through proxies, coalitions were used less often (with exceptions), and the United States more often intervened unilaterally (though carefully to avoid directly engaging with the Soviet Union). In the post–Cold War environment, political legitimacy has been paramount in driving the trend toward coalitions, but will this trend continue in a more severe threat environment? Importantly, one way that legitimacy might continue to matter is through questions of access: Having regional partners and support can ease access and logistical challenges that are manifold in both U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and U.S. European Command. Still, a changed threat environment might alter the way the United States uses coalitions.

Why Do States Join U.S. Coalitions?

Our analysis of coalition contributors suggests that states are more likely to join U.S. coalitions when they have close ties with the United States, when the intervention occurs in their own region, and when they can leverage membership to increase their status or standing. We found that having shared interests with other coalition partners can support membership, but there are plenty of instances of states joining coalitions to pursue their own objectives, which can differ from those of the United States or of the coalition. Finally, we found mixed support for the argument that IGO sponsorship drives membership. IGO sponsorship does seem relevant at the aggregate level, but our case studies identified clear exceptions. Planners and policymakers can leverage the insights here to identify specific states that might be willing to join a coalition or are at least open to joining with the right incentives. We offer some thoughts on this here.

When it comes to building coalitions, establishing strong ties prior to a conflict or crisis can be beneficial. The Army should seek to build and strengthen these ties with potential partners along political, military, economic, and cultural dimensions.

Our analysis found that states with longstanding close ties to the United States tended to be more likely than other states to join U.S. coalitions. This was true across different types of relationships: military, political, economic, and cultural. Although the strongest relationship was found for military alliances, we found that military assistance and cultural ties (e.g., the percentage of the country's population that speaks English) also mattered. To build relationships that encourage coalition partnerships, the U.S. government generally and the U.S. Army specifically have several options. First, military and diplomatic leaders could seek to expand the number of formal partnerships of which the United States is a member. That is a high bar and could be challenging in such places as East Asia, where potential partners have avoided bilat-

eral relationships and are concerned about angering China. However, there are less formal options, such as unofficial partnerships and even close military or political ties built through interpersonal relationships, joint training and exercises, and personnel exchanges. Another option would be to capitalize on military assistance to establish ties that could build a different type of military and economic relationship while also building partner capacity in ways that can support future operations. Economic ties can also matter. Increasing trade relationships with a country, for example, appears to increase the likelihood of that country joining a coalition. Equally important to the observation that closer ties can encourage potential partners and allies to join U.S. coalitions, our analysis suggests that even allies do not universally join U.S. coalitions. As a result, the United States cannot and should not assume partner or ally support when conducting contingency planning.

Where does the United States stand on building the relationships it needs to support future coalitions? The answer varies by region. In Europe, the United States has strong political and military ties, formal alliances, deep trade relationships, and strong cultural connections, though there are questions about whether even these ties will be enough to guarantee support in the event of major war. In the Pacific, the U.S. position is more fragile. The United States has several key military alliances in the region, but many other states have stringently avoided formal military relationships. Even close allies have shown hesitancy to anger or provoke China by drawing closer to the United States. Economic ties are strong, and the United States is a major economic player in the region, but it is overshadowed by China in most instances. Had the United States joined the Trans-Pacific Partnership, such a multilateral relationship would have built a strong set of economic ties that could have increased the odds of future coalition support. Finally, cultural ties are limited and dominated by China in some places.

There is some evidence that states seeking greater international status or influence might be primed for recruitment to a coalition, even if initially resistant. When forming coalitions, the United States should consider whether there are status-seeking states that might be willing to join without explicit or implicit payments or side payments.

We found some evidence in several of the intervention situations we considered of a state joining a coalition to advance its own status or standing. In most of these situations, the partners in question were smaller states seeking to advance on the international stage. This was true in the coalitions formed in the Gulf War and to fight the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). In other situations, even larger states, such as Canada in the case of the war in Afghanistan (in 2001), have used participation in a coalition to advance national standing and reputation. Participation can be motivated by a desire to win the favor of the United States or to solidify relationships on which states are economically or militarily dependent—but it can also be motivated by hopes of getting a place at the table and a larger voice on the international stage.

This notion that the United States might be able to leverage the desire of some states to advance their international status when building coalitions is one that deserves additional research, given the potential implications. Specifically, if the relationship observed in our case studies is one that can be generalized, then identifying those states most vulnerable to such appeals could be a useful means for the United States to extend and diversify future coalitions without significant costs. When thinking about possible future conflicts and the coalitions that would be needed to fight them, the European, Pacific, and Middle East theaters are very different. In each case, however, there are both smaller states that might seek more influence and rapidly rising states that might see coalition membership as a pathway to greater international political influence. Additional research in this area should seek ways to test this relationship between status-seeking and coalition membership empirically and in a wider set of situations, as well as to explore whether certain types of states are more likely to have status objectives.

IGO sponsorship or leadership might not be required for the formation of strong coalitions, but it can increase the willingness of potential contributors to join. Building and working through IGOs can help the United States successfully build coalitions for military interventions.

Our analysis shows that states seem more willing to join coalitions when they have the approval of an IGO, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations (UN), the European Union, or the African Union. But our case studies also show that IGO sponsorship is not a requirement and that coalitions have been successfully formed without having an IGO involved. For the United States, building and working through IGOs might be one way to support the formation of diverse coalitions. Importantly, IGOs formed in one region can serve as powerful legitimacy providers for interventions in other regions. For example, NATO has led interventions across the globe, and interventions supported by the UN are similarly widely dispersed. IGOs can serve as the core foundation of an intervention and motivate wider participation. The United States does not have a NATO-like multilateral IGO in the Pacific that can support coalition formation in this way; furthermore, it is unlikely that the United States will be able to build a multilateral organization in the region. Instead, the United States has a series of bilateral alliances that it must work through to achieve its aims. This could pose a vulnerability should a conflict in the region require a coalition-led response, but informal relationships could fill the gap. Exercises that bring multiple East Asian players together could be one way to foster these types of multilateral ties, although perhaps not formal alliances. When thinking about and planning for future interventions, the United States should consider more carefully (and earlier) how it will leverage IGO support to build strong coalitions. IGO sponsorship should be incorporated into operational planning and exercises. IGO support

is not something that can be built overnight; it is something that requires significant investment and consensus-building.

What Makes Coalitions Successful?

Our results regarding factors that drive coalition success at achieving U.S. political objectives were less strongly supported than other results presented in this report. We found no difference in terms of likelihood of success between coalition and noncoalition interventions (both overall and across activity types), and we determined that past experience operating as a coalition were tied to mixed effects, as was the number of partners involved in a coalition. We found some qualitative support for an argument that shared interests can support cohesion (and, ultimately, success at achieving U.S. political objectives), and we observed that shared threats seem more important than shared objectives in many situations. With only five qualitative case studies, we must be careful about generalizing, but our findings suggest a few recommendations for Army planners.

Although coalitions can be beneficial and support success at achieving U.S. political objectives in some situations, there is no guarantee that they will be more effective than unilateral interventions.

Our analysis shows that although coalitions can have benefits—in terms of legitimacy gained or operational resources acquired—there is no guarantee that they will be any more effective than a unilateral intervention. Similarly, although large and diverse coalitions can bring benefits, they also bring significant challenges that can work against successful achievement of key objectives. Although the decision to enter into a coalition might be one of necessity, choices about coalition structure, partners, and processes can play a role in the success or failure of an intervention in achieving its political objectives. Some interventions are better conducted as coalitions; others must be done in that way. Examples of the former are the coalition against ISIS that required regional support to be as effective as it was. Examples of the latter are such large conflicts as the World Wars and, to a lesser extent, the Korean War, which required partners to meet operational requirements. In each of these instances, the challenges of coalitions were worth shouldering for the benefits they provided. However, similar coalitions have worse outcomes—such as the one in Afghanistan, which has been less effective at achieving key objectives despite its size and diverse membership. The key to coalition success (from the U.S. perspective) seems to be ensuring that the right partners are involved. This might mean involving important regional players or small countries that can fill key gaps with important niche capabilities. The number of partners might matter less for the United States than having key partners whose support and commitment are essential to good coalition outcomes.

Having some kind of shared interest, such as a perceived or real threat or desired end state, is important to coalition formation and success, but states also can—and do—have their own national objectives.

In our case studies, coalitions were generally formed around a shared set of interests or desired end states but very often had partners that also had divergent objectives. Shared interests, such as a shared threat or overarching desired outcome (e.g., defeating ISIS in the early 2000s, removing Saddam Hussein from Kuwait in 1990), are important to coalition formation but even more central to the ability of coalitions to achieve that outcome (not to be confused with the separate national-level objectives—such as status-seeking, building ties with the United States, or operational experience—that also might exist). In particular, we found that coalitions that shared a common threat and common view of that threat tended to have several advantages in terms of cohesion, communication, and commitment; those that lacked such a shared threat tended to suffer from conflicting motivations, communication challenges, and failure to coordinate. For example, one reason the Global Coalition Against ISIS, formed in 2014, was successful was because coalition partners shared a perception that the threat posed by ISIS was severe and immediate, which overrode partners' varied and conflicting individual motives. This shared sense of the threat allowed the diverse coalition to hang together for an extended period. By contrast, coalition partners in other interventions considered here did not share a common threat—or, at least, a common view of that threat. In the instances of Afghanistan in 2001 and NATO's deterrence of Russia in Europe in 2014, coalition partners differed in their experiences and perceptions of the threat's severity. These different perceptions created cracks and fissures that undermined coalition success.

Our findings suggest that, when working to form coalitions, the United States should focus on recruiting partners around a shared threat or desired outcome. Our findings also suggest that coalition partners can have some number of different—and, in some situations, even conflicting—national objectives and motivations. Considering current threats, the United States faces challenges in both Europe and the Pacific in building a coalition with a common perception of the threat. In the Pacific, different Asian allies have different views of the threat posed by China, and this might be an impediment to forming closer partnerships in the region. One way to work toward stronger partnerships and to support the development of a future coalition might be to foster a common view of the threat posed by China. The U.S. Army might be able to play a role through military exchanges and talks, and it could foster longer-term information-sharing efforts to build that common narrative about the threat posed by China.

Experience with fighting as a coalition can support success at achieving U.S. political objectives. The U.S. Army should continue efforts to train and exercise with potential future partners but emphasize innovation over routine.

Our analysis shows that past experience with training or fighting as a coalition can provide advantages that support success in future operations. This is not a surprising finding; we would expect that past experience operating as a coalition would yield better interoperability and communication and that past experience would also support the development of processes and procedures that can make coalitions function effectively. Although our quantitative analysis showed ambiguous results, our qualitative case studies provide examples of the benefits of experience. The best example is perhaps the Gulf War in the 1990s—past experience in coalitions and exercises supported ground, air, and naval operations and contributed to the achievement of key objectives. Past experience in this case also helped overcome the challenges created by the diversity and size of the coalition. We also have examples where lack of coalition experience undermined an intervention—specifically, the new partnerships in the post–World War II occupation of Japan. However, it is also clear that past experience does not guarantee success and can even serve as an impediment if past practice stifles innovation, as was the case among NATO partners in Afghanistan.

Still, it seems that, on net, the benefits of experience outweigh the downsides. The United States should not assume that past shared practices or exercises will guarantee favorable outcomes, but it should continue to invest in training and exercises with allies, partners, and potential partners. It is worth noting that past interventions have benefited not only from experience with formal allies but also from exercises conducted with frequent partners. As the U.S. military faces increasing financial pressure and potential cuts, the value of training and exercises should not be overlooked or downplayed. Investments in this type of experience today can pay off in the future. At the same time, training should be structured to ensure adaptability to multiple operating environments, which means training guidance will likely need to be revised and updated often to factor in unexpected challenges and demands. The United States is already working toward developing better training to support future operations with such events as the Defender series in Europe, Pacific Defender, and Pacific Pathways. These types of exercises are the type that our analysis suggests would be useful to future coalitions, and our analysis encourages their continuation despite resource pressures.

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Abbreviations

9/11	September 11, 2001, terrorist bombings
AU	African Union
BCOF	British Commonwealth Occupation Force
C2	command and control
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINC	Composite Index of National Capability
CJTF-HOA	Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa
COIN	counterinsurgency
COW	Correlates of War (database)
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DoD	U.S. Department of Defense
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EFP	enhanced forward presence
EU	European Union
FID	foreign internal defense
GAO	U.S. Government Accountability Office
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	gross domestic product
IGO	international government organization
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies

ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
MFO	multinational force and observers
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSC	National Security Council
OAS	Organization of American States
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
OLS	ordinary least squares
ROE	rules of engagement
RUCID	RAND U.S. Coalition Intervention Dataset
RUGID	RAND U.S. Ground Intervention Dataset
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
VIF	variance inflation factor
WWII	World War II

Introduction

The decision to use a military intervention to try to achieve a political goal is inherently risky. Although sometimes necessary, the use of military force abroad can bring with it large monetary costs, loss of life (civilian and military), the potential for short- or long-term regional instability, and the possibility of backlash (political or violent) in the form of retaliatory attacks on the homeland. To offset some of these risks, states sometimes seek to build coalitions made up of partner states that have similar objectives, can share some of the cost (in terms of personnel, materiel, and resources), and can increase the perceived legitimacy of the intervention. Coalition partners can also be useful in providing access and facilitating the transit of goods and personnel, especially in interventions that occur far from the United States. The United States, for example, has used coalitions in Afghanistan and Iraq and has joined coalitions for operations in Bosnia and Rwanda.

From the perspective of the United States, coalitions can provide several benefits. They can supplement and complement U.S. forces, providing additional personnel, logistical support, access, and financial resources. They can also increase the political legitimacy of the intervention by affirming the cause to be a necessary and justified one. Possible partner states might vary in their ability to provide burden-sharing and legitimacy: Larger states, such as the United Kingdom or France, can often make substantial contributions in terms of capability and funding; smaller states might contribute in other ways—for example, by providing access to key ports or military installations, logistical support, niche operational capabilities and specialized military units, or (in some situations) increasing the perceived legitimacy of an operation. However, working with partners can also bring significant challenges. Interoperability, communications, command and control (C2), and integration of forces can be difficult, even for partners that have fought together in the past. Partners might also differ in ways that make cooperation difficult. They might have different objectives, different rules of engagement, or different operational processes that make communication and joint combined operations a challenge and could undermine intervention success.

Despite the challenges, the United States has relied on coalitions more frequently in the post–Cold War period than it did in earlier periods, including the

majority of its major military interventions of the past 20 years. Since the end of the Cold War, for instance, about 75 percent of U.S. interventions (not including disaster relief operations) have been conducted in coalitions.¹ Looking to the future, the trend toward greater reliance on coalitions is likely to continue. First, norms of non-interference in the affairs of sovereign states and increasing concerns over the costs (in money and lives) incurred by large-scale overseas military interventions make coalitions relatively more appealing. As already noted, intervening with partners can increase legitimacy and help spread the burden of an intervention. After close to 20 years of ongoing military operations, the domestic U.S. public is largely weary of and skeptical about the initiation of new interventions. A 2019 survey by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs found that just 41 percent of Americans supported maintaining troops in Afghanistan; 44 percent said the same about keeping troops in Germany, and 43 percent about troops in Syria.²

Coalitions might be one way to reduce domestic opposition to new interventions when they are deemed necessary by political and military leaders. Second, all the major security threats that the United States is likely to face in the next 20 years will require coalition partners. Threats posed by near-peer competitors, such as Russia and China, are likely to necessitate coordinated responses. A conflict with China, for instance, would likely be fought thousands of miles from the U.S. homeland and would require logistical support and access permissions from regional partners, at the very least. Response to China also would likely depend on ad hoc coalition contributions of personnel and other resources. Responses to a military threat from Russia would similarly require a coordinated operation led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to repel a Russian advance. Other emerging threats, such as those from the proliferation of nuclear weapons or the pervasive threats presented by violent nonstate actors have also required—and will continue to require—coordinated coalition responses that involve both regional partners where these groups are most active and more-traditional partners with potentially greater military capabilities. Even humanitarian interventions, in an age of climate change and global pandemics, are likely to require wider coalitions. As the United States considers what it would take to fight effectively in these contexts, military leaders and policymakers are considering what types of coalition support they can count on and how they can go about building the partnerships needed to support contingency operations. This report provides insight into these questions, looking at factors that have predicted coalition membership and what has made coalition interventions more or less successful in the past.

¹ This assessment is based on RAND-collected data, described in detail in Chapter Three of this report.

² Dina Smeltz, Ivo Daalder, Karl Friedhoff, Craig Kafura, and Brendan Helm, *Rejecting Retreat*, Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2019.

Objective

Given that coalition warfare is likely to remain relevant, military planners would benefit from greater understanding of the dynamics that govern coalition formation and the factors that shape coalition outcomes. There is a fairly robust literature that considers the question of coalition formation—both the reasons why a state, such as the United States, might seek to form a coalition and the reasons why smaller partner states might choose to join. But most existing work is limited in any of several ways. First, much of the literature on this topic is qualitative, relying on situations that might not be fully generalizable. Second, quantitative work on U.S. decisionmaking uses data from before 2001 and so misses several formative recent interventions. Third, quantitative analysis focused on the decisions of other states is often focused on the NATO context, which limits generalizability or understanding of the decisionmaking of a wider group of states.

With all this in mind, we have two objectives for this report. First, we revisit the topic of coalition formation. Using updated and expanded data, we consider what factors seem associated with the U.S. decision to form coalitions and explore the factors that drive the decisions of partner states to join coalitions. This analysis builds on, updates, and extends past work on this topic and considers both qualitative and quantitative evidence. Second, we consider the question of which factors shape the success of a coalition by examining the conditions under which U.S. coalition operations are more successful than unilateral ones at achieving U.S. political objectives. This analysis uses a broader set of objectives than does most existing work on this topic (which tends to focus narrowly on combat victory, economic trajectory, or democratization) and so provides a more complete view of factors that might support coalition success. Our approach to answering these questions combines quantitative analysis with a diverse set of case studies to capture both generalizable insights and nuance relevant to only specific types of interventions.

This report will be most useful to policymakers and defense planners seeking to gain a better understanding of coalition warfare—why coalitions form and when they are successful. The analysis and recommendations in the report can inform planning for future contingencies by providing insight regarding when states are most likely to join a military coalition and when these coalitions are most likely to advance U.S. interests. The material in this report might be able to guide decisions about when to pursue the support of a coalition and when the United States might benefit from operating alone. It also might help policymakers and planners make choices about coalition recruitment and participation by identifying which types of states might be most willing to join a given coalition and which might make the most-meaningful contributions to coalitions of different types.

Definitions

For the purpose of this report, we define a *U.S. coalition intervention* as any ad hoc military intervention including the United States and at least one other country (in addition to the host) for a common action. This definition follows that outlined in Joint Publication 3-16.³ We define *military intervention* to be any deployment of military personnel outside the home country comprising at least 100 *person-years* (i.e., 100 troops deployed for 12 months, or an equivalent size for shorter duration, such as 200 troops for 6 months or 1,200 troops for 1 month) or an equivalent contribution of naval or air personnel for the purpose of carrying out a qualifying activity type.⁴ *Qualifying activities* are everything from conventional combat to stabilization and humanitarian operations, such as train and assist, security, deterrence, intelligence and reconnaissance, and lift activities. Our definition means that we intentionally exclude special forces deployments that fall below the 100 person-year threshold and that we do not include long-term forward presence (although we do include long-term deterrence interventions where a specific threat is present—for example, U.S. forces in Germany during the Cold War).

The report considers many types of coalitions. Coalitions might differ in their membership. Coalitions can be made up of treaty allies (e.g., NATO), long-standing strategic partners, temporary partners that join together for a single operation, contributors that join for the status benefits but provide only token support, and even adversaries that find common ground to operate jointly in a narrow context. Coalitions can also vary in their command structure and leadership. Although the United States tends to play a pivotal and leading role in most of the coalitions it forms, our analysis also includes coalitions in which the United States was a more marginal contributing partner to operations led by another nation or by an international government organization (IGO), such as NATO or the United Nations (UN). Moreover, the United States might occasionally join a coalition it did not form.

Within a given coalition, member states vary in their contributions. Some states make sizable contributions that last the duration of the intervention; small contributors can play an important role if their contributions fill specific gaps or provide niche

³ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Multinational Operations*, Washington, D.C., Joint Publication 3-16, March 1, 2019. Per this document,

A coalition is an arrangement between two or more nations for common action. Coalitions are typically ad hoc; formed by different nations, often with different objectives; usually for a single problem or issue, while addressing a narrow sector of common interest. Operations conducted with units from two or more coalition members are referred to as coalition operations. (p. I-1)

⁴ Air and naval size limits vary according to the time and resources available. For the United States in the post-Cold War period, for instance, we consider only carrier strike group deployments for naval operations, air-wing deployments for air forces, and any kinetic activity. At other periods when such criteria would not apply, we instead considered the proportion of total available air and naval forces. We discuss the coding criteria in more detail in Chapter Three and Appendix A.

capabilities. Other states make only minor contributions—small numbers of forces for shorter periods of time. Our analysis captures two types of contributors: major and minor. *Major contributors* are states that meet the 100 person-year deployment threshold, make up a minimum of 5 percent of total non-U.S. forces, are deployed for at least 25 percent of the coalition duration, and have their deployed forces engaged in one of the qualifying activities.⁵ Minor contributors are all partners that contribute military personnel to a coalition but fall short of these thresholds.

The foundation of our analysis is a dataset of 37 U.S. military interventions between 1946 and 2018 that met our definition of a U.S. coalition.⁶ We chose to focus on the post–World War II period for several reasons. First, the geopolitical situation in the first half of the 20th century was significantly different from today. As a result, interventions during that earlier period provide less useful insights for military planners. Second, coalitions themselves were less common for the United States in the period before World War II. Military alliances were relevant, but there were fewer international organizations, norms, and legal obligations tying countries together and less emphasis on multilateralism in military operations generally. Furthermore, much U.S. military activity during this period was focused on the Central and South American region where European military powers were less involved. Finally, the data we sought to collect and then use in our analyses is less available for the period before 1946. This would have complicated our ability to explore trends and test hypotheses. The decision to limit the scope also requires some caveats. Most importantly, two of the largest U.S. coalition interventions, World War I and World War II, are excluded from the sample. These were unique in the severity of the threat posed, the far-reaching geographic spread, and the operational burden. Thus, they would make important test cases for our hypotheses. To balance their exclusion from the quantitative analysis, we consider those situations in our qualitative discussions.

Our dataset included detailed information about each of the interventions, the partners involved, and the activities conducted. As described in more detail in Chapter Three, we collected information for each major coalition partner on the number and types of forces committed, the activity types conducted, the extent of naval and air force contributions, the duration of involvement, and any caveats or restrictions on the use of force (that we could uncover using unclassified sources). This dataset served

⁵ As described in more detail in Chapter Three and Appendix A, states could also qualify as major contributors in the air and naval domains by conducting kinetic strikes and attacks or by contributing approximately 5 percent of total non-U.S. aircraft or ships.

⁶ For more details on this foundational dataset, its research design, and its coding approach and methodology, see Jennifer Kavanagh, Bryan Frederick, Matthew Povlock, Stacie L. Pettyjohn, Angela O'Mahony, Stephen Watts, Nathan Chandler, John Speed Meyers, and Eugeniu Han, *The Past, Present, and Future of U.S. Ground Interventions: Identifying Trends, Characteristics, and Signposts*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1831-A, 2017. Also see Jennifer Kavanagh, Bryan Frederick, Alexandra Stark, Nathan Chandler, Meagan L. Smith, Matthew Povlock, Lynn E. Davis, and Edward Geist, *Characteristics of Successful U.S. Military Interventions*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-3062-A, 2019.

as the universe of interventions for our qualitative analysis and was then also used in our quantitative analysis. Our conclusions consider both qualitative and quantitative analyses relevant to a set of hypotheses derived from existing literature, and we use these findings to make a series of recommendations to guide decisions about coalition warfare going forward. We describe our methods in more detail in Chapter Three.

Organization of This Report

The remainder of this report proceeds as follows. In the next chapter, we survey existing literature relevant to the topic of this report and use it to derive a set of testable hypotheses. In Chapter Three, we describe our dataset and approach in more detail—the data collection process, how we selected case studies for the qualitative analysis, and the details of our quantitative analysis. Chapters Four, Five, and Six consider our three research questions, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses to evaluate each hypothesis. Chapter Seven presents recommendations and conclusions. In Appendix A, we provide a detailed codebook expanding on our data collection process and coding decisions described in Chapter Three. Appendix B contains a full list of U.S. coalition and noncoalition situations. Appendix C provides additional technical details about our quantitative analysis and the full regression results.

Learning from Past Research on Coalition Interventions

This report addresses three research questions. First, what factors appear to influence the likelihood that the United States chooses to intervene with partners rather than intervening alone? Second, what factors influence the decision of potential partners to join coalitions involving the United States? Third, under what conditions do coalitions advance the achievement of U.S. objectives and when do they form an impediment? In this chapter, we review past research on these and related questions to explore what is already known, describe existing gaps, and identify the set of hypotheses that we will explore in the remainder of the report.

Why Does the United States Form Coalitions?

Past research suggests that states seek to join or form coalitions for a variety of reasons, and different drivers determine whether states lead or simply take part in coalitions. Such decisions depend on the size and capabilities of the state, its international status, the threat perception, the operational requirements, the region, and political objectives. For larger states, coalitions might not be strictly necessary. The United States, for instance, might choose to act unilaterally or to act with partners, depending on the circumstances. In contrast, smaller states might always have to act in concert with others, simply to ensure sufficient military capabilities and resources.

In this section, we explore what past research says about why large states that could intervene on their own choose to rely on coalitions in some instances but not others. Past research has identified four main rationales for why such states as the United States would prefer to work through a coalition: burden-sharing, geography, international legitimacy, and domestic public support.

Burden-Sharing

Arguments about burden-sharing play a major role in understanding the decision of the United States to intervene with a coalition rather than unilaterally. The basic premise of the rationale for burden-sharing is that interventions are resource intensive and costly, so states use coalitions to share the military burden with allies or other states

willing to fight for the same set of causes.¹ *Burden-sharing* as used in this report refers to the sharing of operational burdens (such as numbers of personnel and resources) or costs of all activities conducted as part of the mission. Coalition partners can provide money; personnel and equipment to participate directly in combat or other operations; or nonlethal support, such as military medical units or some other form of aid. From a burden-sharing perspective, the benefits of coalitions are well documented. First, coalitions can reduce the required commitment from the United States in terms of personnel and military equipment. There are numerous examples in which the United States has been able to supplement its military resources with those of allies and partners, such as recent interventions in Iraq in 2003 and Afghanistan in 2001. Second, coalitions can help defray the costs of an operation by spreading those costs across a wider set of actors. The cost-reduction benefits of coalitions has been well documented. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), for example, reported in 2018 that the cost of the U.S. peacekeeping activities has been halved by the use of coalitions.²

Related to the concept of burden-sharing is that of using coalitions as a sort of loss avoidance strategy or insurance policy. This argument suggests that larger countries, particularly the United States, might use coalition formation as a hands-tying mechanism and insurance policy that pushes for or demands restraint where the natural tendency might otherwise be toward escalation. This can help the United States cut its losses more quickly and thus place a bound on the degree of loss experienced. Specifically, Tierney notes that the preferences of allies for restraint, the ability of allies to influence U.S. policy debates and decisionmaking, and the political cover offered by a multilateral coalition might prevent escalation and facilitate concessions and compromise where such policy choices would be politically or reputationally difficult for U.S. policymakers otherwise.³ This can minimize loss incurred and help U.S. policymakers save face in the event of unfavorable outcomes.⁴ The argument that coalitions can promote restraint and hedge against loss assumes that there are allies or partners in the coalition that prefer concession and compromise to escalation. This has been the case in several major coalition interventions in the post–Cold War era but is certainly not universally true or guaranteed. The opposite might be true when allies and partners

¹ Peter Kent Forster and Stephen J. Cimbala, *The US, NATO and Military Burden-Sharing*, London: Frank Cass, 2005; Mark A Boyer, “Trading Public Goods in the Western Alliance System,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 33, No. 4, 1989; Daniel F. Baltrusaitis, *Friends Indeed? Coalition Burden-Sharing and the War in Iraq*, dissertation, Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, 2008.

² GAO, *UN Peacekeeping: Cost Estimate for Hypothetical U.S. Operation Exceeds Actual Costs for Comparable UN Operation*, Washington, D.C., GAO-18-243, 2018.

³ Dominic Tierney, “Multilateralism: America’s Insurance Policy Against Loss,” *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 2011.

⁴ Tierney, 2011, pp. 655–678.

have more-hawkish tendencies. In these instances, coalitions might not serve as a constraint on escalation.⁵

Although the burden-sharing argument seems straightforward, coalitions necessarily involve their own costs and challenges, already described previously. Given that the process of working through a coalition can be messy and slow and that, in many situations, burden-sharing is not strictly necessary for a country such as the United States, Kreps asks why the United States would ever choose to enlist coalition support, a puzzle not fully addressed by other work on this topic.⁶ Although one part of the answer might reside in the political benefits, such as the pursuit of legitimacy and multilateralism (discussed in a later subsection), Kreps argues further that the decision to form a coalition (and the appeal of burden-sharing despite its drawbacks) depends first on the extent of the military commitment required and second on the urgency of the intervention—that is, how quickly the intervention must happen, what she calls the “time horizon.”⁷ She also says that states are more likely to form coalitions when the required military commitment for the intervention is high (making burden-sharing to mitigate costs more appealing) and the time horizon is long or the threat weak (reducing the risk of a slow coalition process).⁸ In other words, burden-sharing becomes increasingly attractive as the expected costs of an intervention increase and the threat declines. This argument is particularly relevant to the post–Cold War period, in which the United States has faced few major threats. The situation might change in the future, if such rivals as China and Russia become increasingly capable and willing to take on the United States directly. Cimbala and Forster make a similar argument and use a review of historical situations to make the point that the United States and its NATO partners might be better able to achieve their political objectives by banding together because of the additional resources such a coalition brings and because of the benefits of presenting a united front, which can marshal additional capacity, logistical support, and other assets that reduce the burden of the intervention.⁹ From the U.S. perspective, burden-sharing can be especially important in helping the United States fill specific gaps and in providing local logistical support, refueling, and other special-

⁵ Elizabeth Stanley, “Ending the Korean War: The Role of Domestic Coalition Shifts in Overcoming Obstacles to Peace,” *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2009.

⁶ Sarah Elizabeth Kreps, *Coalitions of Convenience: United States Military Interventions After the Cold War*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

⁷ Kreps, 2011.

⁸ Kreps, 2011. Kreps also weaves the role of multilateralism into her argument. We discuss this in the next section.

⁹ Stephen J. Cimbala and Peter Kent Forster, “The US NATO and Military Burden Sharing: Post–Cold War Accomplishments and Future Prospects,” *Defense & Security Analysis*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 2017.

ized capabilities (such as medical support).¹⁰ Notably, burden-sharing can also be used as a tool to decrease domestic opposition to an intervention, which often arises as a result of concerns about costs (both monetary and otherwise), a rationale discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.¹¹ On the other hand, according to Kreps's argument, when the threat to U.S. interests or national security is strong, we might expect the United States to be less likely to rely on coalitions, at least when it can resource the operational burden on its own.

Finally, it is worth noting that burden-sharing might not mean an equal sharing of all burdens. Research suggests that, in some situations, the United States and other developed countries do carry a relatively greater share of the costs and contributions to military coalitions than do small and less-developed states. But the literature also notes that this has not been universally true and varies over time and across contexts.¹² Furthermore, most research suggests that burden-sharing alliances rarely end up entrapping the United States. In other words, the United States is able to skirt commitments when needed, and, although it often does carry the largest share of the burden, there can be advantages to doing so, in terms of control and benefits gained from the outcome (e.g., the stability and order of the international system).¹³

Geography

Related to burden-sharing, geography can also play in whether states choose to form coalitions. Specifically, the United States might form coalitions not for personnel or monetary reasons but because partners might offer access to key territories or resources, such as ports or airfields, and provide support or contributions in the form of transportation and sustainment that ease the logistical challenges of an intervention.¹⁴ These types of support might be absolutely essential to the success of a military intervention and might necessitate the formation of a coalition even when other operational requirements are relatively modest, and the need for these relationships can explain part of the investment that the United States makes in security cooperation and partnership-

¹⁰ Jonathan Colman, "The Challenges of Coalition Building: The Vietnam Experience, 1964–1969," *RUSI Analysis*, March 15, 2010; Kathleen McNinnis, "Lessons in Coalition Warfare: Past, Present and Implications for the Future," *International Political Reviews*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2013.

¹¹ Marina Henke, "The Politics of Diplomacy: How the United States Builds Multilateral Military Coalitions," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 61, No. 2, June 2017.

¹² Todd Sandler and Hirofumi Shimizu, "NATO Burden Sharing 1999–2010: An Altered Alliance," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2014.

¹³ Beckley, Michael, "The Myth of Entangling Alliances: Reassessing the Security Risks of US Defense Pacts," *International Security*, Vol. 39, No. 4, Spring 2015.

¹⁴ Scott Wolford and Emily Hencken Ritter, "National Leaders, Political Security, and the Formation of Military Coalitions," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 3, 2016.

building activities in peacetime.¹⁵ For smaller states, such contributions as access to ports, airfields, or bases might be significant parts of their overall participation if they have limited numbers of combat personnel and a limited ability to provide financial resources. Larger states, such as the United States, might benefit greatly from having access to these types of additional resources, especially when intervening in remote locations where access and logistical support might be essential to mission success.¹⁶ In his book *The Politics of Military Coalitions*, Wolford finds statistically significant empirical evidence (i.e., $p < 0.01$) indicating that in most coalitions, “the target’s neighbors are uniquely likely to join coalitions with the lead state . . . [which] could be indicative of [the lead state’s] desire to gain military partners that afford easy access to their targets—as the United States did with Kuwait in 2003.”¹⁷ This argument is distinct from the one about burden-sharing because this type of logistical support might be necessary for remote and extended deployments even when the operational burden of the deployment is limited or manageable.

Notably, however, countries can provide access to basing or ports or transit rights without joining the coalition itself. For example, when the United States intervened in Afghanistan in 2001, Central Asian countries provided important support in the form of access and transit rights, but they did not provide troops for the intervention itself. In contrast, for U.S. activities in Iraq both in the Gulf War and in operations to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), regional partners provided both access and military personnel. To explore the extent to which considerations of geography and the logistical support associated with it motivate U.S. coalition decisions, we must focus on those instances in which logistical support came from a partner that also provided troops.

When thinking about interventions in the future, particularly those to counter such adversaries as Russia and China, the importance of this geographic component of coalitions becomes even more apparent. In the case of either of these adversaries, the United States would likely need to intervene far from its own territory. So, even in situations where the operational demands could be shouldered by the United States alone, coalitions would likely be required to meet the logistical demands of getting troops and equipment to the fight and sustaining those forces after arrival.

International Legitimacy

A third set of arguments for why the United States forms coalitions focuses on the fact that multilateral interventions better adhere to international norms and are more likely to be granted international approval because they are supported by a larger group of nations

¹⁵ Tommy Ross, “Leveraging Security Cooperation as Military Strategy,” *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 2016, pp. 91–103.

¹⁶ Forster and Cimbala, 2007; Kreps, 2011.

¹⁷ Scott Wolford, *The Politics of Military Coalitions*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015, p. 78.

and sometimes also an international organization. In other words, coalitions might grant an intervention a degree of international legitimacy or approval from the international community. One version of this line of reasoning maintains that states pursue coalition interventions because they strictly prefer the international legitimacy that is bestowed on an intervention when it is conducted by multiple countries together or through an international organization.¹⁸ Since the end of the Cold War especially, the norm of legitimacy has become increasingly important for states using military force abroad and is closely tied to the norm of territorial sovereignty.¹⁹ Finnemore describes two changes relevant to a discussion of coalition interventions: first, a strengthening of the norm of territorial sovereignty that began after World War II and continued to consolidate in the post–Cold War period, and, second, the norm of multilateralism and the notion that, to legitimately violate a given nation’s sovereignty, states should endeavor to do so as part of a multilateral coalition.²⁰ She notes that “multilateralism has provided political cover for military operations whose legitimacy was contested internationally.”²¹ When multiple states act together, this sends a message of consensus or agreement that the military action is justified, necessary, and permissible under international norms. The legitimacy conferred by multilateralism does seem to increase the likelihood that a state joins a coalition intervention.²²

Although coalitions can provide legitimacy, multilateralism also places constraints on the ability of any given state to act autonomously. This is particularly relevant to the United States. As noted, Kreps argues that the United States accepts the costs of multilateralism most easily when the implied threat is low and the cost of the intervention is high.²³ Kreps uses operations in Afghanistan as an example, describing the limited collaboration that occurred in the early combat phases given the perceived greater threat and lower operational requirements. In contrast, the second phase, stabilization, was characterized by reliance on a broad coalition of partners consistent with the higher operational burden and the lower threat.²⁴

¹⁸ Alexander Thompson, *Channels of Power: The UN Security Council and U.S. Statecraft in Iraq*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2009; Katharina P. Coleman, *International Organizations and Peace Enforcement: The Politics of International Legitimacy*, Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2007a; Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003.

¹⁹ Finnemore, 2003.

²⁰ Finnemore, 2003.

²¹ Finnemore, 2003, p. 134.

²² Atsushi Tago, “Why Do States Join US-Led Military Coalitions? The Compulsion of the Coalition’s Mission and Legitimacy,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 7, No. 2, May 2007.

²³ Kreps, 2011.

²⁴ Sarah Kreps, “When Does the Mission Determine the Coalition? The Logic of Multilateral Intervention and the Case of Afghanistan,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3, September 15, 2008.

It is worth noting that when pursuing international legitimacy, the United States might have to appeal to multiple audiences. It might need to win the backing of key allies, for instance, and of specific stakeholders, such as other countries in the intervention region. For example, in building coalitions for U.S. interventions in the Middle East, policymakers have sought the support not only of key NATO allies but also of regional partners to ensure that the intervention is seen as legitimate at both levels. In this sense, all partners might not carry equal weight when it comes to building legitimacy. Instead, different partners might help build legitimacy for a different set of audiences. Coleman, for instance, describes the different makeup of the coalition used for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and that involved in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) by noting that OEF planners were concentrating on legitimacy within Afghanistan and thus focused partnership efforts on cooperation with the Northern Alliance, whereas ISAF planners were more concerned with international legitimacy and legitimacy among the domestic publics of the United States and other interveners and thus focused on building a broad base of NATO allies and other partners.²⁵ The Global Coalition Against ISIS is another example. In this case, membership of the host nation (Iraq) and broad regional support were central both to the coalition's ability to operate and to countering the ISIS narrative that the coalition was made up of "western invaders."²⁶

Domestic Public Support

A final set of arguments about why the United States might form a coalition focuses on the use of multilateral coalitions to overcome resistance from domestic audiences—not only the general public but also military and civilian elites. First, there is evidence that coalition participants' publics might be more willing to back a military intervention in situations in which that intervention involves a multilateral coalition. This could be because of the perceived benefits of partnerships, reduced commitment from the United States, and the perception that the intervention must be justified because it is supported more widely. This argument has been supported with research looking specifically at the U.S. context and appears to apply to NATO allies as well. Past research has clearly demonstrated that executives are sensitive to public opinion when they are making military intervention choices and that, in many situations, having the support of a coalition can bolster domestic support for the operation.²⁷

²⁵ Katharina P. Coleman, "The Legitimacy Audience Shapes the Coalition: Lessons from Afghanistan, 2001," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 2007b.

²⁶ Inspector General, U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), *Operation Inherent Resolve: Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Washington, D.C., April–June 2015, p. 9.

²⁷ Andrew Bennet, Joseph Lepgold, and Danny Unger, "Burden Sharing in the Persian Gulf War," *International Organization*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 1994; David Auerswald, "Explaining Wars of Choice: An Integrated Decision Model of NATO Policy in Kosovo," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 48, No. 3, 2004; Bruce W. Jentleson and Rebecca L. Britton, "Still Pretty Prudent: Post–Cold War American Public Opinion on the Use of Military

However, other audiences also might need to be won over to support an intervention, and the formation of a coalition might help accomplish this. For example, Recchia argues that, when civilian policymakers are divided and national interest is not at stake, military leaders might have effective veto power over the initiation of new military interventions, and they might require the backing of an international organization as the price of their support.²⁸ Because the general public typically looks to its elites (military and civilian) when trying to make decisions about whether to join a given military intervention, winning the support of military leaders can also mean winning the support of the domestic public.²⁹

Finally, coalitions might be required to achieve consensus among political leaders about interventions as well. The Gulf War is a good example of this. In that case, congressional support of the intervention was achieved only after the proposed intervention was also approved by the UN.³⁰ Coalitions, therefore, can serve important internal—and external—functions when it comes to winning support and building legitimacy.

Summary

Past work has provided a relatively robust set of explanations for why such states as the United States might choose to form coalitions, but there is little quantitative empirical examination of patterns in U.S. intervention behavior to assess which of these motivations best explains that behavior. In part, this might be because of the relatively small sample size and issues of endogeneity. Case studies can provide nuance about how these different factors shape U.S. decisionmaking, but it remains difficult to generalize across interventions. To fill this gap, in the analysis that follows, we use an expanded and updated quantitative dataset and a diverse set of case studies to consider the following hypotheses.

H1. The United States is more likely to form coalitions when operational demands are high.³¹

If burden-sharing has been the primary motivation for coalition formation, then the United States should be most likely to join coalition operations when the operational demands and associated costs appear to be high.

Force,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 4, 1998; Richard Eichenberg, “Victory Has Many Friends: U.S. Public Opinion and the Use of Military Force, 1981–2005,” *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2005; Timothy Hildebrandt, Courtney Hillebrecht, Peter M. Holm, and Jon Pevehouse, “The Domestic Politics of Humanitarian Intervention: Public Opinion, Partisanship, and Ideology,” *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 2013.

²⁸ Stefano Recchia, “Soldiers, Civilians, and Multilateral Humanitarian Intervention,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 2015.

²⁹ Adam J. Berinsky, *In Time of War*, Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

³⁰ H. W. Brands, “George Bush and the Gulf War of 1991,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2004.

³¹ We discuss in the next chapter how each variable is operationalized.

H2. The United States is more likely to form coalitions when the logistical challenges are significant.

If geography and considerations of access to ports, airfields, basing, and other logistical resources drive coalition decisionmaking, then coalitions should be more likely in situations in which these types of resources are most essential—for example, interventions that are far from U.S. borders.

H3. The United States is more likely to form coalitions when having international partners is important.

If coalitions are most valuable for the legitimacy they provide, then the United States should be most likely to use coalitions when legitimacy is most important and valuable. Since the norms of state sovereignty and nonintervention have increased over time (and since the end of the Cold War), we consider how the frequency of coalition use has changed over time.

H4. This United States is more likely to join coalitions when required by domestic political concerns.

We expect that domestic political considerations (both public support and the need to build support from political elites) will drive decisions about the formation of coalitions. As a result, coalitions might be most likely when domestic publics or other constituencies demand coalition support or when there is an electoral advantage to the use of a coalition.

H5. The United States is less likely to form coalitions when the threat is high and/or national security is at stake.

We expect that coalitions will be less likely when the threat created by an overseas conflict or crisis is high—meaning that it poses a more severe threat to U.S. interests (e.g., regional stability, international norms)—because the United States will choose to act quickly and independently, prioritizing speed over perceptions of legitimacy (at least in situations in which it can bear the operational demands alone).

Why Do States Join U.S. Coalitions?

For smaller states, the decision to join a U.S. coalition is best thought of as a two-stage process. First, states must choose whether to join the coalition. Second, they choose how much and what types of support to contribute, as well as whether to place caveats or restrictions on what their contingent of forces will do. The literature about why states choose to join coalitions proposes a wide variety of possible rationales and a mix of quantitative and case study evidence in support of these reasonings. Some explanations of why large states, such as the United States, decide to form coalitions can apply equally well to small states' decisions to join them. For example, multilateralism and burden-sharing are relevant to both for the same reasons. However, other factors do

appear more directly applicable to smaller states choosing to join coalitions than to larger ones deciding to form them—such as the bilateral relationship between the joining state and the coalition leader and the role of financial, reputational, and political incentives.

Pursuit of Shared Interests

One reason that states might choose to join coalitions is that they and the coalition leader share a common set of interests or seek to uphold a common norm. Interests can be goals, objectives, or desired end states. Although larger states are more likely to see military force as a feasible way to achieve strong preferences, smaller states might turn to membership in international coalitions to support a key objective or address a key security threat in a way that they cannot if acting alone.³² Tago finds that the purpose or objective of a coalition does appear to play a role in whether a state chooses to join.³³ One way to explore the extent to which shared objectives might matter for coalition joiners is to look at variation in contributions by NATO member states to NATO-led interventions. If intervention objectives do not matter, we would expect states to contribute the same numbers of forces across NATO operations, driven by alliance duty or obligation. However, past work has found that states make variable contributions and that these contributions can be explained by geopolitical factors. Specifically, NATO members appear to support most strongly those interventions that address strategic threats that affect them directly.³⁴

However, the common objective argument does not appear to explain all or even most coalition interventions. Empirically, combined military interventions appear least likely when the member states have the most-similar policy preferences. Gent demonstrates that states are most likely to join military coalitions when their preferences diverge from that of the majority because doing so provides them some leverage over coalition activities and outcomes.³⁵

Intergovernmental Organizations

Existing research on coalitions also suggests that states will be more likely to join coalitions that are led or backed by IGOs that can provide legitimacy and backing to the intervention. Kreps, for example, finds that NATO's backing of the coalition operation in Afghanistan gave leaders of partner countries political cover and allowed them

³² Tago, 2007.

³³ Tago, 2007.

³⁴ Ida M. Oma, "Explaining States' Burden-Sharing Behaviour Within NATO," *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 47, No. 4, 2012.

³⁵ Stephen Gent, "Strange Bedfellows: The Strategic Dynamics of Major Power Military Interventions," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 69, No. 4, 2007.

to remain in the coalition even as public opinion shifted.³⁶ Past research on NATO, specifically, has shown that its involvement motivates participation by a wide swath of members because it provides clear security benefits and is deemed a legitimate actor. Furthermore, there are clear advantages to membership and clear costs for defection.³⁷ Cimbala and Forster similarly argue that IGO involvement can boost the legitimacy and effectiveness of a coalition to a greater extent than those without such international legitimacy.³⁸ There are several recent examples of interventions that might not have happened without the backing of an IGO: Libya, Syria, the Balkans, and (further back) the Gulf War³⁹—in fact, it is not clear that the U.S. Congress would have approved initiation of the Gulf War in 1990 without UN backing. However, legitimacy might not be the only reason that IGOs seem to encourage coalition membership; another is that the IGO might serve to bring together states with common perceptions, ideologies, norms, and values. By providing this unifying function, IGOs can encourage states to enter coalitions and then sustain their commitment.⁴⁰

Domestic Conditions

Past work has also shown that domestic factors might play a large role in whether and when states choose to intervene unilaterally or with a coalition. Specifically, reluctant domestic publics might be more willing to support a military campaign when they know that support is widespread or that it has the backing of a large international coalition. Although some institutional domestic political variables—such as electoral timing and party affiliation—seem not to influence the decision to join the coalition,⁴¹ others seem to matter more. To understand how domestic public opinion shapes coalition decisions, a broader assessment about what we know about it—and about the use of force more generally—is relevant. This body of work is too vast to review in full here, but it has been reviewed extensively elsewhere. To summarize, domestic public attitudes toward use of force appear to be shaped by the nature of the objectives being pursued and by the costs, both in monetary terms and in terms of loss of life. Past work suggests that domestic publics are willing to sacrifice substantially for objectives

³⁶ Sarah Kreps, “Elite Consensus as a Determinant of Alliance Cohesion: Why Public Opinion Hardly Matters for NATO-Led Operations in Afghanistan,” *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 6, No. 3, July 2010.

³⁷ Weitsman, Patricia, “Alliance Cohesion and Coalition Warfare: The Central Powers and Triple Entente,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 2003; Kenneth A. Oye, “Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies,” *World Politics*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1985.

³⁸ Stephen J. Cimbala and Peter Kent Forster, *Multinational Military Intervention: NATO Policy, Strategy and Burden Sharing*, New York: Routledge, 2010.

³⁹ Ivo H. Daalder and James G. Stavridis, “NATO’s Victory in Libya: The Right Way to Run an Intervention,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 91, No. 2, 2012.

⁴⁰ Henke, 2017.

⁴¹ Tago, 2007.

that seem existential in nature and that they are more sensitive to marginal causalities than total ones.⁴² There are instances in which political leaders have been punished for remaining in a coalition that becomes unpopular, suggesting the power of public opinion on this issue (for example, the electoral loss suffered by Spain's Popular Party in the face of the political unpopularity of Spain's participation in the U.S. war in Iraq after the Madrid train bombings). On the other hand, Kreps finds that in the case of Afghanistan, leaders of NATO countries did not withdraw even as public opinion shifted against their nations' participation in the intervention.⁴³ She argues that it was elite consensus in support of the intervention and the backing of NATO generally that allowed leaders to avoid political consequences for ignoring public opinion.⁴⁴ Other work echoes Kreps on the relevance of elite consensus in shaping intervention decisions and decisions about withdrawal.⁴⁵ For example, Berinsky shows that elite consensus is crucial in shaping both public opinion about interventions and, ultimately, state decisions, especially in the case of the United States.⁴⁶ Finally, it is worth noting that states vary in how sensitive they are to domestic public attitudes. Democracies are likely to be more sensitive than authoritarian countries, but past work suggests that authoritarian leaders are not immune to domestic pressures.⁴⁷

Public opinion also might influence a variety of additional decisions beyond that to send military forces, such as the number of forces, whether to use a coalition or go it alone, and the restrictions to place on those forces.⁴⁸ Most relevant to the analysis here is the question of coalition formation. Finnemore demonstrates that coalitions are often more domestically palatable, given the burden-sharing and legitimacy implied;

⁴² Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Reifler, *Paying the Human Costs of War: American Public Opinion and Casualties in Military Conflicts*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009; Eric V. Larson, *Casualties and Consensus: The Historical Role of Casualties in Domestic Support for U.S. Military Operations*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MR-726-RC, 1996; Scott Sigmund Gartner and Gary M. Segura, "War, Casualties, and Public Opinion," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 1998, pp. 278–300; Patrick James and John R. Oneal, "The Influence of Domestic and International Politics on the President's Use of Force," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1991.

⁴³ Kreps, 2010.

⁴⁴ Kreps, 2010.

⁴⁵ Justin Massie, "Public Contestation and Policy Resistance: Canada's Oversized Military Commitment to Afghanistan," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2016a; Justin Massie, "Why Democratic Allies Defect Prematurely: Canadian and Dutch Unilateral Pullouts from the War in Afghanistan," *Democracy and Security*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2016b.

⁴⁶ Berinsky, 2009.

⁴⁷ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson and James D. Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003; Jessica Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2014.

⁴⁸ Daniel F. Baltrusaitis, *Coalition Politics and the Iraq War: Determinants of Choice*, Boulder, Col.: FirstForumPress, 2010.

as a result, they might be used by leaders seeking broad public support.⁴⁹ The literature has less to say on the specific mechanisms that connect these decisions to public attitudes.

Other domestic conditions might act to suppress the likelihood of a state joining a military intervention. Economic recession in a potential partner state might reduce the likelihood that it will join a military intervention, as might domestic unrest—especially where domestic military resources might be required to support domestic stability.⁵⁰

Burden-Sharing and Military Capabilities

We already discussed the concept of burden-sharing in the context of U.S. decision-making. Just as larger states, such as the United States, might seek to use coalition military interventions to defray intervention costs, smaller states might be likely to see coalitions as a way to increase the military feasibility of an intervention that they could not otherwise carry out on their own. For joining states, the rationale is more likely to be one of capability aggregation and necessity. Although coalition support might be a desire for larger states, it is a necessity for states that have smaller militaries and cannot act on their own. Cimbala and Forster describe how one of the key lessons of World War II for European states was the benefits of working through coalitions for achieving things they could not achieve alone, because of both the greater resources and the united front.⁵¹ Some joining states might require the combined capabilities of a coalition to conduct a military operation or pursue a strategic objective. Zyla, for example, finds that many NATO states seem to commit more forces to a coalition when the threat is high.⁵² This is different from what we expect in the U.S. case, most likely because of the very different military capabilities of the United States and small NATO partners. Although the United States might be driven by concerns of burden-sharing to reduce the operational cost it must bear, small states might see burden-sharing as a way to ensure protection from the “patron state.”⁵³ Other work questions whether true burden-sharing is possible, noting that there are many states content to hitch a free ride with the larger contributors and that state preferences and concern about sacrificing independence can interfere with burden-sharing goals.⁵⁴ It is also worth remembering

⁴⁹ Finnemore, 2003.

⁵⁰ Atsushi Tago, “Too Many Problems at Home to Help You: Domestic Disincentives for Military Coalition Participation,” *International Area Studies Review*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2014.

⁵¹ Cimbala and Forster, 2010.

⁵² Benjamin Zyla, “Who Is Free-Riding in NATO’s Peace Operations in the 1990s?” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 2016.

⁵³ Rasmus Brun Pedersen and Yf Reykers, “Show Them the Flag: Status Ambitions and Recognition in Small State Coalition Warfare,” *European Security*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 2020.

⁵⁴ Hirofumi Shimizu and Todd Sandler, “NATO Peacekeeping and Burden Sharing, 1994–2000,” *Public Finance Review*, Vol. 31, No. 2, 2003; Niklas Novaky, “Who Wants to Pay More? The European Union’s Mili-

that, in some instances, smaller partners might contribute key niche capabilities or provide legitimacy that is valuable to the coalition, even if it difficult to manage. Thus, thinking about burden-sharing in terms of absolute numbers of forces committed or dollars spent might not capture the true value of a smaller state's commitment.

Finally, it is worth noting that the more relevant question for smaller joining states might not be whether to burden-share but, rather, how many forces to contribute. This is not a question we tackle directly in this report.

Relationship with the United States

A would-be partner state also might enter a coalition with the United States because of its specific existing relationship with the United States, formal or informal. Formal alliances or military partnerships appear to drive coalition formation. For example, NATO allies might choose to enter coalitions (even non-NATO ones) because of a close relationship or feelings of obligation to the United States.⁵⁵ Such a logic might also shape the decisionmaking of informal partners or other states with other types of close ties with the United States.⁵⁶ Some past work has suggested that economic ties can drive coalition formation. States that have stronger trade ties with the United States thus might be more likely to join U.S. coalitions than those without such relationships.⁵⁷ Cultural ties also might matter. Several studies have found that sharing English as a language appears to be a significant predictor of which states will join U.S.-led coalitions. There are at least two reasons why this might matter: First, a shared language is a proxy for cultural closeness; second, a shared language simply makes coalition participation easier because it reduces language and communication barriers.⁵⁸ Together, these explanations suggest that arguments about soft power and the spread of cultural ties might have relevance to coalition formation.⁵⁹ Henke underscores the importance of explicit and implicit bilateral and multilateral ties between states in coalition formation, noting that these formal and informal ties are central to states' willingness to join coalitions and the ultimate coherence and longevity of the coalitions.⁶⁰

tary Operations and the Dispute over Financial Burden Sharing," *European Security*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2016.

⁵⁵ Tago, 2007.

⁵⁶ Tago, 2007.

⁵⁷ Wolford, 2015; Henke, 2017.

⁵⁸ Srdjan Vucetic, "Bound to Follow? The Anglosphere and US-Led Coalitions of the Willing, 1950–2001," *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2010; Tago, 2007.

⁵⁹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 616, No. 1, 2008.

⁶⁰ Marina E. Henke, *Constructing Allied Cooperation: Diplomacy, Payments, and Power in Multilateral Military Coalitions*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2019b.

Incentives

An extension of arguments about the role played by ties to the United States is the view that states join coalitions explicitly for the payoffs of incentives, in formal and informal quid pro quos. Henke emphasizes the importance of these side payments and agreements as a kind of currency that allows coalitions to form and endure, noting that coalitions should be considered as constructed in this way more than as spontaneous formations.⁶¹ Arguments about the role that financial and other incentives play in driving coalition membership apply largely to smaller states that receive payouts from larger states for joining military operations. Payments might come in any number of forms: money, access to markets or preferential trade agreements, military sales, or even assurances of protection or support. For states that already have access to these resources, incentives might include assured *continued* access to the benefits of a partnership with the United States. Side payments of this type are frequent and extensive, having been used in recent operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Gulf War, and others. In Afghanistan, for example, the United States provided extensive financial perks to partner countries, especially Eastern European partners.⁶²

Incentives can also be implicit. States might join U.S. coalitions to curry favor with (or avoid punishment from) Washington. There is some evidence that states expected to participate in a coalition by the patron state (in this case, the United States) are more likely to be punished for sitting out than rewarded for participating.⁶³ In other words, states might join coalitions to avoid punishment as much as to receive rewards. (We explore the “payoff” angle next.) For example, many coalition members participating in the conflict in Afghanistan (including close NATO allies) did so to appease the United States and reduce the risk of retaliation that might have ensued had they refused to participate or failed to provide a sufficient number of personnel. Finally, the United States might be able to use its privileged position in the international economic and security infrastructure to exert influence on potential coalition contributors. This influence might be especially strong for states that are more dependent on the United States or are more deeply intertwined with the United States in terms of economic and

⁶¹ Henke, 2019b.

⁶² Using 2010 as an example, see DoD, *Department of Defense Section 1209 and Section 1203(b) Report to Congress on Foreign-Assistance Related Programs for Fiscal Year 2008, 2009, and 2010*, April 2012; Marina E. Henke, “Buying Allies: Payment Practices in Multilateral Military Coalition-Building,” *International Security*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 2019a.

⁶³ Atsushi Tago, “Is There an Aid-for-Participation Deal? US Economic and Military Aid Policy to Coalition Forces (Non)Participants,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2008.

security outcomes.⁶⁴ For example, some work suggests that states that trade more with the United States might be more likely to join U.S.-led coalitions.⁶⁵

The rationale for states receiving payments appears straightforward. They receive a payment or other desired benefit and contribute some number of military personnel or other resource in return. In many instances, they might even have the upper hand in negotiations, depending on their strategic position and the needs of the state that is making the payments.⁶⁶ Henke notes that the United States has offered financial incentives to states fighting in some of the largest recent coalitions (such as operations in Kuwait, Iraq, Kosovo, and Somalia) and in UN, NATO, and African Union (AU) interventions. She describes several types of aid received by states in return for coalition membership, such as direct payments that support the cost of the intervention and indirect benefits, such as trade agreements or debt forgiveness. Her analysis finds that the states most likely to benefit from such payments are those lacking sufficient resources to deploy without support, “opportunistic states” that might not require help but see the coalition as an opportunity for leverage, and states that are seen as “critical contributors” because of their location, ideology, or other characteristics.⁶⁷ (We note, however, that some recent academic research concludes that the “‘peacekeeping for profit’ narrative has been vastly overstated” as an explanation for why “[d]eveloping states contribute so heavily to UN peacekeeping, furnishing over 90% of UN military peacekeepers.”⁶⁸) Finally, states might join coalitions for other benefits, such as gaining military and operational experience, building institutional capabilities, enhancing military leadership and professionalism, and developing stronger defense relationships with other countries. This rationale might be especially relevant for humanitarian or stabilization missions, where the threat is lower.⁶⁹

But what about the states providing payments? On the surface, the financial incentive rationale (i.e., costs) for coalition formation appears to contradict the burden-sharing argument. How can an intervention that involves many side payments be a net financial gain? However, past research suggests that subsidizing the deployment of partner personnel is often much cheaper for an intervening nation (especially for such a country as the United States) than paying for the deployment of more of its

⁶⁴ David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2011; Wolford, 2015.

⁶⁵ Wolford, 2015; Henke, 2017.

⁶⁶ Henke, 2019a.

⁶⁷ Henke, 2019a, p. 130.

⁶⁸ Katharina Coleman and Benjamin Nyblade, “Peacekeeping for Profit? The Scope and Limits of ‘Mercenary’ UN Peacekeeping,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 55, No. 6, 2018, p. 726.

⁶⁹ See for example, Krep, 2011.

own personnel.⁷⁰ In addition, in the case of critical contributors, the state paying the incentives might gain legitimacy, access, or some other benefit from the deployment that would not otherwise be available. Consider, for example, the provision of sanction relief to Syria during the Gulf War in 1991. In return for this side payment, the United States received the support and participation of a key Middle Eastern country and the strategic location that provided.⁷¹ Thus, for a larger state, financial incentives might support at least three of the rationales already described. They can act to facilitate burden-sharing, they can be a mechanism to achieve the desired legitimacy, and they can be way to gain access to valuable logistical support or geography (e.g., ports).

Status-Seeking

Aside from explicit or implicit benefits from more-powerful states or the coalition's leader, states also might join coalitions for other intangible status benefits within the international system. Past research on coalitions indicates that states might join a coalition to raise their national status, signal an ability and willingness to operate (and cooperate) on the international stage or in the process of global governance, or note a commitment to an important international norm or ideal.⁷² The distinctions among these benefits and the incentives described previously is, first, that they are not given or taken away by one country. Rather, they are accrued within the international system. They are also entirely based on perception and reputation. States might pursue these intangible reputational benefits at the same time that they pursue explicit and implicit incentives. China, for example, has long used membership in UN coalitions as a signal of its role as a major international power able to act to uphold global norms.⁷³ Similarly, one explanation for the large contribution of Canadian military personnel to operations in Afghanistan involves status-seeking and Canadian leaders' view of that large role as a way to raise national prominence within the international system and the NATO alliance.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ See, for example, GAO, *Peacekeeping Cost Comparison of Actual UN and Hypothetical U.S. Operation in Haiti*, Washington, D.C., GAO-06-331, 2006; and GAO, 2018.

⁷¹ Henke, 2019a.

⁷² Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shevchenko, "Status Seekers: Chinese and Russian Responses to US Primacy," *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 4, 2010; Wolford, 2015.

⁷³ Shogo Suzuki, "Seeking 'Legitimate' Great Power Status in Post-Cold War International Society: China's and Japan's Participation in UNPKO," *International Relations*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2008. China has quickly risen as the second largest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping operations since the end of the Cold War. Today, China contributes more troops to UN missions than the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Russia combined. See United Nations, "Global Peacekeeping Data," database, 2019.

⁷⁴ Sean M. Maloney, "In the Service of Forward Security: Peacekeeping, Stabilization, and the Canadian Way of War," in Bernd Horn, ed., *The Canadian Way of War: Serving the National Interest*, Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2006; Sean M. Maloney, "Afghanistan: Not the War It Was," *Policy Options*, November 2010; Justin Massie, "Canada's War for Prestige in Afghanistan: A Realist Paradox?" *International Journal*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 2013.

For smaller states, even token participation might be used to improve national status or curry favor with other contributing actors. For instance, beginning in the early 2000s, less advanced military powers, particularly from South Asia (specifically, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Nepal)—and then from Africa (Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana, and Rwanda)—overtook European or Western powers as the top troop contributors to UN peacekeeping operations globally;⁷⁵ a large body of academic research points in part to status concerns as reasons for these trends. Some scholarship contends that Bangladesh and Nepal, for example, have been largely motivated by the opportunity to improve their global images as participants and contributors to global peace and security.⁷⁶ Likewise, some academic research argues that Pakistan and India have been motivated to increase coalition peacekeeping efforts not only as a way to raise their international profiles as good global citizens and (in the 1990s) to reduce international tensions over their nuclear programs but also to enhance their own diplomatic influence (and counter the other's) within the UN General Assembly over ongoing political conflicts, such as the status of Kashmir.⁷⁷ Elsewhere, Pedersen and Reykers find evidence for status-seeking as it pertains to U.S.- and NATO-led coalition operations among smaller European partners, such as Belgium, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands.⁷⁸ Pedersen and Reykers assess through process tracing that coalition contributions by these states are not provided only—or even primarily—for protection by the United States or NATO leaders; rather, these contributions are made to advance European partners' national status and “punch above their weight.”

Summary

Existing work, then, presents a variety of reasons why states might choose to join U.S. coalitions or find themselves coerced into joining: relationship with the United States, financial position, military capabilities, and international ambitions, among others. Based on this research, we identified a set of hypotheses that we believe are worth investigating further. Our analysis of these hypotheses builds off past work in a few key

⁷⁵ Chris Perry and Adam C. Smith, *Trends in Uniformed Contributions to UN Peacekeeping: A New Dataset, 1991–2012*, New York: International Peace Institute, Providing for Peacekeeping Issue Paper No. 3, June 2013, pp. 2–5.

⁷⁶ See, for instance, Kabilan Krishnasamy, “Bangladesh and UN Peacekeeping: The Participation of a ‘Small’ State,” *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 1, 2003, p. 24; Surendra Singh Rawal, *United Nations Peacekeeping Participation and Civil-Military Relations in Troop Contributing Countries*, Monterey, Calif.: Naval Postgraduate School, March 2010, pp. 53–65; Rashed Uz Zaman and Niloy Ranjan Biswas, “The Contribution of Commonwealth Armed Forces in UN Peacekeeping: The Case of Bangladesh,” *The Round Table*, Vol. 106, No. 4, 2017, p. 442.

⁷⁷ Kabilan Krishnasamy, “‘Recognition’ for Third World Peacekeepers: India and Pakistan, International Peacekeeping,” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 2001; Kabilan Krishnasamy, “Pakistan’s Peacekeeping Experiences,” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 2002; Inam-ur-Rahman Malik, “Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: Pakistan,” IPI Providing for Peacekeeping, New York, June 2014.

⁷⁸ Pedersen and Reykers, 2020.

ways. First, we used an expanded dataset of U.S. military interventions and U.S. coalitions that provided additional detail on the timing, size, and nature of participation. Second, we considered a more diverse set of case studies, both recent and historical, to examine a fuller variety of U.S. experiences. Most of the recent qualitative work on this topic has focused on larger post–Cold War interventions—Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Libya—which might miss key observations from previous periods.

H6. States are more likely to join U.S. interventions when they have a close relationship with the United States.

If states with close ties to the United States are most likely to join coalition interventions, decisionmakers might choose to (1) focus their efforts to recruit coalition partners on states that have stronger alliances or ties to the United States (e.g., bilateral trade or investment relationships, cultural history and exchanges) and (2) build closer ties in such areas with states that could serve as valuable coalition partners in the future.

H7. States are more likely to join coalitions in their own regions.

States in the region of an intervention can provide significant legitimacy to a coalition military operation and might also provide valuable resources, such as access to ports and facilities or transit and overflight rights. Understanding the propensity of these states to join a coalition might be particularly valuable for policymakers seeking to establish the legitimacy of the operation. These states might be particularly likely to join a coalition intervention in their own region because such an intervention is more likely to have meaningful implications for national security, trade, and other issues. They might also be more likely to share a threat perception or set of objectives with an intervening set of states.

H8. States are more likely to join coalitions when they have shared interests.

Past work seems to differ on whether having shared interests is required for states to be willing to join a coalition. On the one hand, having at least some overlapping objective or shared threat might be important; on the other, existing research suggests that states might also have their own self-interested or narrowly defined objectives.

H9. States are more likely to join U.S. coalitions when the intervention is sponsored or led by an international government organization, or IGO.

There are many aspects of coalition operations that policymakers cannot control, but they can often influence whether an operation occurs under the auspices of an IGO or under ad hoc national control. Thus, we examined how the ease of coalition formation varies depending on who is leading the operation.

H10. States are more likely to join U.S. coalitions when they seek status in the international system or to gain a reputation.

There is already evidence from past work that states join coalitions to receive explicit and implicit incentives from the coalition leader. However, if there are states willing to join simply for the reputational and status gains that might come from participation in the intervention, this would provide the United States another way of expanding a coalition—and without additional costs or investments. This hypothesis is difficult to test quantitatively, but we explore it qualitatively.

What Factors Shape Coalition Success?

The third question tackled in this report focuses on the conditions for coalition success. Success itself can be conceived of in many ways and depends in part on the goals of the coalition. For example, a coalition aimed at peacekeeping might measure success by considering the years of peace achieved. In contrast, a coalition with a humanitarian mission might consider other metrics to assess success, such as persons fed, homes built, or lives saved. The United States might also have its own objectives and measures of success for any given coalition. As a result, in addition to considering coalition success relative to achievement of coalition objectives, we can also explore how coalitions fare in achieving U.S.-specific objectives. This latter question is the focus of our analysis in this report. We consider narrowly whether and when coalitions help the United States achieve the political objectives that it defines at the start of the intervention.

There are competing arguments and expectations about whether coalitions will contribute positively, negatively, or not at all to the outcomes of a given military intervention. On the one hand, coalitions combine the resources of many countries in ways that should favor success. On the other hand, they can be riddled with problems, such as poor communication, complicated C2 structures, slow decisionmaking, lack of interoperability, conflicting objectives or levels of resolve, and differing rules of engagement (ROE) and/or operational restrictions.⁷⁹ What, then, is the net effect of coalitions on intervention success? Morey finds that, at least for interstate wars fought between 1816 and 2007, coalitions (though not necessarily coalition interventions) tended to have a greater chance of success than did states fighting on their own.⁸⁰ Other research suggests that multilateral interventions are no more effective than unilateral ones at securing lasting stabilization when used in postconflict environments

⁷⁹ Robert Riscassi, “Principles for Coalition Warfare,” *Military Review*, Vol. 73, No. 6, 1993; Patricia Weitsman, *Waging War: Alliances, Coalitions, and Institutions of Interstate Violence*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2013.

⁸⁰ Daniel Morey, “Military Coalitions and the Outcome of Interstate Wars,” *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 12, No. 4, October 2016.

(often after intrastate wars).⁸¹ Because the empirical findings are mixed, we now consider what past research suggests about the conditions under which forming a coalition advances the chances for success. We divide the discussion into coalition-level factors, state-level factors, and characteristics of the operating environment or conflict.

Coalition-Level Factors

Past research suggests that coalition-level factors might play the greatest role in shaping coalition outcomes; furthermore, the literature identifies several different coalition characteristics that might be required for success. First, coalitions tend to perform better when made up of members that have more experience working together (for example, in past operations). This is not surprising. Past experience might support interoperability and might facilitate the development of processes and protocols that favor cooperation and collaboration.⁸²

Second, coalition interventions tend to be more successful when member states have trained together and have a doctrine for joint operations.⁸³ Past training can, again, support interoperability and enable forces with different backgrounds to operate effectively as a team. The existence of a joint doctrine shared across a coalition is significant because it provides a blueprint for a given set of operations and even, in some instances, an overarching strategy that can guide coalition actions and decision-making. For example, a joint doctrine might document lines of communication and authority, assign responsibility, and ensure that all participants remain aligned on key processes. Some past work suggests that the existence of a shared doctrine is the foundation of effective coalition operations.⁸⁴

Third, interoperability of equipment and technology is clearly essential to the ability of a coalition to function effectively. If coalition members have incompatible equipment, communication platforms, or technical systems, they might not be able to operate as a single unit and might be hamstrung by logistical, communication, or other challenges.⁸⁵ Significant challenges would emerge, for example, if coalition members consistently had weapons that required different types of ammunition, or tanks or planes with communication systems that could not talk to each other.

A fourth issue has to do with C2. An effective coalition will require unified control and a clear command structure, but coalitions might sometimes face disagreements about who is ultimately in charge. Hybrid or joint command structures can be

⁸¹ Marie Olson Lounsbery, Frederic Pearson, and Andrea Kathryn Talentino, "Unilateral and Multilateral Military Intervention: Effects on Stability and Security," *Democracy and Security*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2011.

⁸² Nora Bensahel, "International Alliances," in Risa Brooks and Elizabeth Stanley, eds., *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007.

⁸³ Bensahel, 2007.

⁸⁴ Riscassi, 1993, p. 63; Tago, 2007.

⁸⁵ Bensahel, 2007.

effective—they were in Haiti and the Gulf War—but they can also cause conflicting orders and confused lines of accountability even in the best situations.⁸⁶ Even if the coalition is able to establish a unified command structure, challenges still might arise if coalition members disagree on the desired course of action and if orders issued by the coalition commander conflict with orders from a home government or home commander. Command structures that operate only through consensus or that require lengthy debates and compromise might also undermine coalition effectiveness by damaging responsiveness and distracting from the main operational focus.⁸⁷

Finally, coalition success requires sufficient cohesion to support cooperation and coordination and to overcome the often sizable communication barriers that exist in a typical coalition force.⁸⁸ Cohesion here has many dimensions, such as cultural and linguistic cohesion and unity of political goals and intervention objectives. Based on her own experience working in Afghanistan and on a survey of coalition experiences going back to Napoleon, McInnis identifies an ability to overcome cultural differences within a coalition as one of the key requirements for coalition success.⁸⁹ Past research on coalition warfare suggests that culture might affect all aspects of a coalition: Relationship to authority, organization, work ethic, and modes of communication can all have an effect on the ability of a coalition to achieve its political objectives.⁹⁰ More broadly, successful coalitions require a set of common interests that can create unity of purpose. Past research and a review of coalition warfare suggests that shared interests and a clear sense of the defined threat might be required to overcome the challenges of coalition warfare. When this cohesion does not exist and states have divergent interests, tension between the strategic (capabilities) and ideological (objectives) might undermine the functioning of a coalition, particularly when ideological differences undermine the enhanced military capabilities of a coalition.⁹¹ It is worth noting that coalition partners frequently end up with different objectives and different preferences about how to pursue a military intervention. This is true even of NATO interventions, such as that in Libya in 2011, that are composed primarily of long-term allies that share much history and have operated together numerous times before.⁹²

⁸⁶ Morey, 2016.

⁸⁷ Morey, 2016.

⁸⁸ Bensahel, 2007.

⁸⁹ McInnis, 2013.

⁹⁰ McInnis, 2013; Gal Luft, *Beer, Bacon and Bullets: Culture in Coalition Warfare from Gallipoli to Iraq*, Charleston, S.C.: BookSurge Publishing, 2010.

⁹¹ Weitsman, 2013; Riscassi, 1993, p. 60; Morey, 2016.

⁹² Daadler and Stavrides, 2012.

State-Level Factors

In addition to coalition-level factors, characteristics of the states involved in the coalition are also relevant to coalition success. A common argument is that coalitions are more successful when they involve democratic states. One reason for this might be that better civil-military relationships allow for easier delegation of authority in a democracy, and this delegation of authority provides the flexibility needed for success in coalition military operations.⁹³ Another facet of this argument is that empirical research indicates that democracies fight harder and more effectively than nondemocracies (across types of conflict), primarily because democratic leaders have more to lose (elections) than autocratic ones and so allocate the resources and commitment needed to achieve stated objectives.⁹⁴ Although both arguments are supported by quantitative analysis, it is also worth noting that democracies might bring vulnerabilities to a coalition. Most notably, leadership change in democratic partners might increase the likelihood that they defect from the coalition, creating a risk of coalition fracture that might not exist with more-autocratic partners.⁹⁵

Related research has identified additional factors that might be associated with success. Schmidt focused on the characteristics of junior coalition partners that allow them to make a more significant contribution to coalition outcomes.⁹⁶ He suggests that they can contribute politically, militarily, or both. Politically, any additional legitimacy conferred can support success. Having member states with the necessary political standing might be required to initiate or sustain a coalition operation. Using case studies, Schmidt suggests that junior partners support success with integration into the operation, the number of forces they contribute, and their technological capabilities and ability to work with other partners.⁹⁷ He finds that the technological capacity of coalition members and their ability to integrate with other participants are relevant to coalition outcomes across situations. Integration and interoperability appear important here at the state level and also at the coalition level. Notably missing from this analysis is an assessment of whether caveats or restrictions on the use of force by some partners affect coalition outcomes.

⁹³ Ulrich Pilster, "Are Democracies the Better Allies? The Impact of Regime Type on Military Coalition Operations," *International Interactions*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2011.

⁹⁴ Randolph Siverson, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, and James D. Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002.

⁹⁵ Ulrich Pilster, Tobias Böhmelt, and Atsushi Tago, "Political Leadership Changes and the Withdrawal from Military Coalition Operations, 1946–2001," *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 16, No. 4, 2015.

⁹⁶ Olivier Schmidt, *Allies That Count: Junior Partners in Coalition Warfare*, Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2018.

⁹⁷ Schmidt, 2018.

Characteristics of the Operating Environment

There is also evidence that the success of coalition interventions depends, in part, on the operating environment in which the intervention happens. Research on intervention outcomes and the characteristics that make interventions generally successful, regardless of intervener, stress the role of the operational environment. Past RAND Corporation research, for instance, found that the key correlates of successful outcomes for U.S. interventions generally (combining unilateral and multilateral) varied depending on the operating environment and the primary activity type.⁹⁸ Similarly, there are indications that the likelihood of a multilateral intervention achieving its objectives might vary depending on the type of intervention and the context of the intervention. Doyle and Sambanis find that multilateral peace operations—specifically those headed by an intergovernmental organization, such as the UN—have better success at democratization than those under national control.⁹⁹ This result appears to be specific to peace operations and suggests that there might be something about the postconflict environment that favors or requires military interventions. Similarly, past research finds that military interventions that occur in the aftermath of a negotiated settlement—typically stabilization, reconstruction, and peace enforcement—tend to be the most likely to achieve their objectives focused on democratization and economic reconstruction, especially compared with those that occur during an ongoing conflict or those involved in combat operations.¹⁰⁰ This might be because interventions that occur after a settlement are those in which intervening forces are most welcome and can operate most freely, but it also might reflect the fact that coalitions are a key vehicle for burden-sharing and that postconflict reconstruction, especially, can benefit from the ability to spread costs and operational demands.

Operational environment and the nature of the intervention might also define the shape of the coalition—and thus the outcome of its activity. Specifically, states forming a coalition are likely aware of the political and military gaps they will need to fill to execute the intervention and might seek out the partners required to fill those gaps. The requirements for a combat mission might differ from those of a stabilization mission on these dimensions. For a combat mission, success is likely to depend more heavily on the military capabilities and integration of partners; success in a stabilization or peacekeeping operation might require a different set of resources and perhaps greater legitimacy.¹⁰¹

Finally, the degree and immediacy of the threat also might be relevant to the success of the coalition. As noted elsewhere, conflicting agendas and objectives can often under-

⁹⁸ Kavanagh et al., 2019.

⁹⁹ Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, “International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 94, No. 4, 2000.

¹⁰⁰ Patrick M. Regan, “Choosing to Intervene: Outside Interventions in Internal Conflicts.” *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 60, No. 3, 1998.

¹⁰¹ Kreps, 2011.

mine a coalition. The slow processes and complications of coalitions might be one reason that such nations as the United States often avoid coalitions when the threat and national security implications are high.¹⁰² A significant and shared threat, however, might help states overcome these obstacles and align objectives in ways that support operational effectiveness.¹⁰³ This argument seems somewhat counter to the one stating that coalitions might have higher odds of success in postconflict stabilization environments where the threat is likely to be lower. Further analysis is needed to disentangle these effects, but they might not be mutually exclusive. Coalitions might be especially effective in a variety of environments. One might be when they share an immediate threat, and another might be in stabilization missions where they have more flexibility.

Summary

Literature on what makes coalition interventions more or less successful at achieving their political objectives is more limited than on coalition formation. The research that does exist is largely qualitative in nature, relying on case studies, and the quantitative work that exists typically examines interventions only up until 2001, thus missing some of the most-recent and most-significant coalition operations that the United States has undertaken. The discussion in this section—which relies heavily on the literature on military interventions writ large rather than coalition interventions specifically—highlights the continuing gaps and contradictions in understanding of when coalition interventions are more successful than unilateral operations in achieving key political objectives. From the perspective of policymakers, this is also the more important question. States seeking to form coalitions would benefit from knowing what types of coalitions are most likely to be effective and from being able to identify the operational environments in which coalitions should be preferred to unilateral action. Based on the literature we have cited, we define the following hypotheses that we explore in the rest of the report. As already stated, we focus on those hypotheses most relevant to policymakers and military planners and leaders.

H11. Coalitions are more likely than unilateral interventions to achieve U.S. political objectives.

The first question of interest is whether coalitions are more likely than unilateral interventions to achieve stated political objectives. We expect to find that they are more likely to be successful only in certain instances and under certain conditions. The remainder of the hypotheses explore these conditions in more detail.

¹⁰² Kreps, 2011.

¹⁰³ Tago, 2007.

H12. Coalitions are more likely to achieve U.S. political objectives in stabilization missions.

Policymakers would benefit from knowing whether coalition interventions are only successful in certain operating environments or for certain types of military activities. Previous work has identified postconflict stabilization missions as one area in which multilateral interventions might be more likely than unilateral missions to achieve stated political objectives.

H13. Coalitions are more likely to achieve U.S. objectives when partners have a shared interest.

Policymakers would benefit from knowing whether coalition interventions are only successful in certain operating environments or for certain types of military activities. If coalitions are most effective when a shared interest unites coalition members and prevents differences from being divisive, then policymakers might want to focus on coalition-building activities in these situations.

H14. Coalitions with past experience partnering (e.g., members of an alliance) are more likely to be successful.

Countries in formal alliances with the United States—for example, NATO members—conduct training missions together and typically have previous experience fighting as an allied force to achieve objectives in combat, stabilization, and deterrence missions. If past experience and training do matter to coalition outcomes, we should find that coalition interventions that consist only or primarily of formal alliance members are likely to be more effective than ad hoc coalitions that do not share this experience.

H15. Coalitions with more partners are less likely to be successful because of coordination challenges.

If coordination and communication problems undermine coalition effectiveness, we would expect coalition success to diminish as the number of partners increases. On the other hand, if aggregation of capabilities is the key to coalition effectiveness, then larger coalitions (especially those with advanced capabilities) might be most effective. Knowing how size affects the likelihood that coalition interventions achieve political objectives could inform U.S. coalition formation processes and decisions about whom to invite or include.

Summary

Coalitions appear to be becoming more common, especially with strengthening norms against the use of force abroad and increasing concerns about the cost of lengthy military interventions. Significant effort has already been spent on the question of coalition

interventions, why they form, and when they are more or less successful. Research on why coalitions form, why large states choose to work through them, and why smaller states seek to enter them is more robust than research on correlates of success, likely in part because the latter question is significantly harder to answer. Identifying the correlates of success is complicated by small sample size and endogeneity that affects both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Despite this strong foundation of knowledge, gaps in our understanding remain. As noted, the majority of quantitative work on this topic focuses on interventions prior to 2000. Existing data on coalition warfare is limited in the detail and information it provides. Much of the case study research focuses on large operations, such as those in Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, or the Gulf War. Although certainly the most-significant instances, these do not accurately represent many smaller coalition operations that make up the bulk of the U.S. experience with such operations.

The analysis in the remainder of this report evaluates the 15 hypotheses outlined in this chapter using a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis and seeks to address the limitations identified here with an updated and more comprehensive dataset and a more diverse set of case studies.

Data and Methodology

In this chapter, we describe our definitions, data sources, and approach. We also discuss our qualitative and quantitative methodology.

Definitions

For the purpose of this report, we define a *U.S. coalition intervention* as any military intervention including the United States and at least one other country (in addition to the host) for a common action. This definition follows that outlined in Joint Publication 3-16.¹ We define *military intervention* to be any deployment of military ground forces outside the home country comprising at least 100 person-years or an equivalent contribution of naval or air personnel for the purpose of carrying out a qualifying activity type.² For air and naval interventions in the post–World War II period, we consider only carrier strike group deployments for naval operations, air-wing deployments for air forces, and any kinetic activity. This follows the definition used in previous RAND work on military interventions and was chosen for several reasons. First, we wanted a threshold that captured as many military interventions as possible. Previous datasets that have higher thresholds leave out important train-and-assist missions (among others). However, we also wanted to be able to state with reasonable confidence that we had collected all interventions that met our chosen threshold and to be able

¹ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2019. Per this document,

A coalition is an arrangement between two or more nations for common action. Coalitions are typically ad hoc; formed by different nations, often with different objectives; usually for a single problem or issue, while addressing a narrow sector of common interest. Operations conducted with units from two or more coalition members are referred to as coalition operations. (p. I-1)

² For additional details on the definitional parameters presented in this chapter and on other data-collection and coding criteria, challenges, and decisions, see Appendix A, which contains our codebook for the RAND U.S. Coalition Intervention Dataset (RUCID). Because the RUCID is derived from hundreds of different primary and secondary sources, it is impossible to cite each individually in each chapter of this report. See Appendix A for more information. We also used the RAND U.S. Ground Intervention Dataset (RUGID), which is similarly dense in nature and uses many of the same sources.

to provide detailed information on each of the interventions in the database. We also wanted to keep the data unclassified. For these reasons, including interventions below the 100 person-year cutoff would be challenging—not only because verified information about smaller operations is sparse but also because these operations are often partially or completely classified.

In addition to the size threshold, forces must have been participating in a qualifying activity for us to count them as a military intervention. We list ten qualifying activity types (also see Box A.1). Notably, we exclude *forward presence*—that is, forces stationed forward but conducting routine duties without one of the operational missions included in our list.³ This boundary is fuzziest between forward presence and deterrence. To count as a *deterrent intervention*, we require that forces be deployed at least in part to counter a specific threat. For example, U.S. forces stationed in Germany during the Cold War and after the 2014 Russian annexation of Crimea are counted as deterrent forces, but they are not counted as such between the end of the Cold War and 2014 because they were not seen as serving a major deterrent role against Russia or another major power at that time. Our qualifying activities include the following:

- **advisory/foreign internal defense (FID);** training and military assistance missions
- **counterinsurgency (COIN);** operations against a nontraditional ally, using non-traditional military tactics and in a nontraditional environment
- **combat;** conventional warfighting against a conventional enemy
- **deterrence;** activities to deter adversaries or protect allies in both the short and long terms
- **humanitarian assistance/disaster relief;** refugee relief, aid, and assistance in the case of natural disasters or in the aftermath of war
- **security operations;** operations to protect U.S. and allied assets and civilians overseas from a temporary and specific threat, typically of a limited nature
- **stability operations;** peacekeeping, reconstruction, and other activities to establish law and order and end violence
- **interdiction;** naval blockades and no-fly zones intended to prevent the passage or movement of vehicles, aircraft, or specific types of cargo into designated areas
- **lift/transport;** operations intended to move personnel, equipment, or supplies from one location to another, typically to support an overseas intervention
- **intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR);** covert information-gathering to support an ongoing intervention.

³ Included in forward presence are not only garrisoned peacetime troops at main operating bases (that is, absent a clear deterrent purpose) but also personnel at long-term logistics and support hubs, overseas weapon depots, and other locations. Other excluded activity types include noncombatant evacuation operations and paramilitary operations, such as covert actions conducted by civilian intelligence agencies, contractors, mercenaries, and non-state actors.

The foundation of our analysis is a dataset of U.S. military interventions conducted between 1946 and 2018.⁴ Starting with this circumscribed list of all U.S. military interventions ($N = 115$), our data-collection efforts proceeded in three phases. First, we worked to identify the subset of all historical U.S. interventions that met our definition of a coalition. During this initial phase of data construction, multiple coders reviewed every case to identify potential qualifiers.⁵ We set a standard of inclusiveness for this iterative process; that is, during initial passes through the data, we erred on the side of flagging false positives as possible coalition situations. From an initial list of more than 50 plausible instances, we winnowed the universe of U.S. coalition interventions to a final list of 37 U.S. coalition situations.⁶

Second, we identified the list of all partners involved in these coalition situations and defined the major and minor contributors in each case.⁷ Third, for all major contributors and for all coalitions in aggregate, we collected information on ground, air, and naval force sizes; activity types; and other coalition variables pertinent to each case. We describe this data-collection and data-coding process in greater detail later in this chapter. Before proceeding to that discussion, however, we add a few general caveats about data availability and sourcing undergirding the quantitative analysis.

Data Source Limitations and Caveats

Collecting granular data on historical force deployments across more than 100 countries over nearly 80 years of operations in the ground, air, and naval domains is a difficult proposition for several reasons, as discussed in fuller detail in the dataset codebook contained in Appendix A. Official coalition statistics are generally readily available (and, presumably, relatively accurate) from self-reporting IGOs (specifically, the UN and NATO), but official data on ad hoc coalitions and coalitions conducted under the auspices of other multilateral organizations are typically more elusive. This is particularly true of older coalitions, especially those in the immediate post–World War II era. At the same time, our research efforts were partly confounded by lack of access to primary source documents from partner nations (although there were exceptions among some major contributor countries, such as Canada, Australia, and the United King-

⁴ For more details on this foundational dataset, its research design, and its coding approach and methodology, see Kavanagh et al., 2017, and Kavanagh et al., 2019.

⁵ To merit inclusion in the universe of coalitions, a case had to involve U.S. military forces working in operational and/or strategic coordination with the armed forces of at least one other foreign-deployed country; in addition, the partner deployment had to satisfy our definition of a military intervention as described (i.e., qualifying activity type and minimum size threshold of 100 person-years).

⁶ For additional information on situations that were closely examined but considered definitional near misses, see the section “Defining the U.S. Coalition Intervention Universe” in Appendix A.

⁷ See our codebook in Appendix A for a more detailed discussion of the process by which we defined and distinguished between major and minor contributors—and how subsequent decisions were rendered for in-depth coding of so-called major partners.

dom). More generally, we discovered surprisingly few statistical reference resources on coalition sizes and compositions.

Because of these data limitations, circumscribing the preliminary universe of U.S. coalition situations proved more challenging than earlier RAND efforts to build the broader U.S. intervention case universe.⁸ Therefore, we identified reputable primary and/or secondary sources specific to each coalition and major partner. These sources included official military histories, factsheets, and press releases published by the U.S. government, other partnered armed services, and IGOs; they also included declassified intelligence estimates and analyses from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), DoD, National Security Council (NSC), and State Department. When official government or declassified primary source materials could not be found, we drew on secondary data sources, such as multiple volumes of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)'s *The Military Balance*,⁹ peer-reviewed academic journal articles, think tank analyses, and contemporaneous reports from unbiased NGOs and news media outlets. The Notes fields of the dataset provide detailed documentation of these case-by-case data availability issues; the dataset bibliography provides complete citations on more than 500 individual sources consulted in coding the RUCID.

Studying Coalitions

This report considers many types of coalitions. First, coalitions might differ in their *membership*. Coalitions can be made up of treaty allies (e.g., NATO), long-standing strategic partners, temporary partners who join together for a single operation, contributors who join for the status benefits but provide only token support, and even adversaries who find common ground to operate jointly in a narrow context. Coalitions can also vary in their *command structure and leadership*. Although the United

⁸ Although the full list of publications used to construct the original dataset of U.S. interventions since 1898 is too numerous to cite, the RAND research team found many to be particularly relevant as general references. For example, see W. Eugene Cobble, H. H. Gaffney, and Dmitry Gorenburg, *For the Record: All U.S. Forces' Responses to Situations, 1970–2000 (with Additions Covering 2000–2003)*, Alexandria, Va.: CNA Center for Strategic Studies, June 2003; John C. Fredriksen, *The United States Air Force: A Chronology*, Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2010a; John C. Fredriksen, *The United States Army: A Chronology, 1775 to the Present*, Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2010b; John C. Fredriksen, *The United States Navy: A Chronology, 1775 to the Present*, Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2010c; Barbara Salazar Torreon, *Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad, 1798–2016*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, R42738, October 7, 2016; Adam B. Siegel, *The Use of Naval Forces in the Post-War Era: U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps Crisis Response Activity, 1946–1990*, Alexandria, Va.: Center for Naval Analyses, CRM 90-246, February 1991; U.S. Air Force, *One Hundred Ten Years of Flight: USAF Chronology of Significant Air and Space Events, 1903–2012*, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.: Air University Press, 2015; and Timothy A. Warnock, ed., *Short of War: Major USAF Contingency Operations, 1947–1997*, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.: Air Force History and Museums Program and Air University Press, 2000.

⁹ IISS, *The Military Balance*, Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 1961–2018.

States tends to play a pivotal and leading role in most of the coalitions it forms, our analysis also considers coalitions in which the United States is only a contributing partner to operations led by another nation or IGO, such as NATO or the UN. The Enhanced Force Presence Deployment in the Baltics is one example of such a coalition. This is a NATO-led operation in which the United States is only one of many contributing partners. U.S. operations alongside NATO operations in the Balkans are another example of this type of arrangement. Additionally, we note that the leadership role played by the United States often changes over the life cycle of a coalition, with ad hoc U.S. C2 often strongest early on (i.e., during initial entry into impermissible environments and/or early kinetic activities) and leadership eventually transferred to an IGO (sometimes still headed by a U.S. commander).

Within a given coalition, member states vary in their contributions. Some states make sizable contributions that last the duration of the intervention. Others make only minor contributions, providing small numbers of forces perhaps for shorter periods of time. Still others might not provide military forces at all but instead offer money, access, or other types of support. Our analysis focuses primarily on partners that contribute some kind of military forces to the intervention, even if largely in a logistical or support role. Of course, simply observing the number of military personnel committed to an operation is not always a good way to judge the nature of the contribution made by a given coalition partner because it does not take into account the specific services provided or role occupied, nor does it take into the account the relative size of the partner's military. For a country with a small military, even a minor contribution of forces might be significant. Our analysis identified many instances in which small countries contributed disproportionately to their size compared with other partners and often provided niche and specialized units not available elsewhere. We use number of forces as a proxy here; in our case studies, we consider the many diverse ways that states might contribute to coalition operations.

As already noted, our analysis captures two types of coalition partners: major and minor contributors. Major contributors are defined as states that meet the 100 person-years ground force deployment threshold, make up a minimum of 5 percent of total non-U.S. (and non-host) ground forces, are deployed for at least 25 percent of the coalition duration, and have their deployed forces engaged in one of the ten qualifying activity types we have identified.¹⁰ Alternatively, states could also qualify as major contributors in the air and naval domains by conducting kinetic strikes and attacks or by contributing

¹⁰ As an additional subcriterion, major partners were required to exceed 5 percent of total non-U.S. (and non-host) forces for at least *10 percent of the duration of the coalition*. The concern motivating this condition was to exclude borderline instances in which a country might cross the threshold exceeding 5 percent of total non-U.S. troops for a very short period, such as during the waning months of a coalition after other major contributors have withdrawn. In practice, this subcriterion was rarely invoked during the coding process.

approximately 5 percent of total non-U.S. aircraft or ships.¹¹ Minor contributors are all partners that contribute military ground, air, or naval forces to a coalition but fall short of these thresholds for deployment size and/or activity type. In our data on coalition partners, we do not include countries that provide access or overflight rights or money without also contributing military personnel. Such contributions are essential to coalition outcomes—as noted elsewhere, geography is one of the key reasons the United States might form a coalition. For the purpose of our empirical analysis, however, we are interested in those partners that meet the thresholds defined here and we examine such factors as logistical support, access, and other contributions through that lens.

Distinguishing between major and minor contributors was, in part, methodologically necessary to build a manageable set of coalition partners. Consider, for instance, the challenge of coding very large coalitions, such as the U.S.-led occupation of Afghanistan, in which some 50 countries contributed military troops to ISAF and OEF and dozens more provided support in other forms (e.g., civilian and police training, military equipment and sales, economic and humanitarian aid, and diplomatic and political support). Coding each of these partners in full detail would have been infeasible given RAND project resources. Additionally, distinguishing between major and minor contributors was methodologically desirable because it allowed us to focus more closely on the historical subset of nations assuming the lion's share of military, economic, and political burdens in U.S. coalition interventions.

After we defined the universe of U.S. coalition situations, our second step of the data-collection process was to define the major contributors in each case. Doing so with rigor and consistency arguably proved the biggest methodological challenge in constructing the U.S. coalition data universe. The process entailed, for instance, detailed annual calculations of every troop contributor's force numbers relative to total non-U.S. (and non-host) troop numbers. In many instances—particularly for older coalitions and for non-UN, non-NATO ad hoc ones—troop data availability at monthly and/or annual levels was sometimes limited, as described in more detail in Appendix A. Locating quantitative data on non-U.S. naval and air force contributions (i.e., peak or average number of naval vessels and fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft) was typically even more challenging.¹² To ensure high standards of coding accuracy,

¹¹ Although this size threshold proved to be relatively low in the context of most coalitions (i.e., usually fewer than 2–3 ships or 7–12 aircraft), it yielded very few instances of partner naval or air interventions exclusive of qualifying ground interventions. That is to say, we found that if a partner nation was providing in excess of 5 percent of non-U.S. aircraft and/or ships, that country was, in most instances, providing in excess of 5 percent of non-U.S. ground forces as well. Likewise, our research found only a few instances of coalition partners conducting kinetic air or naval activities but not independently qualifying based on the size criteria for ground, air, or naval contributions.

¹² As one exception to the dearth of sources containing centralized air and naval coalition statistics, we note the work of Eric V. Larson, Gustav Lindstrom, Myron Hura, Ken Gardiner, Jim Keffer, and William Little, *Interoperability of U.S. and NATO Allied Forces: Supporting Data and Case Studies*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MR-1603-AF, 2003.

consistency, and transparency, multiple coders reviewed and confirmed every coding decision and source.¹³

Finally, as the third (and closely related) data-collection step, we coded a wide variety of database variables for each major coalition partner, aggregated at different analytical levels (discussed in the next section), such as information on the number and types of forces committed; the activity types of ground, naval, and air forces; the duration of involvement; and any restrictions on the use of force (that we could uncover using unclassified or declassified sources).

U.S. Coalitions Dataset

Our resulting dataset consists of 37 U.S. coalition interventions (Table 3.1) among the 115 total U.S. military interventions that occurred abroad between 1946 and 2018.¹⁴ This dataset served as the universe of situations for our quantitative analysis and was also used in our qualitative analysis. Our conclusions consider qualitative and quantitative analysis relevant to a set of hypotheses derived from existing literature, and we

Table 3.1
Universe of U.S. Coalition Situations (1946–2018)

Coalition Name	Location	Dates	Duration (months) ^a	Number of Partners (all)	Number of Major Contributors ^b
Western Allied Occupation of Germany (post-World War II [WWII])	West Germany	1946–1955	120	7	3
Western Allied Occupation of Austria (post-WWII)	Austria	1946–1955	125	3	2
U.S.-Led Occupation of Japan (post-WWII)	Japan	1946–1952	76	5	4
Allied Berlin Airlift	West Germany	1948–1949	15	6	1
Korean War	South Korea	1950–1953	38	22	11
Post-Armistice Peacekeeping and Stability Operations in South Korea	South Korea	1953–1957	49	20	9
UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Congo	Congo-Leopoldville	1960–1964	54	34	9

¹³ Important coding challenges and decisions are discussed in detail in Appendix A. More-granular case-by-case notes are embedded in the raw dataset.

¹⁴ See Appendix B for additional data on these coalitions, such as aggregate force sizes and complete lists of major and minor partners.

Table 3.1—Continued

Coalition Name	Location	Dates	Duration (months) ^a	Number of Partners (all)	Number of Major Contributors ^b
Vietnam War	Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia	1962–1975	160	7	4
U.S.-Led Occupation of Dominican Republic	Dominican Republic	1965–1966	18	7	4
MFO in Sinai	Egypt	1982–ongoing	444	12	2
Lebanese Civil War	Lebanon	1982–1984	19	4	2
U.S.-Led Invasion of Grenada	Grenada	1983–1985	21	7	1
Tanker War and Kuwaiti Oil Tanker Protection	Kuwait	1987–1988	23	7	5
U.S.-Led Deterrence Force in the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations, Pre-Invasion Phase	Saudi Arabia	1990–1991	6	40	10
Gulf War	Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, UAE	1991	2	40	13
U.S.-Led Peacekeeping and Deterrence Force in Northern Iraq and Turkey	Turkey, Iraq	1991–2003	144	13	5
U.S.-Led Deterrence Force in Southern Iraq and the Persian Gulf	Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq	1992–2003	127	3	2
Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Somalia	Somalia	1992–1995	32	30	13
UN Peacekeeping and NATO No-Fly Zone and Embargo Enforcement During Bosnian War	Croatia, Bosnia	1992–1995	42	35	14
U.S. and UN Deterrence Force in Macedonia	Macedonia	1993–1999	68	6	1
Rwandan Genocide Relief and UN-Led Peacekeeping Mission	Rwanda, Uganda, Zaire	1993–1996	29	25	13
Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Haiti (I)	Haiti	1994–1997	39	23	5
NATO Bosnian Air Campaign	Bosnia	1995	1	15	7
NATO and European Union (EU) Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Bosnia	Bosnia, Croatia, Hungary	1995–ongoing	277	39	11

Table 3.1—Continued

Coalition Name	Location	Dates	Duration (months) ^a	Number of Partners (all)	Number of Major Contributors ^b
UN Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Croatia	Croatia	1995–1998	35	27	11
NATO Kosovo Air Campaign	Kosovo	1999	3	15	10
NATO Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Kosovo	Kosovo, Macedonia, Greece, Albania	1999–ongoing	235	28	11
U.S.-Led Invasion of Afghanistan	Afghanistan	2001	3	13	4
U.S.-Led Occupation of Afghanistan (post-combat phase)	Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan	2001–ongoing	205	50	9
U.S.-Led Invasion of Iraq	Iraq	2003	2	4	2
U.S.-Led Occupation of Iraq (post-combat phase)	Iraq, Kuwait, Turkey, Saudi Arabia	2003–2011	103	39	9
ECOWAS and UN-Led Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Liberia	Liberia	2003–2018	177	22	7
Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Haiti (II)	Haiti	2004–2017	165	24	9
U.S.-Led Multinational Tsunami Relief in the Indian Ocean	Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Malaysia	2004–2005	3	25	8
NATO-Led Libya Air Campaign	Libya	2011	8	18	8
NATO and EU Deterrence of Russian Aggression in Europe, Black Sea, and Baltics Air Policing	Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, United Kingdom, Norway	2014–ongoing	57	22	11
U.S.-Led Multinational Coalition Against ISIS	Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Kuwait	2014–ongoing	55	29	16

NOTES: ECOWAS = Economic Community of West African States; MFO = Multinational Force and Observers; UAE = United Arab Emirates.

^a For ongoing coalitions, duration is calculated through the end of 2018.

^b Major-contributor numbers exclude the United States and host nations that did not deploy forces to foreign territory during the coalition.

use these findings to make a series of recommendations to guide decisions about coalition warfare going forward.

As described in more detail in the dataset codebook in Appendix A, we set a standard of inclusiveness when winnowing the universe of all U.S. military *interventions* between 1946 and 2018 to a circumscribed list of U.S. military *coalitions*. Although we erred on the side of inclusion, borderline instances were typically excluded from the final coalition universe for a few common reasons. First, in several instances, we found evidence of cooperation between U.S. and partner forces, but the latter were of an insufficient size to meet our definition of a military intervention per se. This was especially common in several humanitarian assistance missions.¹⁵ Second, as the reciprocal coding caveat, there are numerous historical instances in which the United States deployed token contingents to international (specifically, UN) peacekeeping coalitions well beneath our 100 person-year threshold required to constitute a U.S. military intervention; because U.S. force levels did not, in the first place, meet our definitional size criteria for a U.S. military intervention in these UN instances, we likewise exclude them from our list of U.S. coalitions.¹⁶ Third, in

¹⁵ We found only one natural disaster response case in which U.S. partner forces exceeded our 100 person-year threshold. As just one example of a potential humanitarian assistance/disaster relief coalition that was omitted, the United States deployed some 1,000–1,200 troops to Pakistan between October 2005 and March 2006 to provide earthquake relief during Operation Lifeline. At the same time, some 19 countries contributed about 1,200 troops total (in addition to U.S. forces), but the largest non-U.S. contingent was a deployment of approximately 125 Australian troops for less than six months (i.e., about half shy of the equivalent of 100 person-years). More generally, therefore, we underscore that least one partner nation had to meet these basic size thresholds individually for the case to be considered a coalition. In a few borderline situations, the total number of non-U.S. troops deployed exceeded the 100 person-year threshold, even though no countries individually deployed more than 100 troops. In such instances, the U.S. intervention would not be considered as part of a coalition; rather, the U.S. deployment would be coded as a unilateral intervention.

¹⁶ This coding decision proceeded from the logic that modest U.S. contributions of, say, a dozen or two military personnel annually to UN peacekeeping missions have little bearing on DoD leaders' and military planners' most critical decisionmaking regarding strategy, doctrine, and resources. For instance, we note the following list of UN peacekeeping missions in which the United States provided (at peak) fewer than 99 troops. Per our primary research questions, we did not consider these situations to be U.S. coalitions per se because American participation was minimal. An area for additional future research, however, would be systematic analysis of the counterfactual reasons why Washington *did not* mobilize greater troop levels during these borderline situations and would-be coalitions. This UN subcase list includes the following non-U.S. coalition missions with peak U.S. military personnel noted in parentheses: UNTAC/UNAMIC, Cambodia (~5 U.S. troops at peak, 1991–1993); MINUSCA, Central African Republic (~8 U.S. troops at peak, 2014–ongoing); MINURCAT, Chad (~2 U.S. troops at peak, 2009–2010); MONUC/MONUSCO, Democratic Republic of Congo (~5 U.S. troops, 2010–ongoing); UNMEE, Eritrea/Ethiopia (~3 U.S. troops at peak, 2001–2008); UNIKOM, Kuwait/Iraq (~21 U.S. troops at peak, 1991–2003); UNTSO, Israel (~36 U.S. troops at peak, 1990–ongoing); MINUSMA, Mali (~37 U.S. troops at peak, 2014–ongoing); ONUMOZ, Mozambique (~5 U.S. troops at peak, 1994); UNMISS/UNMIS, Sudan/South Sudan (~11 U.S. troops at peak, 2005–ongoing); UNAMID, Sudan/Darfur (~4 U.S. troops at peak, 2008); UNAMET/UNTAET/UNMISSET/UNOTIL/UNMIT (~3 U.S. troops at peak, 1999–2007); and MINURSO, Western Sahara (~30 U.S. troops at peak, 1991–2002). Additionally, since 1990, the United States has also deployed fewer than 100 civilian police and/or observers (without military troops) to the following UN missions not otherwise captured in our master dataset of U.S. coalitions ($N = 37$): UNAMA,

a handful of borderline situations, we documented the parallel deployment of U.S. and other foreign militaries (often, apparently, special operators) to the same host nation at the same time—but we found insufficient evidence of operational and/or strategic coordination between the U.S. and international contingents to constitute a military coalition *per se* (i.e., to satisfy the definitional component for a common action). This was particularly true, for instance, in several recent and ongoing U.S. counterterrorism operations in central and eastern Africa (e.g., Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa [CJTF-HOA], multinational efforts to defeat Boko Haram in Lake Chad Basin).¹⁷ Likewise, in a few confirmed coalition situations, we omit from our list of coalition members adversarial powers that happened to be operating in the same country without coalition jointness, even if endeavoring toward similar purposes (e.g., Iranian and Russian forces in Syria and/or Iraq working to defeat ISIS, Soviet troops during the post-World War II Allied occupations of Germany and Austria). Finally, we note that unlike many U.S. air-only interventions, the vast majority of U.S. naval-only interventions are coded as unilateral operations.¹⁸ This is true even in instances in which U.S. carrier groups were repositioned offshore during crises or conflicts in tacit support of partners or allies (e.g., to deter aggression against Israel or Turkey during flashpoints in the Middle East)—provided that no coalition coordination or cooperation occurred beyond bilateral training exercises. Similarly, we note that most U.S. deterrence situations (especially during the Cold War) are coded as bilateral operations, not multilateral ones.

The final configuration of the data contains iterations organized along four distinct levels, or lenses of observation, covering the period 1946 to 2018:¹⁹

Afghanistan; UNOMOG, Georgia; MINUGUA, Guatemala; UNAMI, Iraq; UNSMIL, Libya; UNMOGIP, Pakistan; UNAMSIL/UNIOSIL, Libya; and UNSMIS, Syria. For a full description of these missions, see “Where We Operate,” United Nations Peacekeeping database, undated.

¹⁷ For instance, throughout CJTF-HOA, French, Italian, British, German, and Japanese troops have been deployed to Djibouti, Kenya, and elsewhere in the subcontinent theater of operations for the common purpose of defeating transnational terrorist organizations, such as al-Shabaab and Boko Haram; however, we found no clear evidence (at least at the unclassified level) that U.S. and foreign militaries were coordinating beyond perhaps intelligence-sharing and regular regional training exercises. That being the case, this does not meet our definition of coalition action. At the same time, U.S. forces were typically conducting multiple bilateral train-and-assist missions with regional militaries as part of larger counterterrorism-oriented deployments in this handful of instances, but host African nations were not typically operating under the umbrella of a foreign-deployed international coalition. Stated more broadly, our coding standards exclude from the U.S. coalition case universe any borderline interventions in which U.S. troops were deployed to a country at the same time as one or more other foreign militaries but during which time these foreign forces did not cooperate operationally and/or strategically.

¹⁸ By contrast, several primarily air interventions are coded as coalitions, including the Berlin Airlift, monitoring of northern and southern no-fly zones over Iraq after the Gulf War, and NATO air campaigns in the 1990s and 2000s against Bosnia, Kosovo, and Libya.

¹⁹ For a full list of variables coded in each of these datasets, see Boxes A.2–A.5 in Appendix A.

1. **Coalition situations.** In this top-level iteration of the dataset, the unit of analysis is one observation per coalition (i.e., $N = 37$ U.S. coalitions out of 115 total U.S. interventions between 1946 and 2018).
2. **Coalition country-years.** In this second-level iteration of the dataset, coalition-level observations are disaggregated by year and—in instances in which national contingents deployed to multiple countries under the umbrella of the same coalition in the same year—by country location (i.e., $N = 472$, or about 12 country-years per coalition on average).
3. **Major contributor situations.** In this third-level iteration of the dataset, the unit of analysis is one observation per “major contributor” to every U.S. coalition between 1946 and 2018 (i.e., $N = 319$, or about eight major contributors per coalition on average, with observations for U.S. and force-contributing host nations where applicable).
4. **Major contributor country-years.** In the fourth-level iteration of the dataset, major contributor-level observations are similarly disaggregated by year and, as applicable, by country location. The unit of analysis is one observation per year per “major contributor” to every U.S. coalition between 1946 and 2018 (i.e., $N = 2,357$).

In each of these configurations, the universe of U.S. coalitions between 1946 and 2018 is coded along several dimensions (Box 3.1). In Appendix A, we define in fuller detail each of the variables used in the four iterations of the dataset (Boxes A.2–A.5). In that appendix, we also provide nuanced, albeit important, coding decisions and caveats involved in the coding process.

Approach

Our methods combined qualitative and quantitative assessments of the hypotheses identified in the previous chapter. Many of the hypotheses could be assessed using both qualitative and quantitative methods, providing two lenses on the same question. Others could only be assessed using one of the two approaches. Table 3.2 lists the hypotheses by research question and indicates the methodologies we used to assess each.

Quantitative Analysis

For each research question outlined in Table 3.2, we use a unique permutation of the dataset and empirical strategy. For example, when we test hypotheses about why the United States forms coalitions, we compare the characteristics of unilateral interventions with those of coalition interventions. This test uses an intervention-level dataset. But when examining the determinants of potential ally support, we compare states that become coalition partners with those that do not. Naturally, this requires a country-

Box 3.1**Summary of Key Variables Contained in RAND U.S. Coalition Intervention Dataset**

Variable Category	Variable Descriptions
Case identifiers	Coalition intervention ID, name, description, location(s), dates, duration
Coalition membership	Coalition members (all); major contributor location(s), dates, duration; national contingent caveats or restrictions; U.S.-specific membership details
Coalition leadership	Coalition organizations (all); dates and names of authorities by phase; C2 by IGO or ad hoc coalition leader
Coalition activities	Major contributor and aggregate coalition activity types in ground, air, and naval domains (annually and overall)
Coalition ground forces	Major contributor and aggregate coalition ground force sizes (minimum, maximum, or best estimates) and deployment details (annually and overall)
Coalition air forces	Major contributor and aggregate coalition air force sizes and deployment details (annually and overall)
Coalition naval forces	Major contributor and aggregate coalition naval force sizes and deployment details (annually and overall)

level dataset. Given the variety of data and tests implemented, we provide an overview of the quantitative analysis here. Table 3.3 lists each hypothesis that we test quantitatively, a brief data description, and an explanation of the quantitative analysis used.

Why Does the United States Choose to Work Through Coalitions?

To explore the determinants of coalition formation, we begin by constructing a novel dataset using both the RUCID and the RUGID. As previously discussed, the resulting dataset contains 115 U.S. interventions spanning 1946 to 2018, of which 37 constituted U.S.-led coalition interventions. We tested the three hypotheses related to the research question simultaneously in a multivariate model. The dependent variable (i.e., outcome) is binary and takes the value 1 when an intervention is a coalition and 0 when it is not. We modeled the likelihood that the United States will form a coalition using a logit model and estimated the parameters using iterative maximum likelihood.

The model specification factors in several independent (explanatory) variables; some serve to explicitly test hypotheses while others are used as covariates to mitigate omitted variable bias. The first hypothesis posits that *high operational demands will increase the likelihood of a coalition*. In the model, we proxy for high operational demands in several ways. First, we consider which types of interventions are likely to have the highest operational demands. We expect that interventions that involve *kinetic activities* (such as stabilization, COIN, and combat) are more likely to have

Table 3.2
Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question	Hypotheses	Quantitative Analysis	Qualitative Analysis
When does the United States choose to work through coalitions?	• The United States is more likely to form coalitions when operational demands are high (burden-sharing)	X	X
	• The United States is more likely to form coalitions when the logistical challenges are significant (geography)	X	X
	• The United States is more likely to form coalitions when having international partners is important (international legitimacy)	X	X
	• This United States is more likely to join coalitions when required by domestic political concerns (domestic politics)	X	X
	• The United States is less likely to form coalitions when the threat is high and/or national security is at stake (degree of threat)	X	X
When do other states choose to join U.S. coalitions?	• States are more likely to join U.S. interventions when they have a close relationship with the United States (U.S. relationship)	X	X
	• States are more likely to join coalitions in their own regions (home region)	X	X
	• States are more likely to join coalitions when they have shared interests (shared interests–formation)	X	X
	• States are more likely to join U.S. coalitions when the intervention is sponsored or led by an international government organization, or IGO (IGO)	X	X
	• States are more likely to join U.S. coalitions when they seek status in the international system or to gain a reputation (status-seeking)		X
What factors favor the success of coalitions at achieving U.S. political objectives?	• Coalitions are more likely than unilateral interventions to achieve U.S. political objectives (success)	X	X
	• Coalitions are more likely to achieve U.S. political objectives in stabilization missions (stabilization)	X	X
	• Coalitions are more likely to achieve U.S. objectives when partners have a shared interest (shared interests–success)	X	X
	• Coalitions with past experience partnering (e.g., members of an alliance) are more likely to be successful (experience)	X	X
	• Coalitions with more partners are less likely to be successful because of coordination challenges (number of partners)	X	X

Table 3.3
Quantitative Analysis Summary

Research Question	Hypotheses	Data Description	Analysis Description
When does the United States choose to build coalitions?	Burden-sharing	Intervention-level dataset (<i>N</i> = 115)	Multivariate logit model
	Geography		
	International legitimacy		
	Domestic politics		
	Degree of threat		
When do other states choose to join U.S. coalitions?	U.S. relationship	Potential partner-level data (<i>N</i> = 4,549)	- Multinomial logit model - Multivariate logit model
	Home region		
	IGO		
	Shared interests–success		
What factors favor the success of coalitions at achieving U.S. political objectives?	Success	Intervention-level dataset (<i>N</i> = 115)	Lasso and multivariate regression
	Shared interests–success	Coalition-level dataset (<i>N</i> = 33)	- Descriptive statistics - Univariate and bivariate regressions
	Experience		
	Number of partners		

large operational demands than, for example, humanitarian or train-and-assist missions (which might be difficult but require fewer forces, on average). We find that the *kinetic* indicator is closely correlated with the actual operational demand of an intervention, measured in terms of average number of U.S. forces deployed in each year of an intervention. The average number of U.S. forces is an ex-post measure that can only be observed once the intervention has started while the kinetic indicator can be observed before. Second, we turn to past research on factors that make interventions and military occupations more difficult. The intervention target's *land area and topography* have been proposed as possible factors that shape the challenge that state actors face in seeking to assert authority or successfully control a country.²⁰ Drawing on this, we consider land area and topography of the intervention target as two additional proxies for operational demands of the intervention. Importantly, the United States can assess both of these measures prior to an intervention beginning. As a result, this information can inform the decision to build a coalition—a decision that also must be made (at least initially) before the start of the intervention.

²⁰ Halvard Buhaug and Scott Gates, "The Geography of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 2002.

To test the hypothesis about *the role of logistical demands and geography*, we use a measure of the distance between the United States and the target country of the intervention, specifically the distance between the two capitals. We expect that if logistical demands driven by geography are a key factor in coalition decisionmaking, coalitions will be more likely when the intervention occurs far from the United States.

To test whether a need for *international legitimacy* drives coalition formation, we draw on the fact that the norm of territorial sovereignty and the emphasis on international legitimacy have expanded since the end of the Cold War, and we consider how the likelihood of U.S. coalitions changes over time.

We considered several measures to assess the effect of *domestic public support* on the likelihood of coalitions. The ideal variable in this case would be some measure of public support for each intervention. If we had such data, we could consider how coalition use has varied depending on public attitudes toward a given intervention, but, unfortunately, such data do not exist. Polling, although frequent and reliable today, was much less consistent on these issues if we look all the way back to the 1940s. We also lack consistent, reliable information on the attitudes of military leaders toward military interventions. Collecting such information would not be impossible, but it was outside the scope of this effort. Instead, we rely on several other measures that have been used in past work that focused on assessing the relationship between foreign policy and domestic politics. First, we consider a measure of years to the next presidential election, under the logic that political leaders might be more restrained, and thus more likely to join coalitions, when they are closer to an election. Second, we consider a measure of presidential approval. Presidents who are less popular might also be more likely to rely on coalitions as a hedging strategy, to avoid bearing the costs of a failure. Finally, we consider whether control of the executive and legislative branches matter, using a variable that captures when both are controlled by the same party. We expect that when control is divided, the use of coalitions to win consensus might be more likely.²¹

Finally, we capture the degree of threat by assessing the *count of territorial claims in which the adversary is engaged with other states*. Theory suggests that state actors engaged in territorial disputes pose a greater risk to regional stability and, by extension, U.S. interests.²² We note that this is not a perfect measure and we might instead wish

²¹ We draw these variables from Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2005; Michael T. Koch and Patricia Sullivan, "Should I Stay or Should I Go Now? Partisanship, Approval, and the Duration of Major Power Democratic Military Interventions," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 2010; James Meernik, "Presidential Decision Making and the Political Use of Military Force," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1994.

²² Stephen Watts, Bryan Frederick, Jennifer Kavanagh, Angela O'Mahony, Thomas S. Szayna, Matthew Lane, Alexander Stephenson, and Colin P. Clarke, *A More Peaceful World? Regional Conflict Trends and U.S. Defense Planning*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1177-A, 2017. Note that this variable is not a perfect proxy for degree of threat—in some situations, the territorial claim is not one with direct implications for the United States. Furthermore, not all territorial claims involve conflict or instability. However, past work has sug-

to collect information on the military capabilities of the adversary. This measure could not be applied consistently across all interventions; however, we highlight the inability of this metric to capture the measure of threat posed to U.S. national security, which the literature identifies as a potential determinant of coalition formation. We consider this separately through our qualitative analysis.

The controls are as follows:

- a U.S.–target country alliance (*U.S. alliance*) variable that assesses whether the United States is intervening on behalf of an ally
- a major power–target country alliance (*major power alliance*) that measures whether the target is allied with another non-U.S. major power
- regional indicators
- time dummies for the periods after the September 11, 2001, terrorist bombings (9/11).

The control for U.S. alliances is included because we know from past work that the United States is significantly more likely to intervene in allied countries under threat.²³ When an intervention target country shares a military alliance with another major power (e.g., France, the United Kingdom, China, Russia), it might similarly influence the likelihood that the United States chooses to build a coalition rather than pursue the objective unilaterally. The direction of this effect might depend on whether the alliance is with an ally or an adversary. If it is with a major power that is also an ally of the United States, theory suggests that the intervention should be more likely. If the alliance is with an adversary, we might expect a smaller unilateral intervention to avoid escalation. In any case, we control for these alliances as possible influences on U.S. decisionmaking. We control for location because geography plays a significant role in the frequency of conflict and the strength of U.S. interest. Finally, a post-9/11 indicator rounds out the model. We use this control because 9/11 significantly changed the global political landscape and the U.S. approach to foreign policy. Full details on variables used in the model are provided in Table 3.4.

Why Do Other States Choose to Join U.S. Coalitions?

Our second research question focused on understanding when states are more or less likely to join coalitions involving the United States. As previously described, we established comprehensive lists in the RUCID of all major and minor partners that joined each historical U.S. coalition. To better understand factors that influence state involvement in U.S. coalitions, we compare characteristics of states that join with those of

gested that presence of territorial claims is associated with likelihood of conflict, making it a reasonable metric, especially when supplemented with qualitative instances.

²³ Kavanagh et al., 2019.

Table 3.4
Key Variables for Assessing When the United States Works Through Coalitions

Explanatory Factor	Variable	Source
Operational demands	Kinetic indicator	• RUCID
Geography	Average distance between United States and target country (or countries)	• RAND-calculated
International legitimacy	Post–Cold War indicator Post-9/11 indicator	• RUCID
Domestic public support	Presidential approval ratings Years to next presidential election	• Executive Approval Database • RAND-calculated
Degree of threat	Count of territorial claims of target state as aggressor	• Correlates of War (COW) ^a territorial claims
Control variables	Target country—U.S. alliance indicator Target country—major power alliance indicator	• COW

^a Correlates of War database, undated; Executive Approval Project, “Executive Approval Database,” undated.

states that abstain. Although identifying and categorizing actual coalition partners is relatively straightforward, selecting an appropriate set of potential partners is less so.

To those ends, in the primary quantitative approach, we first consider all states in the international system as potential contributors and compare the characteristics of states that join with those that do not. However, there are many states in the international system that are unlikely to ever join a U.S. coalition, either because they do not have military capabilities to make a meaningful contribution or because they have traditionally been U.S. adversaries (or, at least, not allies). Including a large number of countries with essentially zero chance of joining a U.S. coalition might create noise that prevents us from observing relationships between country characteristics and coalition membership. For robustness, we created a second data specification, where states are categorized as potential contributors only if they satisfy one or more of the following conditions:

- They are members of the international organization under which the coalition is formed (e.g., UN, NATO, EU).
- The state is in the same region as the target intervention state.
- The state is a major power (i.e., the United Kingdom, France, China, or Russia).²⁴
- The state is a formal treaty ally of the United States when the coalition forms.

²⁴ We chose these countries plus the United States following the Military Interventions by Powerful States dataset and the work in Patricia L. Sullivan and Michael T. Koch, “Military Intervention by Powerful States, 1945–2003,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 46, No. 5, 2009.

This strategy, although culling the partner pool to a more theoretically viable control set, imposes other difficulties. The rules used to identify potential partners are often related to the variables of interest in the empirical model. For example, the systematic inclusion of all states with a standing U.S. military alliance will influence the coefficient on *alliance* in the empirical model. Since every single U.S. ally exists in the potential partner pool, the contribution rate for allies must be exceptionally high for the rate of coalition participation to exceed non-allied states. Because of the empirical shortcomings of such an approach and the unreliability of estimates related to the partner pool selection criteria, we relegate the results and discussion of analysis on this data specification to Appendix C.

We tested the hypotheses using two different dependent variables and the corresponding empirical models and estimation techniques appropriate for each outcome type. In the first version of the analysis, the dependent variable is binary and separates states that join the coalition from those that abstain. In the analysis of the binary dependent variable, we estimated the effect of a change in an independent variable on the likelihood of a state joining the coalition. For this outcome, we used a logit model (a nonlinear model in which the parameters are estimated using iterative maximum likelihood). But our extensive data collection allowed for further distinction; the RUCID categorizes states as major contributors, minor contributors, or nonpartners. This variable is not binary—it is categorical. When modeling a function for which the outcome is categorical, the logit model is no longer appropriate. Instead, we used the multinomial logit. In the multinomial logit, we estimated the effect of an explanatory variable on the *likelihood of minor partnership* separately from the effect of the same explanatory variable on the *likelihood of major partnership*. The ability to parse an aggregate effect of an explanatory variable can be useful. For illustrative purposes, consider the case in which estimation of parameters in the logit model finds no effect of an explanatory variable on the likelihood of a state joining the coalition. Although this estimate alone suggests the independent variable is unimportant, it is possible that the explanatory variable significantly increases the probability of a state joining as a major contributor but also reduces the odds that the state joins as a minor contributor. Analysis of the categorical dependent variables through the multinomial logit regression can provide a more nuanced insight into the relationship between the hypothesized determinants and the outcomes.

Despite slight differences in the dependent variables and statistical approaches used to estimate the two models, specifications (i.e., the independent variables used to explain the outcome) were identical across the analyses. In both models, we captured *closeness of the relationship with the United States* using three different measures. First, we captured the extent of the political and military ties using a variable for *alliance with the United States*. Second, we captured economic ties using *extent of bilateral trade between the potential contributor and the United States*. Finally, we used a proxy measure of cultural closeness, specifically, the percentage of the *population that speaks*

English. This captured linguistic and cultural similarities between the United States and a potential collaborator. Similarly, to assess the *effect of region*, the model contains a dummy variable that indicates whether a potential contributor is in the same region as the target intervention state.

Developing a proxy for *shared interests* was more difficult. The ideal variable would be based on a review of the objectives of each possible partner and a consideration of how those objectives overlap with U.S. objectives and the objectives of other partners. We did not have these data, so we relied on two substitutes. First, we considered trade flows between the potential partner and the target state. We knew from past work that the United States is more likely to intervene when it has economic ties with the target state, when measured as trade flows.²⁵ One way to assess whether a given state shares interests with the United States regarding the intervention is to consider whether that state also has economic ties to the target state. We used *trade flows* between the potential partner and the target state as one possible proxy of shared interests. Second, we considered the similarity of the UN voting profiles of the United States and the potential partner. This measure is also not a perfect proxy of our argument. It assesses the match between the overall preferences and worldview of the United States and the potential partner; we are interested specifically in the existence of shared interests between the two only regarding the intervention at hand. However, it is reasonable to assume that if states generally share a UN voting profile, then they are more likely to also have overlapping interests regarding the intervention in question.²⁶ If we find a significant relationship, this might also provide some evidence that shared political or other interests and preferences can contribute to coalition formation. Both measures are indirect, however, so the results should be interpreted with caution and alongside qualitative evidence.

Measuring the involvement of IGOs, another key hypothesis, is straightforward. We used a dummy variable that indicates *whether a coalition takes place under an IGO*. The final hypothesis for this second research question was tested qualitatively. Finally, we qualitatively tested the hypothesis that status-seeking states are more likely to join coalitions—the underlying concept is difficult to observe, measure, and identify.

In addition, we considered several relevant covariates in the model to mitigate concerns of omitted variable bias. We chose controls that proxy for other key factors identified as relevant in past work on coalition contributor decisions, as described in Chapter Two. Polity score controls for the level of democracy of the potential collaborator's political institutions. Lagged per capita income and a recession indicator are included in the model specification because a country's economic condition might make it more or less able to provide resources (military or otherwise) to a military

²⁵ Kavanagh et al., 2017.

²⁶ Erik Voeten, "Data and Analyses of Voting in the United Nations General Assembly," *Routledge Handbook of International Organization*, Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2013.

coalition. We define a *recession* as an extended period (between one and three years) of nonpositive percentage growth of per capita income. Activity type and the target region likely play an important role in the decision of states to contribute or defer, so we include both sets of indicators in the specifications. For example, states might be more willing to join humanitarian missions than combat missions. They also might be more interested in intervening in regions of strategic importance (e.g., the Middle East). Lastly, we were concerned that time trends and structural geopolitical breaks would confound the empirical strategy. In response, we included indicators to identify coalitions that occurred after the Cold War and those that occurred after 9/11, and we controlled for the time trend. All these variables are defined further in Table 3.5.

What Factors Favor the Success of Coalitions at Achieving U.S. Political Objectives?

This final research question posed the most-significant quantitative challenges, because testing hypotheses related to the success of coalition interventions from the U.S. perspective and based on U.S. objectives requires comparisons to be drawn between coalitions. The United States undertook 37 coalition interventions throughout the sample period, which is too small a sample for any type of regression analysis. We could no longer use sophisticated multivariate models because the paucity of data constrained the number of parameters in any empirical model we designed. Instead, we relied primarily on descriptive and summary statistics to shed light on the relationships between coalition characteristics and the success of political objectives.

There is, however, at least one hypothesis that we could test quantitatively. When we compared the success of coalitions with that of unilateral interventions, we used an intervention-level dataset ($N = 115$). The dependent variable is the average degree of success for U.S. political objectives on a given intervention; the independent variable of interest is the coalition dummy variable. The political objectives and degrees of success used in this analysis were taken from previous RAND work.²⁷

To describe the data and analysis for this third research question, we must first describe the underlying political objectives dataset used in previous RAND work. This methodology is explained in detail in that recent research, so we provide only a short summary here of how we assessed the success of each intervention at achieving its objectives.²⁸ First, in previous work, RAND researchers defined the political objectives of each of the U.S. interventions that met the criteria for inclusion in the database ($N = 145$ between 1898 and 2018). Each intervention could have multiple objectives and those objectives could vary over time. To collect the relevant information, the researchers started with official government statements, then looked further—at declassified accounts, historical accounts, and other archival documents. The collection of political objectives was done iteratively with multiple coders and discussions

²⁷ Kavanagh et al., 2019.

²⁸ See Appendix A in Kavanagh et al., 2019.

Table 3.5
Key Variables for Assessing When Partners Join U.S. Coalitions

Explanatory Factor	Variable	Source
Cultural ties to United States	Percentage English-speaking population in potential partner	Britannica
Economic ties to United States	Log lagged trade between United States and potential partner	COW
Military and political ties to United States	Alliance between United States and potential partner	COW
Home region	Target country–host country shared region indicator	RUCID
Shared interest	- UN voting harmony—United States and potential partner - Trade between target(s) and potential partner	Voeten, Strezhnev, and Bailey COW
IGO sponsorship	- IGO sponsorship indicator - Log lagged per capita income	RUCID Maddison
Control variables	- Recession indicator - Polity score - Region of intervention indicators - Activity type indicators - Post-9/11 indicator - Post–Cold War indicator - Year	Maddison Polity RUCID RUCID RUCID RUCID RUCID

SOURCES: Britannica website, multiple entries, undated; COW, undated; Maddison Project Database 2018, Groningen Growth and Development Centre, University of Groningen, Netherlands, January 25, 2018; Erik Voeten, Anton Strezhnev, and Michael Bailey, United Nations General Assembly Voting Data, Harvard Dataverse, 2009.

with experts as needed. RAND researchers then assessed the extent to which these objectives had been achieved, using these same types of sources, on a three-point scale: success (3), some success (2), and no success (1). The research team again relied on multiple coders and a rigorous adjudication process in all coding decisions and consulted with experts as needed.²⁹ It is this success dataset that we rely on here to assess the success of a coalition at achieving U.S. political objectives. Perceptions of success might vary across intervention partners, but, for the purpose of this analysis, we are focused on the U.S. perspective. To calculate the average degree of success, we considered the success on each objective and the total number of objectives.³⁰ We provide additional details and some examples in Chapter Six.

²⁹ Kavanagh et al., 2019.

³⁰ There is disagreement about whether taking the average of a set of categorical measures provides a meaningful metric that can be used in analysis. In this case, because we were largely concerned with relative success (i.e., one intervention compared with another), we assessed that the choice to use this average was methodologically acceptable.

The question we consider in this analysis is whether coalition interventions are more successful than unilateral interventions in achieving U.S. political objectives. This is only one way of considering intervention success, and it might not be the measure used by coalition partners or the international community. As a comparison, we also consider whether coalition and unilateral U.S. interventions differ in their outcomes, using one additional metric: We consider the change in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita for the target state between the first year of the intervention and five years after the end of the intervention. We use this measure as common proxy for level of development or well-being. The argument would be that if coalition interventions are more “successful,” then gains in GDP per capita by the target state should be larger than is true for unilateral interventions over the medium term. Importantly, these two analyses are considered as robustness checks—both are important outcome measures, but, from the U.S. perspective, the extent to which the intervention advances national interest will always be paramount.

With these data and both outcome measures, we still face constraints on model complexity and must choose parameters judiciously. To address this challenge, we use a statistical procedure, called post-double-selection lasso, which performs model parameter selection and estimates the appropriate test statistics for the variable(s) of interest. Belloni, Chernozhukov, and Hansen introduce, derive, and explain the double-selection technique;³¹ here, we offer only a brief explanation. First, a lasso regression functions as a standard least squares regression but removes independent variables that have little explanatory power over the dependent variable. The double-selection technique performs two lasso regressions. In one, a lasso regression identifies the set of explanatory variables to create a restricted model of the average objective success of a U.S. intervention. Another lasso regression produces a model specification that explains the likelihood that an intervention is a U.S.-led coalition. The explanatory variables that appear in both models constitute the final, double-selection model. Double-selection lasso only produces test statistics for the coefficient of interest (i.e., the coalition variable’s coefficient) determining whether the estimated effect is statistically significant or insignificant.

The variables used in this technique and their sources are described in Table 3.6, in which we list all variables used in the double-selection lasso procedure. (In Chapter Six, we will describe which are selected into the model specification and which are omitted.) Each variable (or set of variables) is included because of our expectation, based on past work and existing literature, that it might affect intervention success. First, we use a dummy for whether the intervention is coalition-based. This is the key explanatory variable because we wish to assess whether coalitions provide a higher likelihood of the United States successfully achieving its political objectives. As potential covariates for the double-selection lasso procedure, we use dummies for major activity

³¹ Alexandre Belloni, Victor Chernozhukov, and Christian Hansen, “Inference on Treatment Effects After Selection Among High-Dimensional Controls,” *Review of Economic Studies*, Vol. 81, No. 2, 2014.

Table 3.6
Key Variables for Assessing Relative Success of Coalition Interventions

Variable	Measure	Source
Outcomes of Interest		
Intervention success	Average political objective success	Kavanagh et al., 2019
	Difference in per capita income, five years after intervention	Maddison Project Database, 2018
Explanatory factors		
Type of intervention	Coalition or unilateral	RUCID
Shared interest	Average coalition member's UN voting harmony	UN voting data
Experience	Sum of coalition members' past participation in U.S. coalitions	UN voting data
Size	Number of partners in coalition; number of major partners in coalition	RUCID
Controls		
Order	Ordered number of the intervention when ranked first to last	RUCID
Activity	Activity type indicators	RUCID
Region	Region indicators	RUCID
Degree of threat	Count of territorial claims of target state as aggressor	COW (territorial claims)
U.S.-target relationship	Target country–U.S. alliance indicator	COW
Operational demand	Average annual U.S. troops deployed in intervention	RUCID
Duration	Duration of intervention in months	RUCID
Number of objectives	Number of objectives the intervention pursues	RUCID

types and regions because we expect that the difficulty of achieving key political objectives will vary across intervention types and locations. Third, we provide controls for the average number of U.S. troops deployed and the duration of U.S. involvement in the intervention, which serve as proxies for operational demands. The sum of territorial claims that the target country has challenged (*Territory claims [challenger]*) captures the degree of threat. Finally, the end of the Cold War drastically shifted the political and military landscape in ways that influence the set of objectives the United States pursues and, in turn, the likelihood of success. Thus, we use a post–Cold War indicator to control for this confounder.

We augment this analysis with two additional model specifications. The first is a simple univariate regression of average objective success on the coalition indicator (i.e.,

a t -test comparing the coalition's distribution of average objective success with the unilateral distribution). In a more traditional approach, we construct a simple multivariate model for our second specification with a subset of the potential covariates already listed: post–Cold War indicator; a combat and COIN indicator; and indicators for stability, deterrence, and advisory. Average U.S. troop deployment again serves as a proxy for operational demand; finally, indicators for Europe and East Asia complete the model.

Qualitative Analysis

Because our statistical analysis has shortcomings and because we cannot evaluate all of the hypotheses using quantitative methods, we supplement our regressions with five in-depth case studies to further assess the research hypotheses. Specifically, we use the case studies to collect and evaluate additional evidence on each of the hypotheses, to supplement the quantitative analysis where such analysis exists, and to fill gaps for hypotheses that cannot be tested with the statistical analysis. Case studies are useful in this instance because they can provide the nuance and rich contextual detail that statistics lack. Our case studies do not attempt to cover all details about a given intervention but instead focus on a specific set of questions in each case:

- What was the purpose of the intervention?
- What was the composition of the coalition? What activities did partners participate in?
- Did partners adopt U.S. objectives or have their own?
- Why did the United States choose to act through a coalition? Why did other states choose to join the coalition?
- What states chose not to join the coalition?
- What were the challenges and successes of the coalition?

We used the information collected about each case to address the hypotheses we have outlined.

Selecting Data

To select our material for analysis, we considered several criteria. First, we wanted to choose a set of interventions that were reasonably diverse in terms of period, activity, region, and size. Based on our review of existing literature and past analysis, we expected that coalitions would face different dynamics and operate differently depending on the operational environment and demands and the number of coalition partners. Different types of operations that involve different numbers of players are likely to present different challenges and to have different strengths and weaknesses. Our first step was to break all 37 coalitions along these dimensions and into categories based on the number of contributors and the activity type of the intervention. We focused our attention on four different activities, the four most common across the coalition situations in the dataset: stability operations, combat, deterrence,

and train-and-assist missions. We also considered three coalition sizes: small (those with fewer than five partners), medium (those with 5–15 partners), and large (those with more than 15 major contributors). These categories were drawn by observing and making use of the natural cut points in the data. Table 3.7 maps out the categories created as a result of this analysis and how interventions fall within these different categories.

Based on this initial binning, we observed that very few U.S. coalitions have had fewer than five major contributors. An interesting observation in itself, this led us to focus on medium and larger coalitions. We then selected from among the coalitions in our dataset to capture as much of the analytical space as possible. Although seeking regional and temporal diversity, we also had a bias toward more-contemporary interventions that would take into account more-recent regional dynamics and challenges to unilateral action and the current status of U.S. alliances and partnerships. We assessed that these situations would provide useful and relevant insights for policymakers. This led us to select five case studies, mapped across the analytical space in Table 3.8.

One possible limitation of this approach to case selection is that all five case studies are coalition situations, and none is a unilateral intervention that could be used as a comparison to assess the different hypotheses. Although this is a fair critique, we address these limitations in a few specific ways. First, two of our coalition case studies allow us to partially consider the relative value of unilateral action. The initial part of the intervention in Afghanistan involved minimal partnership. The postwar occupation of Japan involved partners from the British Commonwealth, but they played a peripheral role and dropped out of the coalition after a relatively short period. Second, in our case study analysis, we also weave in examples from unilateral operations. We do not investigate these operations in as much detail in this report, but we have explored them to a greater extent in previous work and so draw on these to supplement the in-depth case work completed specifically for this report.

Still, the case analysis will have certain limitations. First, drawing on only five case studies, we cannot easily generalize to the full universe of coalition situations. We can assess the hypotheses on the basis of the five case studies we have and other examples, and we can weave our observations alongside our quantitative findings. Second, our case studies are somewhat biased toward recent operations in the Middle East and South Asia. In part, this is intentional. We sought to draw lessons and observations from past U.S. experience and for the past 20 years, this has been the primary U.S. experience. However, this does further constrain the generalizability of the situations. Because the future might be very different from the past, and given the shifts in the geopolitical system, we will need to think carefully about how the observations made here might apply to possible future coalitions.³² Box 3.2 lists the case studies, with background about each.

³² Because EFP is a relatively new intervention, assessing its success, even against only U.S. objectives, might be difficult.

Table 3.7
Case Selection Matrix

	Fewer Than 5 Major Contributors	5–15 Major Contributors	More Than 15 Contributors
Combat	U.S.-Led Invasion of Iraq (2/4)	- Vietnam War (5/7) - U.S.-Led Invasion of Grenada (1/7) - U.S.-Led Invasion of Afghanistan (4/13) - NATO Bosnian Air Campaign (7/15) - NATO Kosovo Air Campaign (10/15)	- Korean War (12/22) - Gulf War (14/40) - NATO-Led Libya Air Campaign (8/18)
Stability ops	- Lebanese Civil War (2/4) - Western Allied Occupation of Austria (post-WWII) (2/3)	- U.S.-Led Occupation of Japan (post-WWII) (4/5) - Western Allied Occupation of Germany (post-WWII) (3/7) - U.S.-Led Occupation of Dominican Republic (4/7)	- U.S.-Led Occupation of Iraq (post-combat phase) (10/39) - U.S.-Led Occupation of Afghanistan (post-combat phase) (10/50) - Post-Armistice Peacekeeping and Stability Operations in South Korea (10/20) - ECOWAS/UN-Led Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Liberia (7/22) - Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Haiti (I) (5/23) - Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Haiti (II) (9/24) - Rwandan Genocide Relief and UN-Led Peacekeeping Mission (13/25) - UN Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Croatia (11/27) - NATO Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Kosovo (11/28) - Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Somalia (13/30) - UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Congo (9/34) - UN Peacekeeping and NATO No-Fly Zone/Embargo Enforcement During Bosnian War (14/35) - NATO/EU Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Bosnia (11/39)
Deterrence	U.S.-Led Deterrence Force in S. Iraq and the Gulf (2/3)	- Allied Berlin Airlift (1/6) - U.S./UN Deterrence Force in Macedonia (1/6) - MFO in Sinai (2/12) - U.S.-Led Peacekeeping and Deterrence Force in N. Iraq and Turkey (6/13) - Tanker War/Kuwaiti Oil Tanker Protection (5/7) - CJTF-HOA	- U.S.-Led Deterrence Force in the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations (pre-invasion phase) (16/40) - NATO/EU Deterrence of Russian Aggression in Europe/Black Sea/Baltics Air Policing (17)
Train and assist			U.S.-Led Multinational Coalition Against ISIS in Iraq and Syria (17/27)
Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief			Tsunami Relief in the Indian Ocean

NOTE: Numbers in parentheses are the numbers of major/minor partners.

Table 3.8
Final Case Study Selection

	Combat/COIN	Stabilization	Train and Assist	Deterrence
Small < 5 partners	Very few U.S. coalitions fall into these categories			
Medium 5–15 partners	Afghanistan (2001–early 2002)	Post-WWII occupation of Japan (1946–1952)		Post-WWII occupation of Japan (1946–1952)
Large > 15 partners	Gulf War (1991)	Afghanistan (2002–ongoing)	Operation Inherent Resolve (2014– ongoing)	Enhanced Force Presence (Europe) (2014–ongoing)

In Figures 3.1–3.5, we provide details on U.S. and coalition participation in each of these five interventions. These graphs are useful for understanding the numbers of major partners in each coalition and the size and relative distribution of burdens among those partners. Our analysis of the case studies will be woven through our assessment of each of the 13 hypotheses.

Summary

This chapter summarizes our methodological approach to assessing the three research questions described in Chapter Two. As described, the foundation of the analysis in this report is a dataset of 37 coalition interventions that included the United States, spanning the period from 1946 to 2018. We were able to leverage a larger dataset of U.S. military interventions that also included unilateral interventions conducted over this same period. For each coalition, we recorded information on the number of partners, the size and nature of that partner’s involvement, and the duration of involvement. Where possible, we also captured information on national caveats on the use of forces. Our data also included information on whether an IGO sponsored or led the coalition and on the activities conducted by the coalition and by the partner, which often overlap. We discussed the qualitative and quantitative methods that we combined to assess each hypothesis specified in Chapter Two. Although our analysis of most hypotheses draws from both methods, some we could only assess using one approach or the other. In terms of quantitative analysis, each of our research questions requires a different type of model and a slightly different dataset. This chapter also describes each approach, including the variables used in each model. We provide additional detail on the data in Appendixes A and B and on the quantitative methodologies in Appendix C. Finally, we discuss our approach to case selection and then the ultimate selection of case studies for the qualitative analysis. We chose a broadly representative set of data that could provide a diverse set of insights to address our research questions.

Box 3.2**Case Study Details and Coalition Composition Background**

Case	Background
Occupation of Japan 1945–1952	Following the Allied victory in World War II, Allied forces occupied Japan from 1945 to 1952—concluding with a final peace treaty. The mission of the occupation primarily focused on the democratization, demilitarization, disarmament, and economic reconstruction of Japanese society. Under the leadership of U.S. forces, the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF)—composed of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and India—administered roughly 49,000 square kilometers in southern Japan. (This is one of only three instances in our dataset in which every partner qualified as a major contributor.) At its peak in 1947, the BCOF boasted roughly 37,000 troops, including air, naval, and ground assets, though the size of this non-U.S. contingent dwindled to only a couple thousand in the final years before BCOF withdrawal (Figure 3.1). Despite the overall success of the occupation, the BCOF's legacy is tempered by its exclusion from the military government and the short tenure of the coalition.
Gulf War 1990–1991	Forty nations from six continents joined the Gulf War coalition to oust Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991, making it the largest (measured by non-U.S. troop numbers) and most diverse coalition since the end of WWII. (Measured by number of troop-contributing partners, only the U.S.- and NATO-led coalition in Afghanistan has exceeded the 1991 Gulf War coalition.) Thirteen of the 39 non-U.S. and non-host partners qualified as major contributors during Desert Storm—seven of which (the United Kingdom, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, France, Bangladesh, and Pakistan) easily qualified on ground contributions alone; two additional contributors (Qatar and Morocco) were borderline qualifiers based on ground contributions; and four others (Bahrain, Canada, Italy, and the UAE) qualified on the basis of kinetic airstrikes.^a The United States deployed between 440,000 and 540,000 troops to lead the offensive effort, although a peak of perhaps as many as 147,000–173,000 combined ally troops helped bolster legitimacy, enforce sanctions against Iraq, sustain logistics, support air and ground assaults, liberate Kuwaiti City, and, ultimately, defeat Saddam quickly (Figure 3.2).
Afghanistan War 2001–ongoing	Having gone on for nearly two decades, ongoing stability operations in Afghanistan represent not only the largest U.S. coalition in history (measured by the number of troop-contributing nations) but also the fourth longest-running U.S. coalition in history (behind only peacekeeping operations in Sinai/MFO, Bosnia, and Kosovo). This is significant because the United States and its partners did not anticipate staying in theater for as long as they have; repeatedly, the coalition has watched its progress reverse. (At the time of this writing, the group was negotiating again with the Taliban.) In the early days of the war, the United States was able to build a coalition because it signaled wide support for the U.S. invasion and helped political processes. Of the 48 non-U.S. and non-host nations to contribute troops, ten easily qualified as major contributors based on ground criteria (Canada, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey, Romania, and the United Kingdom); two minor contributors barely missed our ground size thresholds as major contributors (Australia and Spain); 22 other minor contributors provided between 100 and 1,000 troops; and 14 minor contributors provided token contingents of fewer than 100 troops. In 2011, total non-U.S. and non-host contributions peaked at around 43,000—compared with nearly 100,000 U.S. forces (Figure 3.3). Although different partners brought their own views of the political objectives, mission, and mandate to the table—and many also imposed restrictions on the use of their forces, complicating the war effort—the coalition has nonetheless been fairly cohesive. Given the duration of the conflict, this is not to be taken for granted and is noteworthy. However, this has not translated into a desirable military situation for the coalition.

Box 3.2—Continued

Case	Background
NATO Deterrence of Russia in Europe 2014–ongoing	The United States, in addition to its own post-Crimea unilateral and bilateral efforts to deter Russian aggression in Eastern Europe (such as Operation Atlantic Resolve), has supported and participated in several multinational missions led and organized by NATO and intended to enhance the alliance’s deterrence posture. These were the EFP, consisting of multinational battalion-sized ground forces based in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland—and stepped-up air policing missions in the same countries plus Romania and Iceland. These missions enhance deterrence, signal alliance solidarity, and provide participants with opportunities to improve their interoperability and other military capabilities. The rotational nature of national contingent deployments under enhanced air policing missions (since 2014) and EFP (since 2017) present some challenges for data analysis, but we found that, of 21 non-U.S. troop-contributing nations providing some 2,000–5,000 foreign-deployed troops, 11 qualified as major contributors based on troop size deployments (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, and the United Kingdom); six relatively smaller contributors barely missed the major contributor size threshold (Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, and Slovakia); and four other token partners have provided fewer than 100 troops at any given time (Albania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, and Slovenia). Although we simultaneously consider the 20,000- to 30,000-strong forward-deployed U.S. footprint deployed under bilateral basing agreements in Europe as part of the coalition effort to deter Russia, we note that the narrower U.S. contribution to EFP and air policing has been one of relative parity, especially compared with most U.S. coalition experiences (Figure 3.4).
Global Coalition Against ISIS, 2014–ongoing	The Global Coalition Against ISIS is the international umbrella for the U.S.-led effort to defeat ISIS. At peak, the coalition encompassed more than 80 members providing some type of support, including 29 countries directly providing ground troops, aircraft, or ships. The coalition’s military contributions began with airstrikes in 2014 but quickly expanded to include training and advising local ground forces and providing key enablers, such as intelligence and surface fires. Coalition members worked through Iraqi and Syrian partners rather than engaging in high-risk ground combat. Using available unclassified data, we estimate that the total number of non-U.S. and non-host coalition forces deployed to Iraq and Syria ranged from a low of less than 3,000 in 2014 to upward of about 7,000 by 2018, compared with some 2,000 to 9,000 U.S. boots on the ground throughout these years (Figure 3.5). Notably, of the 29 U.S. military partners involved, 16 qualified as major contributors—the most of any case between 1946 and 2018. Of these, seven non-U.S. and non-host countries easily qualified as major contributors based on their ground force contributions (Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom); three qualified as “borderline” major contributors based on troop size deployments (Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands); and five regional partners qualified as major contributors because of kinetic airstrikes, though they did not deploy ground forces abroad (Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE). Despite some differences in approach, the coalition generally remained cohesive throughout the military campaign. The notable exception was Turkey, which broke with coalition preferences to invade northern Syria on multiple occasions from 2018 onward.

SOURCES: Association of the U.S. Army, *Special Report: Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm: The Logistics Perspective*, 1991; Elliot Cohen, ed., *Gulf War: Air Power Survey: A Statistical Compendium and Chronology*, Vol. V, *A Statistical Compendium and Chronology*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993; Anthony Cordesman, *Lessons of the Gulf War: 1990–1991*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2013; Defense Manpower Data Center, Location Country Database, undated.

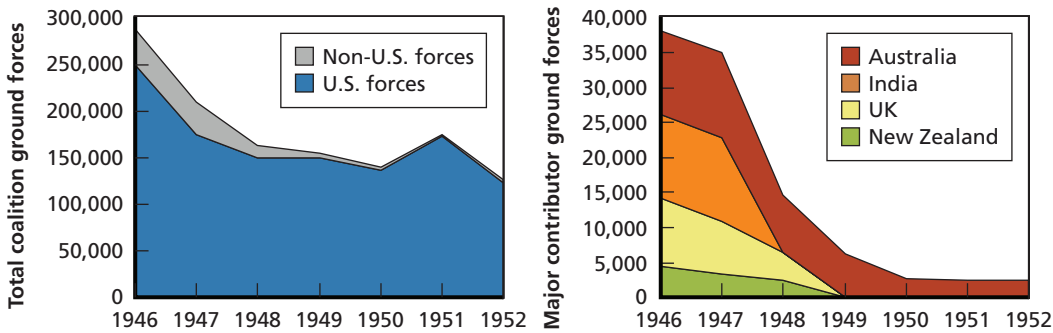
Box 3.2—Continued

(material gathered 2018; no longer available); Joseph Englehardt, *Desert Shield and Desert Storm: A Chronology and Troop List for the 1990–1991 Persian Gulf Crisis*, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, ISSI Special Report, 1991; Arnold G. Fisch, Jr., *Military Government in the Ryuku Islands, 1945–1950*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army, Center of Military History, 1988; Tim Hewish, *The Commonwealth's Call to Duty*, London: Commonwealth Exchange, 2015; Tim Kane, "Global US Troop Deployments, 1950–2003," Washington, D.C., Heritage Foundation, troop deployment database, October 2004; Benjamin S. Lambeth, *The Winning of Air Supremacy in Operation Desert Storm*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, P-7837, 1993; "More Data From Desert Storm," *Air Force Magazine*, January 1996; Ian S. Livingston, Heather L. Messera, and Michael O'Hanlon, *Afghanistan Index*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, May 28, 2010; Ian S. Livingston and Michael O'Hanlon, *Afghanistan Index*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, September 29, 2017; NATO, "NATO and Afghanistan: RSM Placemats Archive," webpage, 2007–2020; NATO, "NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence," factsheets, 2019–2020; Michael E. O'Hanlon and Adriana Lins de Albuquerque, *Afghanistan Index*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, February 23, 2005; RUCID; Iwane Shibuya, *Australian Participation in the Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952*, doctoral thesis, Murdoch University, Murdoch, Australia, 2015; Richard Stewart, *War in the Persian Gulf: Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, August 1990–March 1991*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army, Center of Military History, 2010; Michael Tong, "Analysis: NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence: One Year On," *The Military Balance*, February 22, 2018; U.S. Navy, "U.S. Navy in Desert Shield/Desert Storm: Appendix C, Allied Participation and Contributions," webpage, Naval History and Heritage Command website, November 30, 2016; James Winnefeld, Preston Niblack, and Dana J. Johnson, *A League of Airmen: U.S. Air Power in the Gulf War*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MR-343-AF, 1994; James Wood, *The Forgotten Force: The Australian Military Contribution to the Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952*, Canberra, Australia: Australian War Memorial, 1998.

^a In the case of Desert Storm (and Desert Shield), determination of major and minor partners was complicated conceptually by the role that Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries played, both as quasi-host nations and as foreign interveners. To ensure conceptual consistency with our other data, we have only counted the ground troops that these countries (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Bahrain, and Oman) deployed abroad. For instance, Saudi Arabia might have deployed upward 50,000 troops to its southeastern border, but, by our estimates, only about 20,000 Saudi troops entered Kuwait during Desert Storm. We thus only count foreign-deployed troop contributions. Turkey also did not qualify as a major coalition ground partner because Turkish troops amassed along its border areas but never crossed into northern Iraq during the war. We also note that Kuwait's remaining military units fought in the coalition, but we consider Kuwait the primary host nation in this case.

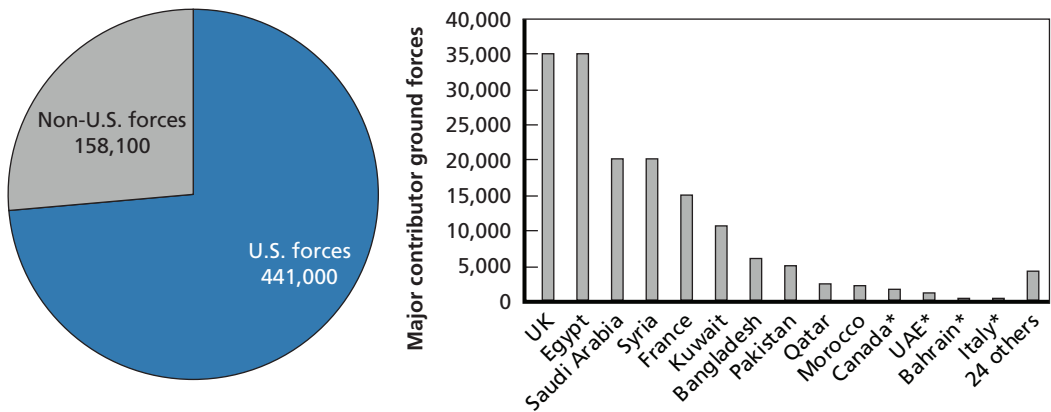
The next three chapters move into our analysis of the three research questions and sets of hypotheses. Each chapter considers a different question: first, the conditions under which the United States joins coalitions; second, the factors that drive partners to contribute to coalitions; and, finally, the factors that make coalition interventions more or less successful.

Figure 3.1
U.S. Versus Coalition Ground Troop Contributions in the Occupation of Japan (1945–1952)



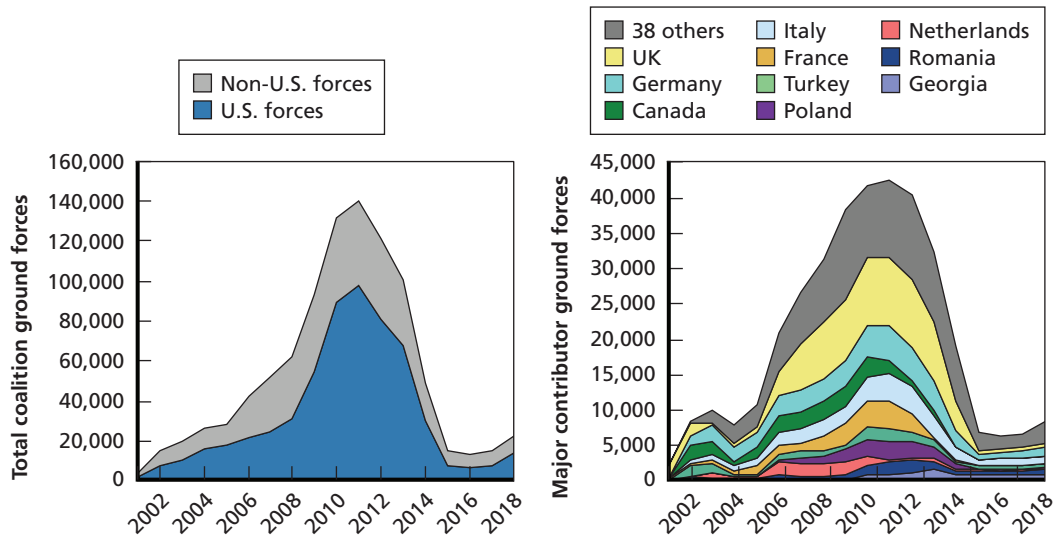
SOURCES: DMDC, undated; Fisch, 1988; Hewish, 2015; Kane, 2004; RUCID; Shibuya, 2015; Wood, 1998.

Figure 3.2
U.S. Versus Coalition Ground Troop Contributions in Operation Desert Storm (1991)

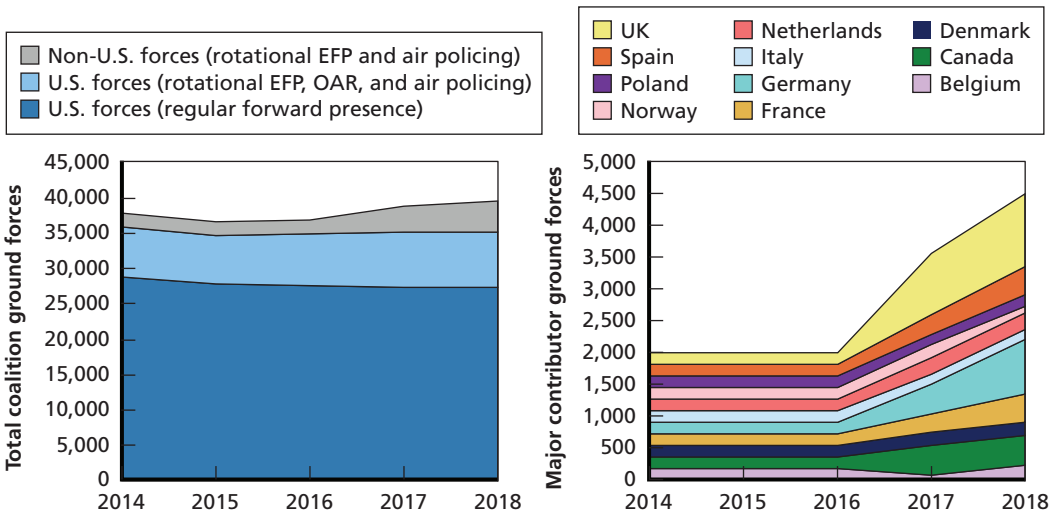


SOURCES: Association of the U.S. Army, 1991; Cohen, 1993; Cordesman, 2013; Englehardt, 1991; RUCID; Stewart, 2010; U.S. Navy, 2016; Winnefeld, Niblack, and Johnson, 1994.

NOTE: Canada, UAE, Bahrain, and Italy qualify as major contributors based on kinetic air activities, not size of ground forces.

Figure 3.3**U.S. Versus Coalition Ground Troop Contributions in Afghanistan (2001–2018)**

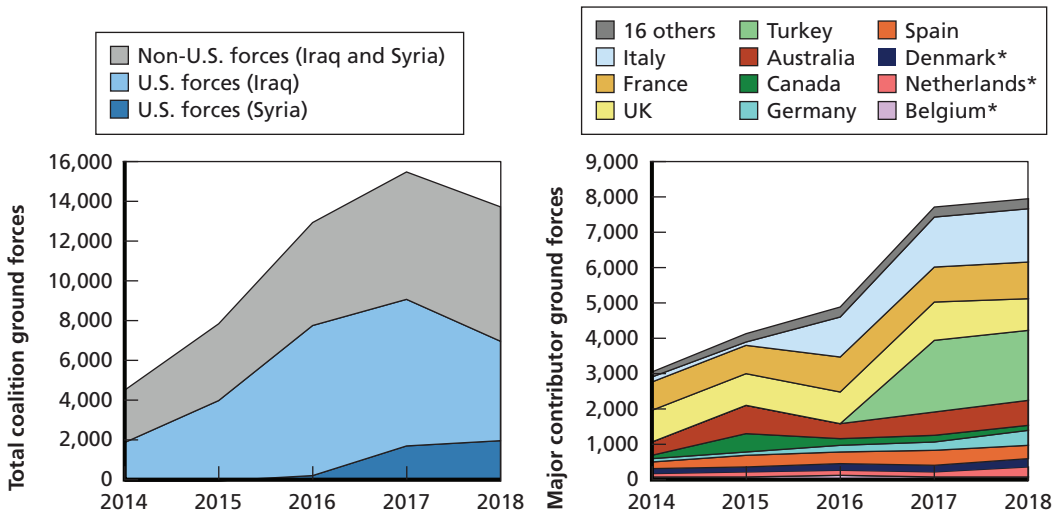
SOURCES: Livingston, Messera, and O'Hanlon, 2010; Livingston and O'Hanlon, 2017; O'Hanlon and Lins de Albuquerque, 2005; IISS, 1961–2018; NATO, 2007–2020; RUCID.

Figure 3.4**U.S. Versus Coalition Ground Troop Contributions in Post-Crimea Eastern European Deterrence Missions (2014–2018)**

SOURCES: IISS, 1961–2018; RUCID; Tong, 2018.

NOTE: Prior to the beginning of NATO's EFP deployments, we have assumed approximately 150–200 personnel deployed annually as part of rotational air policing missions for each of the major NATO contributors.

Figure 3.5
U.S. Versus Coalition Ground Troop Contributions in Iraq and Syria (2014–2018)



SOURCES: IISS, 1961–2018; RUCID.

NOTES: Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands were assessed as borderline major contributors based on the number of troops deployed in the ground domain; however, in the air domain, these countries were assessed as clear major contributors based on kinetic airstrikes conducted. Regional partners Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and UAE also qualified as major contributors based on airstrikes conducted, but they did not deploy ground troops abroad and so are not displayed in this figure.

When Does the United States Use Coalitions?

In this chapter, we consider our first five hypotheses, specifically assessing when and why the United States chooses to work through coalitions, either by joining them or by forming them. We consider the quantitative and qualitative evidence for each hypothesis, working through all five hypotheses. We focus only on evidence for and against one hypothesis at a time; we do not weigh evidence across hypotheses to determine the most strongly supported explanation. In the summary at the end of the chapter, we provide some assessment of which hypotheses seem to receive the most and the least support. However, there is not one relevant explanation for most findings; rather there are several that combine to produce the results we observe. Our approach allows us to consider a wider set of possible explanations but limits our ability to make assertions about the most-important or primary drivers of coalition interventions.

Table 4.1 summarizes the quantitative and qualitative results and key insights from the data for each of the first three hypotheses and suggests reasonably strong support for each. The United States seems to choose coalition operations when faced with resource-intensive operations and to use coalitions to build international support and legitimacy. On the other hand, we find less evidence that coalitions are consistently motivated by logistical considerations, such as support in remote locations, or because of concerns about domestic political support. Finally, we observe that coalitions seem somewhat less likely when the threat is severe, direct, and immediate to the United States, but this appears to be contingent on the United States being able to handle the operational burdens on its own.

Table 4.1
U.S. Coalition Decisionmaking: Summary

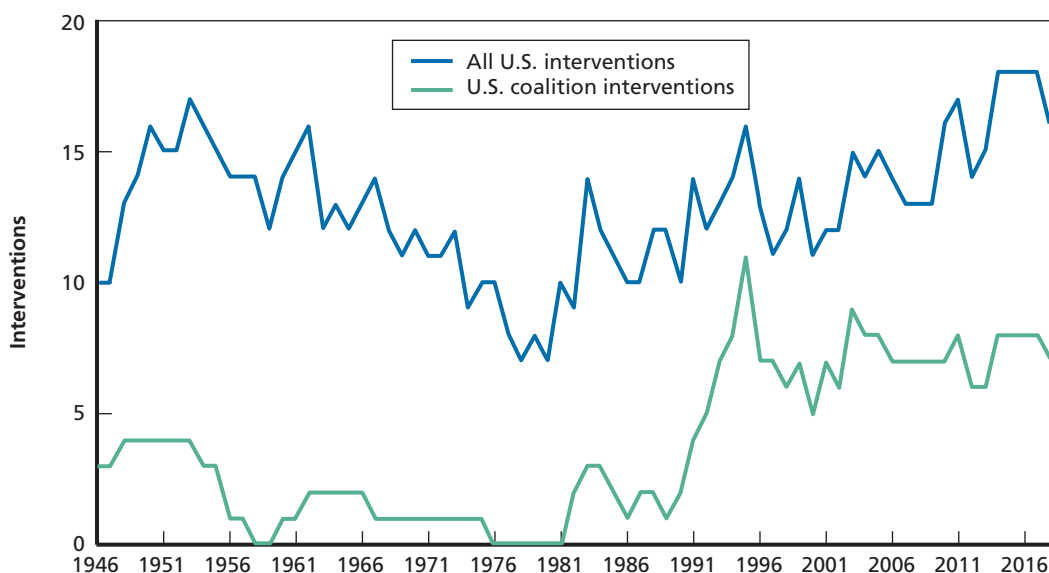
Results	H1 Burden-sharing	H2 Geography	H3 International Legitimacy	H4 Domestic Politics	H5 Degree of Threat
Quantitative	Supported	None	Supported	None	None
Qualitative	Supported	Mixed	Supported	Mixed	Mixed

Trends in U.S. Coalitions

As a starting point, and before moving into an assessment of hypotheses, we consider trends in U.S. coalition use between 1946 and 2018. Figure 4.1 plots the total number of U.S. interventions and the number of U.S. coalition interventions over time, highlighting the increase in the number of U.S. coalition interventions both in absolute terms and as a proportion of total interventions. Prior to the end of the Cold War, only a handful of U.S. interventions involved coalition partners. Starting in the 1990s, coalitions have made up anywhere from one-third to more than two-thirds of total U.S. military interventions.

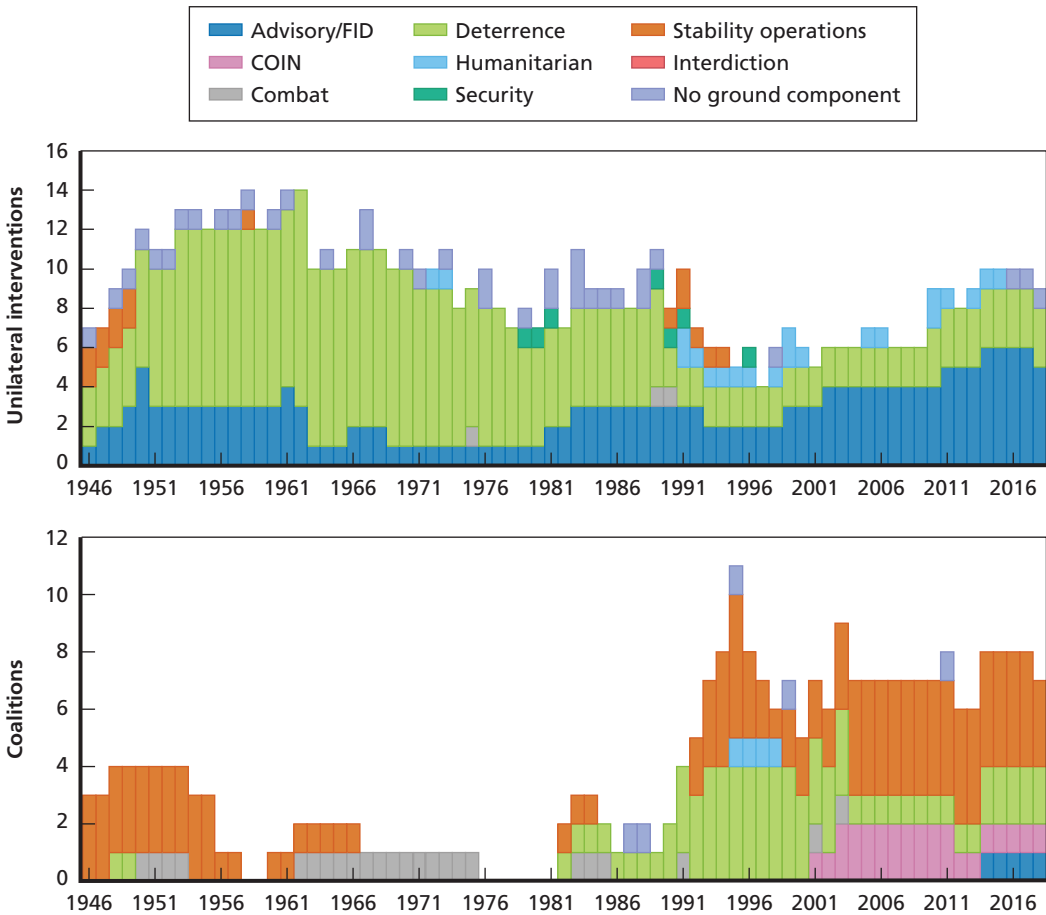
Use of coalition interventions has also varied across regions and in terms of activity type both over time and when compared with unilateral interventions. Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of interventions over time by activity type for coalition and noncoalition interventions. There are a few notable observations. First, coalition interventions have most often involved stability operations, COIN, or deterrence. There have also been some coalition humanitarian efforts (but few in response to natural disasters). Although coalition combat missions have not been as common, it is notable that almost all U.S. combat operations that have occurred have involved coalitions. In other words, involvement in combat is rare for U.S. military forces overall—but when it occurs, coalitions are almost always involved. This might be because of the operational demands of such missions or because of the higher legitimacy requirements when combat is involved. Figure 4.3 shows a similar figure focused on region. Not surprisingly, U.S. coalition missions between 1946 and 2018 have been concentrated

Figure 4.1
U.S. Total and Coalition Interventions



NOTE: Total coalition interventions: 37.

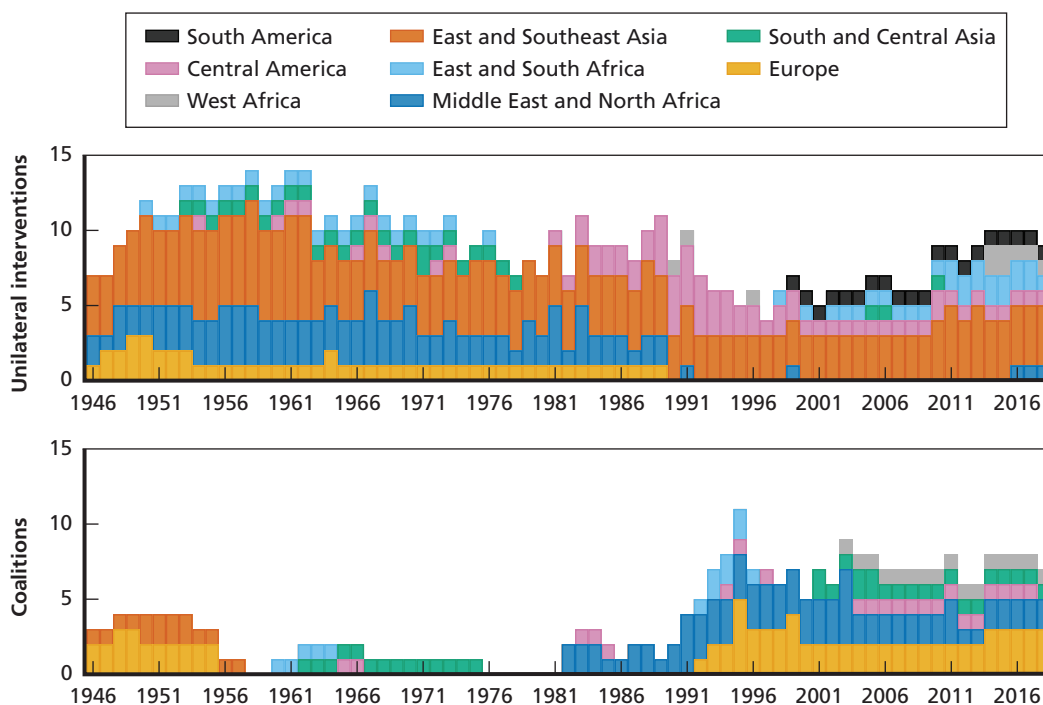
Figure 4.2
U.S. Unilateral and Coalition Interventions over Time, by Ground Activity Type (1945–2018)



NOTE: Total coalition interventions: 37.

in two main regions (and those of high strategic importance), the Middle East and Europe. Additional coalition engagement has occurred in Central Asia and Central America. In contrast, U.S. unilateral missions in recent years have been primarily in East and Southeast Asia and Central America. During the Cold War, unilateral missions in the Middle East and East and Southeast Asia were also common. In short, as the summary statistics in Figures 4.2 and 4.3 reflect, the activity type and regional “profiles” of U.S. unilateral and coalition operations have differed significantly since World War II.

However, even as the United States has increased its reliance on coalition interventions, it has continued to send the lion’s share of troops to most interventions in which it is involved. Figure 4.4 shows the total number of troops (U.S. and non-U.S.) involved in U.S. coalitions over time from 1946 to 2018. The figure underscores that,

Figure 4.3**U.S. Unilateral and Coalition Interventions over Time, by Region (1946–2018)**

NOTES: Total coalition interventions: 37. Central America includes the Caribbean and Mexico. East and Southeast Asia includes Oceania.

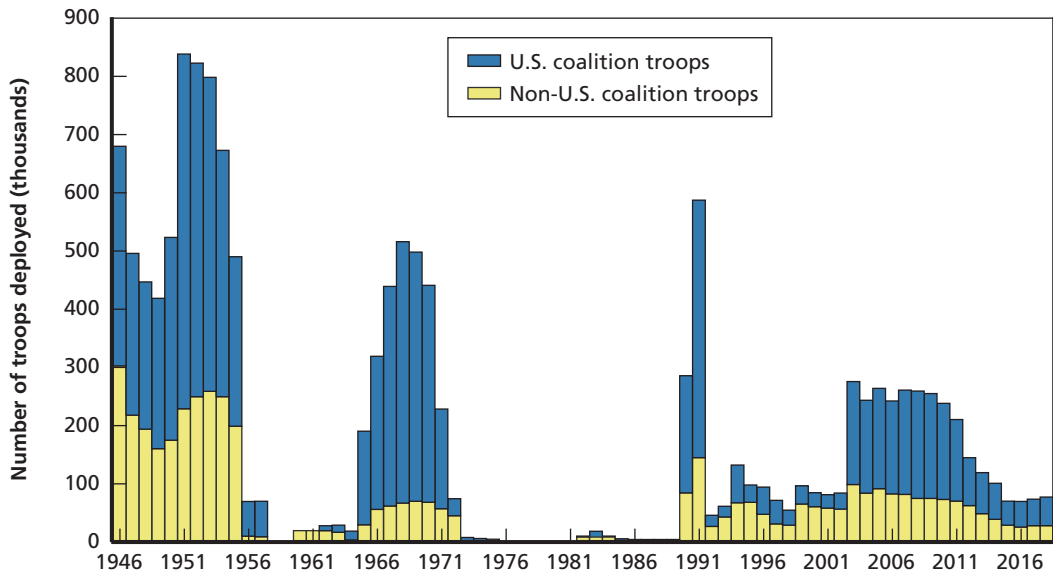
although coalitions certainly might reduce the burden placed on U.S. forces in many ways, U.S. forces continue to far outnumber partner forces in U.S. coalition operations. This has been true across the period with some small exceptions, including in the mid-1990s driven by operations in the Balkans. More recently, the imbalance has been slightly reduced as the number of U.S. and partner forces involved in coalition operations has declined.

In the next section of this chapter, we explore the reasons why the United States might have increasingly gravitated toward the use of coalitions over time.

Assessing the Hypotheses

To explore the effects of the hypothesized explanatory variables (i.e., hypotheses H1–H5), we construct a logit model where the outcome variable is the coalition indicator, equal to 1 if the intervention is a coalition and 0 if the United States acts unilaterally. The explanatory variables are listed in Table 3.5; their estimated effects are listed in Box 4.1. The estimated effects are expressed in percentage point changes to the prob-

Figure 4.4
Total Troops Deployed in U.S. Coalition Interventions over Time (1946–2018)



NOTES: Total coalition interventions: 37. Each bar represents total number of forces deployed in interventions involving the United States in each year.

Box 4.1
Signposts of U.S. Coalitions

Independent Variable	% Change in Coalition Likelihood
Kinetic indicator	63.7****
Distance from U.S. to target country (1,000 km)	1.6
Post-Cold War indicator	44.8****
Post-9/11 indicator	19.0**
Years to presidential election	-5.7
Presidential approval ratings (%)	-0.4
Territorial claims of target state as aggressor	-11.4
Observations	115
Pseudo <i>R</i> -squared	0.348

NOTES: Dependent variable is binary and indicates a coalition or unilateral intervention. Results presented are estimated marginal effects from a logistic regression. The unconditional probability of a coalition intervention is 32.2% (37/115).

* $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

ability of a coalition. We assess each hypothesis in turn, highlighting specific results in each section. Full, uninterpreted regression coefficients and the results of alternative models can be found in Appendix C.

H1. Burden-Sharing

The first hypothesis is that coalitions are more likely where the operational demands are high, or at least where they are higher than the United States can or wants to carry alone. We find strong support for this explanation across the qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Quantitative Results

We operationalize *operational demands* by an indicator that identifies the intervention as one involving kinetic activities—i.e., combat, COIN, or stabilization missions—because such missions tend to have the most-significant operational demands. Our analysis finds significant evidence that coalitions are more likely when the intervention involves kinetic operations. The United States is more than 60 percent more likely to build a coalition when faced with kinetic operations (as opposed to nonkinetic types—e.g., deterrence, humanitarian, security), perhaps due to their greater operational demands. There are many reasons why such missions might be more operationally demanding, both in terms of numbers of forces and resources required, and our results suggest that the United States is more likely to turn to coalitions in these types of situations. It is worth noting that all of the most-sizable U.S. interventions have involved kinetic activity. For example, the United States employs approximately 58,000 troops on average in kinetic operations; nonkinetic interventions require only one-tenth (5,000) on average—which suggests that the kinetic variable is a good proxy of the operational burden that the United States will ultimately face in an impending intervention. Box 4.2 distills the quantitative results from Box 4.1 to the relevant rows.

Box 4.2
Signposts of U.S. Coalitions: Burden-Sharing

Independent Variable	% Change in Coalition Likelihood
Kinetic indicator	63.7****
Observations	115
Pseudo R-squared	0.348

NOTES: Dependent variable is binary and indicates a coalition or unilateral intervention. Results presented are estimated marginal effects from a logistic regression. The unconditional probability of a coalition intervention is 32.2% (37/115).
**** $p < 0.01$.

However, there are still limits to what we can say with the analysis presented here. An ideal empirical analysis would uncover the causal relationship between perceived burden and the likelihood that the United States builds a coalition to share the burden. But burden, perceived or actual, is not assigned randomly, and we lack the data and quasi-experimental setting to confidently circumvent the confounding nonrandomness. Instead, we should think of the estimated coefficients as conditional correlations. For instance, we can confidently assert that there is a statistically significant correlation between burden as measured by type of activity and the decision of the United States to build a coalition, even when controlling for intervention region, the degree of threat, or political period.

Qualitative Results

Turning to the qualitative results, we have clear evidence of the ways in which the United States has used coalitions to spread the operational burdens of warfare, stabilization, and deterrence tasks.

The U.S. rationale behind accepting British support in the postwar occupation of Japan rested on the expectation that additional manpower would be needed. Initially, the United States was hesitant about outside influences in a region it viewed as critical to its future interests. The United States fundamentally sought to be the sole and principal power in Asia, which would be reflected in its policies in the occupation of Japan. Nevertheless, given the initial estimates and expectations of a generational and demanding occupation, the United States reluctantly accepted involvement of the British Commonwealth.¹

The same burden-sharing rationale drove requests for support in the Gulf War. Specifically, the United States feared a strong Iraqi response and believed a coalition was necessary to ensure the manpower and capabilities needed to overtake Saddam (although, ultimately, the requirements of such a mission were drastically overestimated). Contributions from allies were significant in this intervention. The Gulf War Coalition was composed of 38 nations. At peak deployment, the United States had 540,000 total troops in the Kuwait theater—more than triple the 173,000 troops deployed by all other contributors combined. The United Kingdom and Egypt contributed the second highest troop numbers with 35,000 each, followed by Saudi Arabia with 20,000–40,000, Syria with 20,000, France with 15,000–20,000, Kuwait with 10,500–14,000, Bangladesh with 6,000, and Pakistan with 5,000. U.S. leaders at the time knew that they could not rely on another power to take the needed steps in the Middle East to contain Saddam's aggression, but they also feared a long, drawn out conflict that would be a significant drain on U.S. military resources.² Working

¹ Peter Bates, *Japan and the British Commonwealth Occupation Force 1946–52*, New York: Brassey's (UK) Ltd., 1993, p. 218; Wood, 1998, pp. 6–7.

² Bennet, Leppgold, and Unger, 1994, p. 51.

through a coalition allowed principals in Washington to pursue their policy objectives while reducing the cost and risk that they had to assume. It is notable that partners contributed not only ground forces but also significant numbers of air and naval assets to the intervention.

In the instance of the EFP, the United States similarly relied on burden-sharing from NATO allies. In this instance, burden-sharing has been central to U.S. participation as President Donald Trump and his administration made it clear to NATO allies that they expected greater allied participation and contribution and that the United States was not willing to carry all the cost to defend Europe without support. For a NATO mission, this one had extensive and equal burden-sharing. Using data compiled from a variety of sources, we estimate the range of non-U.S. NATO forces deployed annually between 2014 and 2018 to be about 2,000–5,000. If we focus more exclusively on those nations that contributed more than 5 percent of the total force, which works out to about 100 in 2016 and 200 in later years, we end up with a list of 11 countries other than the United States that qualify as major contributors: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Six countries were borderline: the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, and Slovakia. A few others appear to have deployed fewer than 100 troops at any given time: Albania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, and Slovenia. Iceland has no military but has regularly contributed a Coast Guard officer or a civilian to support the EFP. The multinational character of these missions makes them less resource intensive for both the United States and its partners, given that all contributing countries are paying for some portion of the overall costs.³

In the instance of Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR), burden-sharing was certainly a part of the rationale for coalition formation. But, given the lower operational requirements, legitimacy likely played a more central role. In most areas, the United States possessed an absolute advantage over its coalition partners in both numbers and capabilities, but it welcomed burden-sharing as a means to preserve readiness in case U.S. forces were called on to respond to different military contingencies. This was a case where, in pure military terms, the United States could have supplied the required forces on its own, but the addition of partner capabilities made the operation more palatable politically and economically. However, this is also a case where a more nuanced assessment provides a more accurate view of the operational burden than does a simple count of ground forces. In terms of air operations, OIR was on the larger side (with more than 20,000 airstrikes), and coalition partners provided key contributions—especially Australia, France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.⁴ Coalition partners pro-

³ Costs come up occasionally in Kalev Stoicescu and Pauli Järvenpää, *Contemporary Deterrence: Insights and Lessons from Enhanced Forward Presence*, Tallinn, Estonia: International Centre for Defence and Security, January 2019.

⁴ “US-Led Coalition in Iraq and Syria,” webpage, *Airwars*, undated (from the start of the campaign through June 5, 2017). All data referenced in this paragraph are drawn from the official strike releases of Combined Joint

vided aerial refueling capabilities and strike aircraft, reducing the burden on the U.S. Air Force. The coalition partners launched one-third of sorties in Iraq and a much smaller percentage in Syria—but even this level of support freed up U.S. assets to conduct steady-state operations and remain ready for another conflict. Some partners provided key niche capabilities, however, that would have been more difficult for the United States to provide on its own. For instance, just as it did during the Multinational Security Transition Command–Iraq of the mid-2000s, Italy provided a major lift to the training of Iraqi security services that report to the Ministry of Interior.⁵ Based on Italy’s experience fielding a gendarmerie force (the *Carabinieri*), which is the closest Western comparator to Iraqi forces that amount to light infantry operating under Interior authority, Italy is arguably better placed to train those forces than is the United States, which lacks experience with the gendarmerie construct. Coalition forces eased the burden on the United States in other ways as well—providing regional access to necessary airfields, hosting U.S. forces, and supporting resupply efforts.

Finally, in Afghanistan, burden-sharing after the initial phase of the conflict was over was a way to extend the reach of U.S. forces and reduce the personnel requirements placed on the U.S. military. Initially, despite an outpouring of support, the United States chose not to rely on a large coalition, accepting only small contributions of special forces and over-the-horizon air and naval support from NATO and non-NATO allies. This was largely because of the desire of military leaders to act quickly and to keep a narrow set of objectives. As then–Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld put it, “The mission’s going to determine the coalition. The coalition is not going to determine the mission because it will dumb down everything to the lowest common denominator.”⁶

But, once the first phase was over and the United States assumed the much larger objectives of reconstruction and stabilization, leaders recognized the attractiveness of relying on partners. Coalition contributions in this second phase were extensive. During the post-invasion phase of the occupation, the United States continued to maintain a large air and naval presence and 33,000 troops. All major contributors committed ground troops. The host, Afghanistan, contributed 150,000 troops, the United Kingdom 6,230, and Germany 2,610. Although the host did not initially contribute naval or air forces, it did eventually provide large air and naval forces. Canada, France, and Italy all had 1,500–2,000 troops. France and the United Kingdom had a large air and naval force; Canada and Germany contributed medium-large naval and air presences; Italy provided a large naval and medium-large air force; and the

Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve, France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Australia and Canada.

⁵ Online discussion with member of Italian *Carabinieri*, April 30, 2019.

⁶ Donald H. Rumsfeld, *Public Statements of Donald H. Rumsfeld Secretary of Defense*, Vol. 4, Arlington, Va.: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2001.

Netherlands had a medium naval force and a medium-large air force. The other major contributors—Georgia, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey, and Romania—had fewer than 1,000 troops. Turkey, Georgia, and Romania did not contribute air or naval forces, and Poland contributed a medium air force but no naval forces.

NATO partners contributed in substantively significant ways to the U.S. intervention. The coalition divided the security mission geographically, and such NATO partners as Germany, Italy, Spain, and Canada took control of key regions, helping to wrest control away from the Taliban and stabilize the country.⁷ Partners contributed to the train-and-assist mission, working with U.S. forces to build an Afghan military and train its forces. They also made meaningful contributions in facilitating field support services (logistics in particular), which was also important for cost-sharing.⁸ As Seth Johnston notes, “In terms of strategy and organization, NATO’s contributions to the international effort in Afghanistan were procedural rather than substantive. Its structures and processes facilitated multinational cooperation. But national actions mattered most.”⁹ This is not to say there were not challenges. Some NATO partners placed restrictions on their forces and others lacked the political will to send sufficient forces to truly shoulder much of the burden.¹⁰

Summary

Overall, there is strong support in the quantitative analysis and across the five case studies that a desire for burden-sharing is one of the main reasons that the United States chooses to operate through coalitions. Notably, these coalitions often reflect the balance of capabilities, with the United States shouldering the majority of the burden and partners and allies filling in niche capabilities and logistical support. This does not diminish the importance of those partners or the role of burden-sharing in coalition formation, especially if we expand the aperture to consider interventions that occurred prior to 1946 and those that the United States might face going forward in an era of great-power competition. For example, in both of the World Wars, burden-sharing was essential. There is no way that the United States could have singlehandedly defeated the powerful adversaries in either of those conflicts without support from allies. The Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the allied airlift of Berlin are other examples where U.S. resources were stretched to capacity, and the support and burden-sharing of allies was absolutely required. Thinking to the future, a conflict with a near-peer adversary, such as Russia or China, would also be likely to require support from allies. It is hard

⁷ Timo Noetzel and Benjamin Schreer, “NATO’s Vietnam? Afghanistan and the Future of the Atlantic Alliance,” *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 2009, p. 532.

⁸ Seth Johnston, “NATO’s Lessons from Afghanistan,” *Parameters*, Vol. 49, No. 3, Autumn 2019.

⁹ Johnston, 2019.

¹⁰ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, pp. 533–534; Stephen M. Saideman and David P. Auerswald. “Comparing Caveats: Understanding the Sources of National Restrictions upon NATO’s Mission in Afghanistan,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 56, No. 1, 2012.

to conceive of a major-power conflict in which allied support would not be a necessity, especially given the locations where such a conflict would be likely to occur. As a result, it seems possible that the reliance on burden-sharing and coalitions might become more common, especially in the face of major threats from near-peer adversaries.

H2. Geography

The second hypothesis is that the United States is likely to form coalitions not only when operational burden is great but also when geography creates logistical and sustainment challenges that require coalition partners and the resources, forces, and support that they provide. We do not find significant quantitative support for this explanation, but there is some evidence in the case studies that geography can matter in certain circumstances. Still, on net, it is less significant than other factors considered in our analysis.

Quantitative Analysis

Box 4.3 distills the quantitative analysis from Box 4.1 to the relevant rows. The model estimates that an additional 1,000 km from the target country increases the likelihood of a coalition by 1.6 percent, but the finding is not statistically significant at traditional levels. The p -value, which indicates the likelihood of observing the coefficient under the assumption that distance has no effect on coalition likelihood, is 0.2, too high for the 0.05 threshold required for statistical significance. Thus, we find no quantitative support for the argument that the distance between the United States and the target is associated with likelihood of coalition formation. This would suggest that, despite the myriad challenges that projecting power and sustaining forces over long distances can create, the United States does not consistently use coalitions to overcome these challenges once we account for other factors. We use the case studies to analyze this relationship in greater depth.

Box 4.3 **Signposts of U.S. Coalitions: Geography**

Independent Variable	% Change in Coalition Likelihood
Distance from U.S. to target country (1,000 km)	1.6
Observations	115
Pseudo R -squared	0.348

NOTES: Dependent variable is binary and indicates a coalition or unilateral intervention. Results presented are estimated marginal effects from a logistic regression. The unconditional probability of a coalition intervention is 32.2% (37/115).

Qualitative Analysis

Although we do find some support for the hypothesis that the United States uses coalitions to overcome the logistical challenges posed by geography, this support is considerably weaker than that for the operational burden argument. Because of the flexibility and reach of the permanent U.S. force posture, the U.S. military is often able to secure the operational access it requires without needing would-be basing hosts to formally join a coalition by providing military forces. The United States typically has multiple options for securing basing access, overflight rights, and other lines of communication required to sustain a military deployment—thus allowing U.S. defense planners and policymakers to forgo any potential regional coalition member if the concessions it demands in exchange are too steep. Furthermore, defense planners and policymakers are typically able to use access and overflight permissions to facilitate operations without the direct involvement of military personnel from the granting country (although there are certainly instances in which key coalition partners provide both). In other words, the pursuit of access and basing (although vital to operation success) is largely separate from the decision about whether to operate unilaterally or through a coalition. To these ends, this factor—overcoming geographical logistics challenges—appears to be a secondary one in the U.S. decisionmaking process, often influencing how a coalition intervention is waged more heavily than *whether* it should be waged unilaterally or multilaterally in the first place.

The coalition-building experience at the start of OEF offers a good example. During the first three months of kinetic operations in one of the most-impermissible environments on earth, logistics challenges caused by geography and long supply chains extending from the United States were largely overcome by heavy reliance on allied naval warships and long-range U.S. Air Force bombers and airlift assets—without having to draw Central Asian regional partners into the small coalition footprint, which then consisted mostly of special operators from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia.¹¹ Because Afghanistan was landlocked—and because its neighbors with seaports (specifically, Pakistan) would not allow U.S. military resupply convoys to cross their country, and railway and highway infrastructure was “almost unusable”—new approaches were required to overcome conventional geographical challenges; consequently, the “salient characteristic of the opening phases of OEF was that it required air power.”¹² Over the course of October–December 2001, formal

¹¹ Forrest Marion, *Building USAF 'Expeditionary Bases' for Operation Enduring Freedom–Afghanistan, 2001–2002*, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.: Air University, undated.

¹² Donald P. Wright, James R. Bird, Steven E. Clay, Peter W. Connors, Scott C. Farquhar, Lynne Chandler Garcia, and Dennis F. Van Wey, *A Different Kind of War: The United States Army in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), October 2001–September 2005*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: Combined Studies Institute Press, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, May 2010, pp. 58–61. The amount of logistical airlift support required to effect entry was significant. In Wright et al., Colonel Phillip McGhee, deputy chief of staff for resource management for U.S. Army Special Operations Command, recalled, “The amount of airlift it took to get one [special forces group, con-

basing agreements were reached for ground access and overflight rights in neighboring Uzbekistan (Karshi Khanabad Air Base), Tajikistan (Kulyab Air Base, Kurgan-Tyube Air Base, and Khujand Air Base); Kyrgyzstan (Manas Air Base); and Pakistan (Shahbaz Air Base and several other airfields), but Afghanistan's neighbors still never formally joined the coalition. Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan also temporarily permitted overflight rights, though basing negotiations with these neighbors did not proceed to fruition, thereby reinforcing the essential point: Because of the reach and resilience of U.S. power projection—and because of coercive diplomatic tools, such as foreign assistance leverage—overcoming geographical access and logistical problems seems typically to be a secondary factor in the U.S. decisionmaking process that affects how, not whether, the United States fights in coalitions.¹³

Thus, the challenges of geography mandated new strategies and efforts to gain access to key bases and airspace but did not, on their own, drive the United States to build an expanded coalition to carry out the operation. Instead, at the start of OEF, existing U.S. logistics hubs in the Gulf were greatly expanded and upgraded to overcome the so-called tyranny of distance while sustaining OEF and the Global War on Terrorism—specifically, at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, Masirah Air Base in Oman, and Al Dhafra Air Base in the UAE—but none of these GCC states became troop-contributing coalition members of OEF-Afghanistan. In the opening phases in late September and early October 2001, air bases in Spain, Italy, Germany, and Turkey also became key logistics hubs and staging areas for troops and equipment slated to transit into theater.¹⁴ These states' strategic value to the opening moves of war was in granting access permissions, not in joining the coalition *per se*.¹⁵ They influenced how, not whether, the coalition was fought in late 2001. As one history by the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center argues, "Perhaps the most critical type of support offered to

sisting of three battalions and support elements] in theater just amazed me. It took almost fifty C-17s to get 3,000 guys and their equipment into theater" (p. 61). After Uzbekistan agreed on October 5 to allow basing access,

Aircraft began arriving at [Karshi Khanabad Air Base] every 2 hours, and the base population swelled from 100 to 2,000 in just 1 week. . . . In a unique twist, SOF provided the initial logistical support to the Army. Doctrinally, the geographic combatant commander and his subordinate component commanders support SOF once in theater. However, because OEF commenced so rapidly, the SOF were the first to arrive in Uzbekistan and had to begin building the base. Thus, conventional Army units were supported by the SOF support unit for about 30 days until the Army could build its capability for logistical support. (Wright et al., 2010, p. 58)

¹³ As Army historians have argued, "[Secretary of Defense] Rumsfeld's ability to secure support from President Karimov was a key turning point in the planning process. Without use of the air base and airspace, the United States would have had a significantly more difficult time providing the logistics support for operations" (Wright et al., 2010, p. 38).

¹⁴ Wright et al., 2010, pp. 58–61.

¹⁵ Although Italy did not provide troops to the coalition's combat ground operation in the period from October to December, it did deploy an aircraft carrier (along with France and the United Kingdom) and thus qualified as a coalition member (according to our definition) based on its naval contributions.

the Coalition in September and October 2001 were the overflight and landing rights made available to the Coalition by over two dozen nations.”¹⁶

The Gulf War case study is similarly illustrative but has one key difference in the geographical challenge: In planning for these operations, troops and supplies could also be moved great distances by rail or truck from seaports to facilities and depots in the theater of operations.¹⁷ In the first hours of the crisis, the war architects rejected the option of using air and maritime power alone to deter further Iraqi aggression against oil fields in northeastern Saudi Arabia, meaning that basing access would likely be required of some regional partners. However, coalition formation did not hinge on their joining as troop contributors. If access permissions could not be obtained from Gulf partners, the NSC was preparing an alternative amphibious forced entry into Kuwait. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell counseled at this critical juncture that “the most prudent option” to deter further Iraqi aggression “would require U.S. forces on the ground [in Saudi Arabia]”—the second (and much less attractive) military option would be to deploy U.S. forces into Kuwait in a direct confrontation, which Powell forecasted would be “harder than Panama and Libya. This would be the NFL, not a scrimmage. . . . Most U.S. forces would have to be committed to sustain.”¹⁸ In short, the United States recognized the need for a coalition both to overcome expected operational demands, as we have noted, and to achieve the required international and domestic legitimacy, which we will discuss later—but it was prepared to overcome the logistical challenges caused by geography with or without direct contributions of personnel from partners.

This is not to suggest that logistical considerations were irrelevant. Although the military response was not dependent logistically on having support from a broad coalition, access consent from Saudi Arabia and other regional partners (specifically, the Gulf States, Turkey, and Syria) was viewed as critically important in reducing logistical burdens and in waging the optimal fight.¹⁹ In short, although some logistical access was required, it evidently was not the most important driving force behind the decision to operate as a coalition; if one would-be host’s demands were too high or domestic politics too sensitive to host U.S. troops, workable backup options were available for U.S. defense planners.²⁰

¹⁶ Wright et al., 2010, p. 35.

¹⁷ Wright et al., 2010, pp. 58–61. Another major difference in logistics challenges between these case studies is that U.S. forces deployed in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm (1990–1991) to Saudi and other regional bases “with big airfields, brand new runways, brand new shelters, and lots of capacity. Billeting, feeding, and the supply routes were the things that had to be worked” (Marion, undated).

¹⁸ U.S. National Security Council, “Subject: NSC Meeting on the Persian Gulf,” Washington, D.C.: White House, declassified meeting minutes, August 3, 1990.

¹⁹ U.S. Central Command, *Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm*, July 11, 1991.

²⁰ Wolford, 2015, pp. 85–86.

Because the Barack Obama administration's primary source record remains classified, it is somewhat more difficult to assess this hypothesis—that geographical access problems might drive U.S. decisionmaking to operate in coalitions—in our two most recent (and ongoing) case studies: multinational operations against ISIS in Iraq and Syria and deterrence of Russian aggression on Europe's eastern flank (both of which began in 2014). However, the available information points to similar conclusions as we made for the OEF case study. For instance, the regional coalition had not yet coalesced when President Obama announced on September 10, 2014, that the United States would begin airstrikes against ISIS targets in Syria and that nearly 500 U.S. military advisers would return to Iraq.²¹ Put another way, the decision to intervene with U.S. air power was evidently made without regard to whether regional coalition partners would contribute to the bombing campaign or not.²² That same day, Saudi Arabia agreed to host a U.S. train-and-equip program for moderate Syrian rebels even as Secretary of State John Kerry was embarking on his first tour of the Middle East seeking permission to make more use of bases in the region and to gain overflight rights for the air campaign against ISIS.²³ In short, the United States committed to action against ISIS even before the first major talks were held in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, to recruit Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Iraq into the formal coalition. Efforts to overcome the challenges created by geography preceded and occurred apart from efforts to build a coalition, suggesting that the coalition, at least in its early stages, reflected other demands. As Kerry's diplomatic tour proceeded, he secured commitments of support from these key regional countries, but "each pledge had come with fine print and every alliance had its limits . . . [and] in some cases, there just weren't enough strings to pull key countries to action."²⁴ Like the coalition-building efforts already described regarding early operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, this again suggests that the regional partners' membership was considered useful for the sake of added legitimacy, operational burden-sharing, or other factors—but was not crucial for overcoming the geographical challenges of airstrikes and sustaining train-and-equip missions in friendly host countries.

In the case of NATO's collective deterrence of Russian aggression along Europe's eastern flank since 2014, there were relatively few geographical and logistics challenges for U.S. policymakers and defense planners to overcome, given preexisting U.S. basing agreements throughout Europe and the robust U.S. air and naval presence in

²¹ Mark Landler, "Obama, in Speech on ISIS, Promises Sustained Effort to Rout Militants," *New York Times*, September 10, 2014.

²² Michael Gordon and David Kirkpatrick, "Kerry Scours Mideast for Aid in ISIS Fight," *New York Times*, September 13, 2014.

²³ Michael Gordon and Eric Schmitt, "Saudi Arabia Will Grant U.S. Request for Anti-ISIS Training Program," *New York Times*, September 10, 2014.

²⁴ Michael Crowley, "John Kerry's Wary Coalition," *Time*, September 18, 2014.

the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean. The U.S. crisis response to Russian aggression in Crimea and eastern Ukraine thus began with unilateral efforts hatted under Operation Atlantic Resolve, beginning in March–April 2014. Subsequently, on June 3, President Obama called on Congress to provide up to \$1 billion in new funding for the European Reassurance Initiative to bolster U.S. demonstrations of force across Eastern and Central Europe—in Poland, Georgia, Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, and the Black and Baltic Seas.²⁵ Although enhanced training exercises were conducted with NATO partners in these and other European locations throughout the spring and summer of 2014, a formal, collective NATO coalition response did not begin to take shape until the September 2014 Wales Summit—just as Secretary Kerry was preparing to launch his Middle East tour to build the anti-ISIS coalition. Once again, therefore, in our qualitative analysis of this case study, we do not find any clear evidence to support the hypothesis that NATO’s EFP coalition formed primarily to overcome logistical challenges caused by geography.

Finally, we note that the case study of post–World War II stabilization and administration of Japan is an outlier. By the time the postwar occupational force had formed, the tyranny of geography had already been conquered, island by island, over the course of the campaign in the Pacific; the occupation forces faced a permissible entry environment (and essentially no resistance) after Emperor Hirohito’s surrender; and U.S. forces in Japan were intent on demobilizing (rather than deploying) quickly as the coalition intervention began in late 1945. Throughout the war effort, the BCOF allies were vital in helping sustain lines of communication, particularly via U.S. outposts in Australia. But in the context of this hypothesis, this case study is not likely generalizable to modern coalition decisionmaking. In 1946, the world was not a globalized place—and the U.S. global footprint was brand new. All else being equal, overcoming logistical challenges imposed by geography was arguably much more difficult than it is today. This factor might have thus been relatively more important (thereby providing more support to the hypothesis at hand) for this case study than for the more-recent ones considered in this report.

In summary, our analysis of the case studies finds nuance in the hypothesis that the United States might choose to form a coalition as a response to logistical challenges caused by geography. Strictly speaking, we did not find compelling evidence to support the “strong version” of this argument. Instead, at least in the recent U.S. experience, it appears that basing access permissions are crucial to begin and/or sustain operations, but key hosts often do not become force-contributing coalition members; thus, this factor weighs little on the U.S. decision to act unilaterally or multilaterally. Moreover, the United States typically has multiple country-location options for gaining the basing access, overflight rights, and lines of communication required to

²⁵ U.S. European Command, Communication and Engagement Directorate, “Operation Atlantic Resolve,” EUCOM factsheet, June 26, 2014.

begin or sustain a military deployment (even in the most-impermissible locations on earth, such as Afghanistan), so U.S. defense planners and policymakers have negotiating power if would-be hosts attempt to impose overly steep concessions to help Washington overcome the tyranny of geography.

Summary

Our analysis finds limited support for this hypothesis about the role of geography in coalition formation. Specifically, although the United States often needs access permissions, basing, or overflight rights to conduct interventions in distant locations, it can usually achieve this end without building a formal coalition and without host states providing forces. This means that logistical considerations and decisions about whether to form a coalition or proceed unilaterally can and do occur separately. That is not to say that coalitions are irrelevant or that having the direct military support of regional allies does not facilitate U.S. interventions in important ways. These factors do matter, but they appear to be largely secondary to concerns of operational burden and legitimacy. In several of our case studies, it appears that, in pursuing coalitions to meet operational demands, the United States also ends up overcoming logistical challenges caused by distance. Although there are available workarounds that allow U.S. forces to overcome the tyranny of geography even without coalition partners, operational demands have far fewer workarounds. This might explain why operational burden seems to matter more directly for state decisions about coalition formation.

H3. International Legitimacy

In many situations, we observe the United States forming coalitions even when it could handle the operational demands of an intervention on its own. That it continues to rely on coalitions instead suggests the importance of other factors—such as legitimacy, both domestic and international. In this section, we consider international legitimacy

Norms of territorial sovereignty and noninterference in the affairs of other states require that when a state does choose to intervene, it justifies its actions. Building a coalition of states supporting the intervention and its objectives can serve this purpose, signifying that the intervention is approved and backed by the international community as a whole. Our analyses find both quantitative and qualitative support for legitimacy as a motivating factor in U.S. coalition formation.

Quantitative Analysis

To operationalize legitimacy, we consider changes over time in support for the norms of multilateralism and the international politics of intervention, both of which have changed significantly over the period since 1945 and especially since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s. As noted in Chapter Two, Finnemore describes two changes relevant to our analysis: first, a strengthening of the norm of territorial sovereignty that began after World War II and continued to consolidate in the post-Cold War period, and second, the norm of multilateralism and the notion that if states seek

to legitimately violate a given nation's sovereignty, they should endeavor to do so as part of a multilateral coalition.²⁶ To assess the accuracy of this argument, we consider specifically whether coalitions are more likely in the post–Cold War period than they were before. We assume that such a change in likelihood over time could be a reflection of the shift in norms and attitudes toward multilateral military interventions in the post–Cold War period.

We find strong support for this hypothesis, as shown in Box 4.4 (a distillation of Box 4.1). The results suggest that coalitions have been more frequent in the post–Cold War era. The logit model suggests that the end of the Cold War was associated with a 44.8-percent uptick in the likelihood that the United States would intervene through a coalition. Aside from the clear political and military significance, the estimate is also highly statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

Notably, however, we also find that the post-9/11 indicator is statistically significant but negative (–19.0 percent), suggesting that coalitions have become less common since the attacks in 2001. This adds complexity to our understanding of how changing norms have shaped the likelihood of a coalition formation. A closer look at the data suggests that this result reflects the fact that, since 2001, the United States has been involved in a larger number of total interventions; therefore, although it has used coalitions frequently, these coalitions have made up a smaller portion of the total than in the period from 1992 to 2001.

Qualitative Analysis

In our five case studies, we see logic of legitimacy play a consistent role in U.S. decisionmaking. Even when the United States chose to go it alone (e.g., for parts of the

Box 4.4

Signposts of U.S. Coalitions: International Legitimacy

Independent Variable	% Change in Coalition Likelihood
Post–Cold War indicator	44.8****
Post-9/11 indicator	19.0**
Observations	115
Pseudo <i>R</i> -squared	0.348

NOTES: Dependent variable is binary and indicates a coalition or unilateral intervention. Results presented are estimated marginal effects from a logistic regression. The unconditional probability of a coalition intervention is 32.2% (37/115).

** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

²⁶ Finnemore, 2003.

postwar occupation of Japan), or mostly alone (e.g., in the case of the initial invasion of Afghanistan), it was able to do so partly because the interventions in these situations had widespread international legitimacy, stemming from other sources.

Across the data, we find evidence that partners provide two types of legitimacy. The first comes from the support of close allies and major IGOs, such as NATO or the UN. In the Gulf War, for instance, the United States relied on strong and nearly universal support from NATO allies and UN Security Council (UNSC) members. Not all joined the coalition, but the international approval gave Washington legitimacy that it leveraged to further widen the coalition and to bolster domestic support.²⁷ NATO support for the intervention in Afghanistan and the troop commitments of key NATO allies similarly provided the U.S. reconstruction effort with international legitimacy. It was not just the United States “invading and interfering”; rather, it was a coalition of states that were using their military and political resources toward a common and agreed on goal. Support from IGOs was similarly relevant to OIR and the Gulf War (both of which relied heavily on UN approval for their broad legitimacy) and to the EFP deployment (for which NATO approval provided a layer of legitimacy for the operations throughout Europe).

Although this type of legitimacy is crucial, there is another—perhaps, more important—type of legitimacy that the United States often seeks through coalitions: that provided by regional partners whose membership in the coalition provides a type of support and helps diffuse regional pushback against foreign involvement. Such regional support was essential to the Gulf War and again in the Global Coalition Against ISIS. In the case of the Gulf War, the full support of the host nations (Kuwait and Saudi Arabia) and their Gulf State neighbors, all of which perceived Iraq as an existential threat, gave the United States the needed legitimacy to operate in the region. Without the support of regional partners and the involvement of these partners in the intervention, the United States would have faced not only a considerably greater burden and challenge but also, perhaps, the need to take on Iraq and placate regional players unhappy with the U.S. presence. The legitimacy provided by regional support allowed the United States more flexibility in its actions during the intervention and unified the coalition against Saddam’s forces. To some extent, the opposite dynamic played out in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), where the United States has faced a tougher situation with more-hostile regional competitors. In OIR, the participation of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Jordan, and other Arab states was important in signaling that the Global Coalition Against ISIS was intervening on behalf of—not at the expense of—regional stakeholders. In addition, Arab and Muslim participation in the coalition contested ISIS’s framing of the conflict as a sort of western Crusade against local populations. It also eroded ISIS’s ability to maintain a narrative that it was building an authentic “Islamic

²⁷ Bennet, Leppgold, and Unger, 1994, p. 53.

State.”²⁸ Without this legitimacy, the ability of the United States and its Western allies to operate during OIR in the face of such an attack would be severely constrained.

Legitimacy seems to have been a lesser concern during the occupation of Japan. Coming right on the heels of World War II, the international community broadly acknowledged that the victors would occupy the adversary countries and work to support reconstruction. In this way, the operation had an implicit level of legitimacy from the start. The presence of Commonwealth states did not really act to increase the legitimacy of the intervention beyond the legitimacy communicated by the World War II victory. International legitimacy, then, was not irrelevant to this operation, but it was derived from a source other than a coalition.

Summary

The quantitative analysis and case studies clearly suggest the relevance of international legitimacy to coalition decisionmaking. Coalition partners can provide broad international legitimacy, but—even more importantly—in many instances, they also can provide regional legitimacy that reduces the risk of pushback and undermines the foreign-invader narrative often put forward by adversaries. Furthermore, beyond the qualitative evidence provided in the case studies and the academic literature for the role of coalitions for providing legitimacy for U.S.-led military coalitions (especially post-Cold War UN and NATO operations), we anecdotally note at least three particularly politically sensitive instances from the broader U.S. Cold War experience in which this dynamic was at play: the small Organization of American States (OAS) Inter-American Peace Force following the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Caribbean Peace Force following the U.S. invasion of Grenada, and the MFO established in the Sinai in 1982 after peace agreements between Egypt and Israel. In each of these situations, the United States could easily have handled the operational burdens unilaterally (and in the first two instances, the initial U.S. entry force essentially worked independently), but working through coalitions provided legitimacy to mitigate the optics of the U.S. hegemon intervening in the domestic affairs of its hemispheric neighbors or the Arab-Israeli powder keg.

Notably, our results also underscore that there are instances in which the United States is willing to forgo the legitimacy a coalition provides, such as when the threat is so high (and concurrent operational demands relatively low) that it necessitates immediate unilateral action (e.g., the Lebanon Crisis of 1958, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, the U.S. invasion of Panama in 1988, kinetic U.S. air and naval maneuvers against Libya in the Gulf of Sidra in the 1980s, U.S. airstrikes against Bin Laden training camps in 1998, and U.S. airstrikes against ISIS in Libya beginning in 2016). Another example would be situations in which the United States was able to derive legitimacy or international approval for its action on some other

²⁸ Inspector General, U.S. Department of Defense, 2015, p. 9.

basis—specifically, permissive operating environments from the host nation to conduct major humanitarian/disaster relief missions (especially post–Cold War), bilateral train-and-assist missions (both during and after the Cold War and post-9/11), and long-term deterrence missions (especially during Cold War).²⁹ In the next section, we will explore one set of these unilateral instances in more depth: those in which there is a direct threat to U.S. national security.

Summary

Our analysis suggests fairly clearly that the United States frequently uses coalitions to build the international legitimacy and the regional support required to execute military interventions. Concerns about legitimacy have been especially important since the end of the Cold War, following the general shift in international norms, and building the necessary legitimacy has become a key part of preparing for military interventions. Notably, not all states are created equal in the quest for international legitimacy. Regional partners and nontraditional U.S. partners might send especially important signals to the international community about support for a given operation and, as a result, might provide the United States with more flexibility of action during the intervention. But it is also worth noting that although having some sort of international legitimacy does seem to be a requirement in many instances, coalitions are only one path to legitimacy. UN approval (without a coalition) might be an alternative. In addition, states responding to direct threats to their homeland might be given more room for unilateral action (as was the case after 9/11), with self-defense serving to build international acceptance even in the absence of a coalition.

H4. Domestic Politics

Although international legitimacy seems to be a significant driver behind U.S. decisions to form coalitions, domestic political considerations might be another. Specifically, states might use coalitions to build domestic support for an intervention, among both an unwilling populace and other political elites. The rationale is that having backing from the international community can help win over domestic support for a military operation not only because it signals international approval for the operation but also often because of the burden-sharing it implies.

This is, however, a difficult hypothesis to evaluate qualitatively. First, it assumes that the public pays sufficient attention to intervention choices to be swayed by the existence (or lack) of a coalition. Second, it assumes that the attitudes of Congress or the general public could be swayed by whether the intervention is multilateral. Third, it assumes that policymakers consider the attitudes of constituents when making decisions about foreign policy (particularly decisions about how to conduct an intervention) and fails to account for the fact that there are types of military activity and inter-

²⁹ The complete list of situations falling into these categories is too extensive to reiterate here; for more details, see Table B.2.

ventions that do not require direct congressional approval, allowing a commander in chief to respond without explicit congressional approval. Overall, we find mixed support for the domestic politics hypothesis. There is no evidence of a systematic relationship between domestic political factors and intervention decisions, but we find some limited evidence that these factors matter in our case studies.

Quantitative Analysis

To assess the role of domestic politics, we considered two proxy variables: presidential approval rating and number of years to the next presidential election. We suggest that if domestic politics is a factor that drives coalition decisions, then it should matter most when presidential elections are approaching and when presidential approval is low. Of course, the president is not the sole decisionmaker on whether and how the United States intervenes in a military conflict. Military leaders might have influence and Congress ultimately authorizes the major military operations (and the funding of them). Still, an intervention is unlikely to move forward without presidential support, and the president also has an important role to play in building and working through coalitions.

Box 4.5 distills the quantitative analysis from Box 4.1 to the relevant rows. We find no support from this analysis for an argument that domestic legitimacy, at least as measured by our proxy variables, plays a significant role in intervention decisions across situations. This does not mean that domestic legitimacy is irrelevant but does suggest that it does not have the same broad importance as international legitimacy does in decisions about when to form coalitions.

Qualitative Analysis

Our qualitative analysis finds some evidence that domestic politics is relevant to coalition decisions but suggests that its relevance is inconsistent and that it matters less than

Box 4.5
Signposts of U.S. Coalitions: Domestic Politics

Independent Variable	% Change in Coalition Likelihood
Years to presidential election	−5.7
Presidential approval ratings (%)	−0.4
Observations	115
Pseudo <i>R</i> -squared	0.348

NOTES: Dependent variable is binary and indicates a coalition or unilateral intervention. Results presented are estimated marginal effects from a logistic regression. The unconditional probability of a coalition intervention is 32.2% (37/115).

other factors, specifically the pursuit of international legitimacy and considerations of operational burden.

Evidence of the role played by domestic politics and legitimacy is strongest in the case of the Gulf War, in which the formation of a coalition and the approval of the UN were essential to winning the domestic support required for the intervention, both among the U.S. general public and in Congress. Initially, public support for an intervention in Kuwait was low. There was little sense of urgency or sense that U.S. interests were under significant or direct threat. Then-President George H. W. Bush's appeal to the general public and to political elites underscored the strategic importance of the intervention as a defense of international norms and the economic significance of the region. He positioned the United States as a member of a "new partnership of nations" united against the threat posed by Saddam and working toward a new post-Cold War world order. "The crisis in the Persian Gulf," Bush noted, "as grave as it is, also offers a rare opportunity to move toward an historic period of cooperation."³⁰ We can infer from this rhetoric that the White House was consciously trying to win public support by emphasizing the value of the coalition itself to a Congress and an American public that felt deeply ambivalent about deploying combat forces to Kuwait. Although military options had been on the table since the first NSC meetings in August 1990, Bush did not publicly announce an "offensive option" until November of that year, after which "he faced strong resistance from Capitol Hill (mostly Democratic opponents) and his public approval ratings on handling the crisis fell 10 points."³¹ Congress finally issued a joint resolution on January 12, 1991, authorizing the use of the armed forces, but it did so only when the participation of a coalition was assured, after the UNSC approved Resolution 678. Even then, the vote was worrisomely close for the White House and divided largely along partisan lines: 52–47 in the Senate and 250–183 in the House.³²

Similar inferential logic might hold for the case of anti-ISIS operations in Syria and Iraq as well, albeit with some important contextual differences. In this case, public support for sending in U.S. ground troops was quite low at the onset of ISIS's rise—marked by the group's seizure of Mosul, Iraq, in June 2014—though it did rise steadily (along with fears of becoming a victim of terrorism) between the time of the group's first beheading of a U.S. citizen in August 2014 and the homegrown attacks in San Bernardino, California, in December 2015.³³ Moreover, throughout early to mid-2014, President Obama's approval rating was at or near all-time lows, hovering in the low to mid-40s. Given this weak support and the coming 2014 midterm elec-

³⁰ George H. W. Bush, "September 11, 1990: Address Before a Joint Session of Congress," September 11, 1990.

³¹ Larson, 1996, p. 91.

³² Brands, 2004, p. 128.

³³ John Mueller and Mark G. Stewart, "Trends in Public Opinion on Terrorism," briefing slides, May 14, 2020 (citing TIPP/Investor's Business Daily Poll, March 28–April 2, 2016).

tions, it makes sense that Obama and his administration leaned toward conducting the intervention as a coalition. In other words, there was limited public support for a U.S. intervention to counter ISIS in 2014, and Obama had limited political capital or popularity to leverage in pushing through a unilateral intervention. Other factors were also in play at the time, such as U.S. fatigue after more than a decade of extended military deployments, a hesitance to send U.S. forces back to Iraq just three years after they left, and concern over the economic costs as the United States struggled to come out of the recession caused by the 2008 global financial collapse. For all these reasons, intervening alongside a diverse group of allies that would limit the scope and the cost of the U.S. commitment was likely seen as valuable in assuaging domestic opposition. However, we do not have a “smoking gun” in this case—i.e., no explicit statement by a member of Obama’s team suggesting that the use of a coalition was primarily motivated by domestic considerations. Furthermore, there was no need to get formal congressional approval in this case, so we do not have evidence of explicit appeals to Congress. In this way, our evidence in support of this domestic politics hypothesis is considerably weaker than what we observed for other hypotheses.

Evidence that domestic political factors mattered to coalition formation are significantly weaker in each of the other three instances. As noted elsewhere, the initial intervention into Afghanistan was conducted with only minimal support from NATO allies and Afghan partners. In part, this decision was possible because the intervention had such widespread domestic and international support in the wake of the September 11 attack. Widespread support for the mission in Afghanistan persisted long after this initial phase—through the beginning of the Obama administration, and even after support for the intervention in Iraq had begun to wane—because of a general public perception of a continued threat of international terrorism emanating from that region. President George W. Bush’s approval rating also shot up, from just over 50 percent on the morning of September 11, 2001, to almost 90 percent on the eve of war in October, and this provided further flexibility for policymakers in those early months. The second, stabilization phase of the intervention did rely heavily on a coalition, but it is by no means clear that this was done primarily for domestic audiences and approval. Policymakers might have hoped that coalition support would cast the intervention in a favorable light at home or reduce concerns about the burden of the election, but, in reality, popular U.S. support for the operation in Afghanistan have remained relatively high (i.e., over 50 percent) ever since its initiation, thus creating few electoral problems for members of Congress (unlike the Iraq War). Furthermore, the United States bore the majority of the costs and burden, so it is not clear that the coalition did much to reduce any concerns that did exist.

Domestic politics also does not seem to have been a major factor in coalition decisions surrounding the EFP deployment. First, the intervention was small overall, just a supplement in many ways to the existing U.S. presence in Europe. Second, this was not an intervention that captured domestic public opinion or interest. It involved

little to no risk to U.S. forces, and the invasion of Crimea and “little green men” in Donbas did little to capture public attention in the way that more-dramatic attacks on U.S. civilians or property tend to do. In this context, it is hard to imagine attitudes of the general public factoring into the decision about how to conduct the EFP deployment. Moreover, the EFP operation was imagined from the start as a joint operation. In other words, it was intended to be a signal of NATO resolve; as a result, it required a multilateral presence regardless of public attitudes. On the other hand, the coalition nature of the intervention might have appealed to one domestic audience—specifically, the audience concerned that European partners were not carrying their weight in the NATO alliance—by providing an instance of NATO partners doing just that. Still, even with this possible exception, it seems hard to argue that domestic considerations played a major role in the decision to use a coalition in this instance.

Finally, there is little evidence that the decision to involve British partners in the occupation of Japan in World War II was based on concerns of domestic support. As noted elsewhere, in the aftermath of World War II and the defeat of Japan, the postwar occupation seemed necessary and important and it seems likely that the U.S. public would have supported this operation regardless of whether British partners were involved. As revealed by our review of the State Department Office of the Historian’s primary source document collection on the early months of the “Occupation and Control of Japan,”³⁴ the coalition-building process unfolded by diplomatic correspondence that sometimes went weeks without replies and was seemingly conducted outside public view. The surviving documents contained in the *Foreign Relations of the United States* primary source detail at length the negotiations that unfolded between the key allied stakeholders—specifically, the United States, British Commonwealth (including, for example, Australia and New Zealand), Soviet Union, and China—as they debated policies between September and December 1945 for establishing “control machinery for Japan”; however, in none of these hundreds of documents do the principals on either side of the Pacific make direct reference to public opinion generally—let alone winning greater support and political capital for the occupation via acting collectively. Instead, the initial plan for the occupation of Japan was evidently designed with two primary, opposing concerns in mind: the need to demobilize as many troops as quickly as possible while simultaneously maintaining a large enough force to “exercise the controlling voice in the occupation authority in Japan” over the United Kingdom, China, and the Soviet Union, which the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee had decided shared “a responsibility with the United States in the occupation and military control of Japan and the obligation to assume a share in the

³⁴ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, “Occupation and Control of Japan, September 2–December 31, 1945 (Documents 489–650),” in *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, the British Commonwealth, the Far East*, Vol. VI, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969.

burden thereof.”³⁵ Thus, it seems that as already suggested, the rationale for a coalition in this case was almost exclusively focused on burden-sharing, with little attention to public demands other than the widespread desire to bring as many troops home as possible.

Overall, then, our case studies suggest instances in which domestic political considerations (either of Congress or of the general public) played a role in the U.S. decision to pursue a multilateral intervention but also seem to suggest that a focus on domestic politics usually comes in second to other considerations—and even then, only in certain contexts. Specifically, coalitions might be more powerful as domestic signals when the President has weak approval ratings and fears that unpopular military action could do further damage, when the public has strong and skeptical views of an intervention (particularly its necessity, benefits compared with costs, and legitimacy), and when public concerns are reduced by the presence of a multinational coalition as opposed to a unilateral intervention.

Summary

Our analysis suggests limited support for this hypothesis about the role of domestic politics in shaping U.S. coalition formation decisions. The quantitative analysis finds no evidence that domestic political conditions are associated with coalition decisions and our case studies find that although domestic legitimacy and support do influence policymaker decisions in some situations, they appear to be secondary or mostly irrelevant in others. Coalitions can be a way for policymakers to reduce the concerns of a hesitant population over cost, risk, and legitimacy and can help a President or military leadership to win political backing from political elites with similar concerns. However, our analysis suggests that domestic considerations matter largely on the margins. This could be because the public is largely uninformed about international affairs and has weak preferences on most foreign policy issues. It could also reflect the fact that domestic support for interventions and military action has been shown to be most closely tied to the goal at hand.³⁶ It is possible that coalitions are of limited value in winning public support for interventions in most situations, especially when the initial objective does not seem to be one that the American public finds essential and worthwhile.

³⁵ State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, “Report by the Joint Staff Planners of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” draft memorandum, J.C.S. 1398/4, October 11, 1945, in U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, 1969; “The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant),” 740.00119 FEAC/8-2145, telegram, August 21, 1945, in U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, 1969; “The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Bevin) to the Secretary of State, Then in London,” 740.00119 FEAC/9-1245, letter, September 12, 1945, in U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, 1969.

³⁶ Eric V. Larson and Bogdan Savych, *American Public Support for U.S. Military Operations from Mogadishu to Baghdad*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-231-A, 2005.

H5. Degree of Threat

Finally, we consider whether the degree of threat implied to U.S. interests is a relevant factor to decisions about coalition formation. Specifically, some past research has suggested that although international and domestic legitimacy are important, the United States has been willing to act unilaterally when faced with a severe threat, assuming that it can resource the operational demands on its own. By this argument, the United States should also be less likely to use coalitions when the degree of threat implied by the intervention is high or when there is a direct threat to U.S. national security.

Quantitative Analysis

To explore the extent to which the degree of threat influences coalition formation, we use the number of territorial claims in which the target state of the intervention is the challenger as a reasonable proxy of the threat posed (in general, to the risk of conflict and instability) by a specific crisis or conflict.³⁷

Box 4.6, distilled from Box 4.1, presents the results. We observe no statistically significant findings in this case. The threat variable has a negative sign, but it is not statistically significant, meaning that we do not find meaningful support for the argument that the United States is less likely to use coalitions when the degree of threat is high. This is an important result that is not consistent with arguments made elsewhere, but it is consistent with our expectation that intervention and coalition decisions will, by necessity, be shaped by operational and other requirements. Even if the threat is high, the United States might choose to form a coalition when it cannot meet the operational demands alone or when intervening unilaterally would invite criticism from the international community. Thus, the perceived threat might matter in some situations, but we expect that operational and other demands will consistently matter more.

Box 4.6 **Signposts of U.S. Coalitions: Degree of Threat**

Independent Variable	% Change in Coalition Likelihood
Territorial claims of target state as aggressor	-11.4
Observations	115
Pseudo <i>R</i> -squared	0.348

NOTES: Dependent variable is binary and indicates a coalition or unilateral intervention. Results presented are estimated marginal effects from a logistic regression. The unconditional probability of a coalition intervention is 32.2% (37/115).

³⁷ We consider direct threats to the United States in the next chapter.

Qualitative Analysis

Our case studies offer only mixed support for an argument that the United States is more likely to use unilateral action in the face of significant threat, and they provide clear reminders of the ways in which operational burden or expected operational burden might force the United States to rely on coalitions even when it might otherwise prefer to act alone. In two of our case studies, the immediate threat to U.S. interests appeared reasonably low. Thus, it is not surprising that the United States chose to rely on coalitions for these operations. First, the EFP deployment was intended to deter Russia, but expert consensus put a Russian invasion of the Baltics as a relatively low probability event, making the overall threat low. Had the threat been high, it is likely that the United States still would have turned to a coalition, given the size of the expected operational burden that would be required to counter Russian aggression. The postwar occupation of Japan was also a relatively low-threat environment, albeit one with reasonably high stakes. As noted previously, the U.S. decision to rely on a coalition in this case was almost entirely based on the operational burden and the desire to bring U.S. forces home.

In our other three case studies, the threat to U.S. interests was moderate to high, but in only one instance did the United States intervene alone or mostly alone. In the case of the Gulf War, the threat to U.S. national security was not direct or immediate, but the threat to economic interests and security was significant. The United States might have preferred to act alone, all else being equal, but it had two concerns in this case: legitimacy in the eyes of regional powers and operational burden.³⁸ Concern over operational demands meant that the United States did not believe it could feasibly intervene alone. Concern over international legitimacy meant that the United States understood that a unilateral intervention might face obstacles that a coalition would not. As noted previously, domestic considerations were also relevant; having widespread support was key to winning domestic acceptance of the intervention. The decision to work through a coalition, then, had less to do with the nature of the threat and more to do with the expected demands and efforts to build the required support base.

In Afghanistan, the threat to U.S. interests initially seemed high in the aftermath of 9/11 and the intense fear of another attack on U.S. soil, and the United States initially declined most coalition support in favor of a rapid response. But political and military leaders later found it necessary to turn to allies and partners to continue the intervention in its second, stabilization phase. This, perhaps, is the case that offers the most support for the hypothesis that the United States will choose coalitions only when the time horizon is long and the threat low. It does seem to have been the severity of the threat and the need for an immediate and forceful response that drove the United States away from the use of a coalition in the early months, despite the existence

³⁸ U.S. National Security Council, 1990.

of widespread international support.³⁹ As the threat lessened and the time horizon increased, the United States did move increasingly toward a coalition approach that could reduce operational demands (accepting the bureaucracy and slowness that comes with coalition operations).

Finally, the case of OIR offers limited support for the hypothesis in question. The threat to the United States was moderate and the operational demands relatively low. From the perspective of our original hypothesis, the use of a coalition in this case would seem logical. However, there is evidence, first, that the United States was willing to take some action unilaterally. For instance, as President Obama announced on September 10, 2014, that the United States would begin airstrikes against ISIS targets in Syria and that nearly 500 U.S. military advisers would return to Iraq, the regional coalition had not yet coalesced.⁴⁰ That is, the decision to intervene with U.S. air power was evidently made without regard to whether regional coalition partners would contribute to the bombing campaign.⁴¹ Thus, despite an only moderately severe threat, the United States was willing to intervene alone in this case; the decision to use a coalition was driven largely by concerns for legitimacy and the benefits of sharing the operational burden rather than by the threat environment itself. That said, had the threat been more severe or immediate, perhaps the desire for a unilateral intervention would have been overwhelmed by considerations of legitimacy.

We can further investigate the link between degree of threat and U.S. response by considering the instances in our data with the most-severe and direct threats to national security. We already discussed the largely unilateral response to 9/11, perhaps the most immediate threat to U.S. national security since the end of the Cold War. The United States similarly acted unilaterally during the Cuban Missile Crisis, a period when the threat was perceived to be existential in nature. Accounts of the crisis focus on U.S. decisionmaking and do not mention efforts to build a broader coalition before responding to the pressing and real threat. The United States also acted unilaterally in the late 1980s in Panama. Although the extent of the threat to national security here is debatable, the economic threat presented by the potential loss of access to the Panama Canal and threats to U.S. property and individuals was significant. Finally, the United States has always acted quickly and unilaterally to protect U.S. citizens and respond to attacks made on U.S. citizens abroad. A clear example would be the response to the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which featured unilateral airstrikes on al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan and Sudan. In each of these situations, however, the United States did not need significant international assistance, either to resource the operational demands or to win domestic or international legitimacy.

³⁹ Kreps, 2010.

⁴⁰ Landler, 2014.

⁴¹ Gordon and Kirkpatrick, 2014.

We can gain additional insights if we consider the full set of U.S. interventions since the end of World War II. First, the United States was consistently willing to use force unilaterally during the Cold War, when it intervened to prevent the spread of communism. This was especially true in Central and South America, which the United States has traditionally considered its “back yard,” a region where it can intervene without worrying about legitimacy. Its initial intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, for example, occurred with no coordination with the OAS and reflected President Lyndon Johnson’s imminent concern—based on faulty CIA intelligence estimates—that he would “wake up . . . and find out Castro’s in charge” of the country.⁴² Only later, once the initial threat seemed to have passed, did the United States reach out and seek to build a broader coalition with regional partners (specifically Brazil) through the OAS. U.S. operations in Guatemala during its civil war were similarly unilateral, as were regional train-and-assist operations in Honduras, which were initially aimed at countering the spread of leftist groups and ideologies in the region. Notably, the U.S. mission here continues, and it remains largely unilateral or bilateral. Many of the deterrent missions conducted during the Cold War to counter the spread of communism were also unilateral in nature, such as U.S. operations in Europe, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and smaller contingents in Saudi Arabia, Libya, Ethiopia, Morocco, and Iran. U.S. actions against communism—beyond the major hot wars in Korea and Vietnam—frequently seem to have been unilateral in nature. In each case, the urgency of the mission and the perception of a severe and immediate threat to U.S. interests and security seem to have motivated the decision to act without international consultations or partners. Once again, these operations had only modest operational demands and, at the time, the Cold War and the threat of Soviet Union weakened any requirements from the international community or domestic public for legitimacy.

However, the United States did use coalitions in the Cold War, and these coalitions can provide additional insights into how the United States has historically behaved when considering interventions in the face of a severe threat. If we consider situations in which the United States *did* use coalitions during the Cold War, we can divide them into two main groups. First, there are situations in which the threat was moderate to high, and extreme operational demands required burden-sharing coalitions: the allied airlift of Berlin, the Korean War and its aftermath, and the Vietnam War. In these instances, the perceived threat was high, and, although the United States might have been willing to intervene unilaterally, it required coalition support given the extreme operational demands and geographic location. The second set of Cold War situations consists of those in which the operational requirements appear lower but the United

⁴² David Coleman, ed., “New Transcripts of Key White House Tapes Clarify and Illuminate LBJ’s Personal Role in Decision-Making During the Crisis,” *National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book*, Washington, D.C.: National Security Archive, George Washington University, No. 513, April 28, 2015.

States had some interest (with lower stakes) and other states were willing to intervene or even take the lead. Examples are U.S. support to UN missions in Congo-Leopoldville in the early 1960s, the multinational intervention in Lebanon in 1984, and the international naval coalition to protect global commerce and trade during the Tanker War and Iran-Iraq War in the mid-1980s.

Overall, our qualitative assessment offers mixed support for an argument that the United States tends to act unilaterally in situations of severe national security threat and rely on coalitions when the threat is low and the time horizon long. Specifically, when the threat to national security is high, the United States prefers to act unilaterally *if the United States can reasonably shoulder the operational demands and does not need international or domestic approval to execute the intervention*. But if the operational demands exceed what the United States is willing (or able) to commit, or if legitimacy requires partners, the United States does seem to seek partners even in situations of high threat (e.g., World Wars). These caveats severely constrain what the United States is able to do unilaterally, even in situations in which the threat to national security is high. It is possible that there is some ratio between degree of threat and the threshold above which policymakers seek coalition support; a higher threat might have a higher threshold. This would be consistent with Kreps's argument about burden-sharing and time horizons.⁴³ Nonetheless, in thinking about major future threats that might emanate from a near peer, it seems likely that these would have operational demands requiring coalition support regardless of the severity of the threat. So, although this insight is useful in thinking about past trends, it is less clear how much it tells us about the future.

Summary

Overall, our analysis suggests mixed evidence for the hypothesis that the United States is most likely to use coalitions in lower-threat contexts where the time horizon is long and the urgency low. Our quantitative analysis finds a negative relationship between threat and coalition likelihood, but this relationship is statistically significant in only some specifications. Our case studies and a broader review of material in our dataset suggest that when the threat is severe and the United States wants an immediate response, it does often lean toward unilateral action, especially when the threat is directly aimed at the U.S. homeland. However, when the threat is high and the operational demands are significant, the United States has worked through coalitions out of necessity. A high degree of threat might, then, partially counterbalance the push to form a coalition, especially for situations in which the operational burden is low. However, if the operational burden is high, forming a coalition might be necessary even if the United States would prefer to act on its own. This is an important observation as we look toward a future in which the United States faces the risk of conflict with near-

⁴³ Kreps, 2011.

peer competitors, such as Russia and China. Operations against these competitors are likely to have both a high level of threat and high operational demands, and the United States will almost certainly have to build and work through coalitions.

Summary

The quantitative and qualitative evidence described here provides clear support for two of the five hypotheses and limited to mixed support for the other three. Box 4.7 summarizes the results. Evidence appears strongest for the roles played by operational demand and international legitimacy. First, the United States clearly relies on coalitions to spread the costs of an intervention, to fill niche capabilities that it could not support on its own, and to share large operational burdens that exceed U.S. capacity or what the United States is willing to commit. Even in the face of significant threats to U.S. interests, the United States has used coalitions to spread the operational burden. Second, there are many examples of the United States using coalitions to win international support and legitimacy and to build regional legitimacy that facilitates the intervention. In the post–World War II period, the international legitimacy motivation has outweighed concerns about operational burden in decisions to form coalitions, but this will not always be the case. Furthermore, U.S. use of coalitions has increased in the post–Cold War period and this might reflect heightened concerns about legitimacy and an expanding norm of multilateralism.

Support is more mixed for arguments about the role of coalitions as a way to gain necessary access and logistical or sustainment support. We do not find significant quantitative evidence for such an argument, and our case studies suggest that decisions about coalitions and efforts to gain necessary access and permissions are largely separate

Box 4.7
Drivers of Coalition Formation

Factor	Summary
Burden-sharing	Primary factor in U.S. decisionmaking
Geography	Relevant factor but United States can often overcome logistical challenges without a formal coalition
International legitimacy	Primary factor in U.S. decisionmaking, especially after the Cold War
Domestic politics	Secondary factor, relevant in some situations but not others
Threat	Can motivate unilateral intervention in some instances, when operational burden is manageable

choices. The United States often needs to negotiate access and other permissions, but the countries that grant these permissions do not necessarily need to also provide troops and join the coalition. Similarly, there is mixed support for arguments that coalition decisions are consistently guided by domestic political considerations. We are unable to detect any quantitative relationship between U.S. domestic politics and U.S. decisions to use coalitions for military interventions. However, our case studies suggest ways that domestic politics do matter, specifically in helping to overcome domestic opposition. It seems that coalitions can be effective signals to domestic audiences because they imply burden-sharing and international legitimacy, two other key drivers of U.S. coalition formation. In other words, domestic political considerations might be important, but in an indirect way that is secondary to international legitimacy and burden-sharing.

Finally, we find that although the degree of threat is relevant to U.S. decisions to form coalitions, even when the United States would like to intervene unilaterally, it is often constrained by operational demands and considerations of international legitimacy. Thus, although the United States might always prefer to respond to a severe, existential threat with a unilateral action, the reality of an intervention and its requirements in terms of resources and international or regional support are the deciding factors in whether such an approach is possible or strategically desirable.

There is no guarantee that historical patterns will guide future behavior, but policymakers can learn from past experience that underscores the value of operating with allies and partners, especially when those allies and partners are regional members that can provide access; logistical support; and defense from local, international, or U.S. domestic backlash. It is also instructive that, for all the discussion about burden-sharing and its centrality to coalition formation, contributions from partners are often small compared with the total force and U.S. contributions. Efforts to increase partner contributions might be required if future threats from more-powerful adversaries emerge and if the risk for major-power war increases into the future. Diversifying coalitions to involve non-NATO partners as major contributors could be another way to bolster the support received from partners and to expand the scope of international legitimacy, but, to the extent that an increasing threat will require large operational contributions, the United States must also focus on building relationships with militarily capable allies and further bolstering the capabilities of existing partners. It will not be enough to modernize only U.S. capabilities. Instead, the United States will need to also help allies, partners, and potential partners build their military capabilities so that these partners can serve as supplements for U.S. forces in the event of major contingencies for which partner support is required. In the next chapter, we consider factors that seem likely to shape partner nation decisions to join coalitions.

Coalition Partners: Who Joins and Why?

The second question we explored is why partner states might choose to join a U.S. coalition. This is a hugely important question: The United States faces challenges from major-power allies and must consider which partners are most likely to join future coalition operations. In this chapter, we consider evidence for and against each of the five hypotheses about coalition formation outlined in Chapter Two. We consider the evidence for and against each of these hypotheses separately; then, in the chapter summary, we consider how these different factors (and others not considered directly but found to be relevant in the broader literature) might interact to shape state choices about when to join (or not join) a coalition. Importantly, we do not find that any one explanation provides a total answer, and we refrain from ranking factors based on importance because our analysis suggests that the decision to join a coalition is one that varies across interventions for a single state and across states for a given intervention. Instead, we consider how different factors matter, when they might be most relevant, and for which states. Table 5.1 highlights evidence for and against our hypotheses on why states joined U.S. coalitions and combines evidence from our quantitative and qualitative analyses. Evidence is strong for some hypotheses and weak for others. We describe this evidence in this next section.

Trends

Again, it is useful to start with some descriptive statistics that provide a broad overview of partner participation in U.S. coalition interventions between 1946 and 2018.

Table 5.1
Partner State Coalition Decisionmaking: Summary

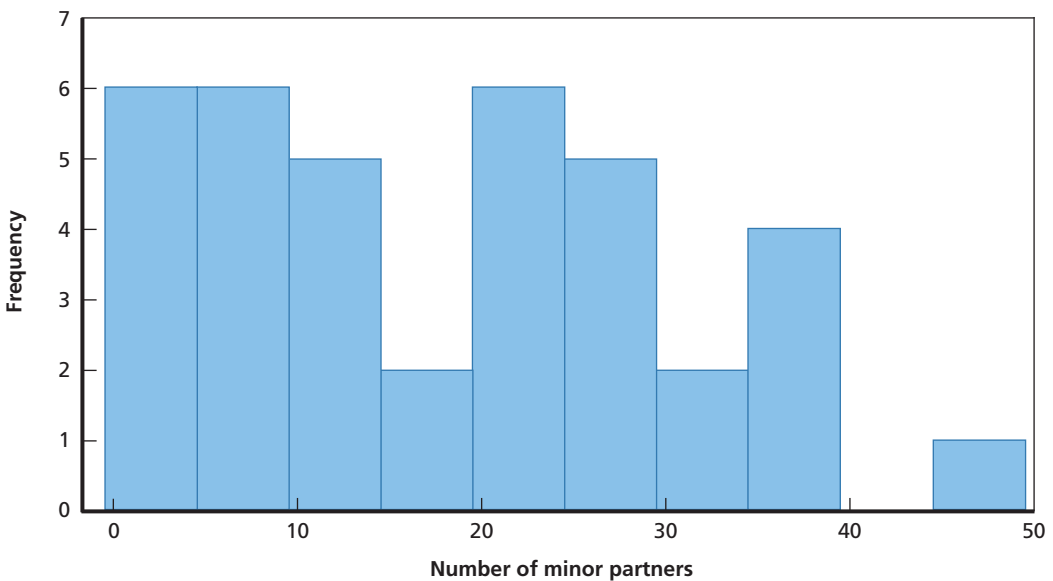
Results	H6 Relationship with United States	H7 Home Region	H8 Shared Interests (formation)	H9 IGO	H10 Status
Quantitative	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported	Not tested
Qualitative	Supported	Supported	Supported (with caveats)	Supported (with caveats)	Supported

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 offer a snapshot of coalition size for both major contributors (or major partners) and total partners. There is significantly more variation when considering numbers of minor partners (Figure 5.1), which can extend up to 50—though it is worth noting that for interventions with many partners, a large number of partners might be committing only very small numbers of forces. About half of our coalitions have fewer than 20 partners; the other half have more. When looking at coalitions with major partners (Figure 5.2), interventions range from 0 to slightly less than 20, and the majority of coalitions have 12 or fewer major contributors, with about half having eight or fewer major contributors.

Although the figures do show some variation in coalition size, our analysis suggests commonality across interventions in terms of partner structures for both large and small coalitions. For most coalitions, two to four countries (excluding the United States and the host) provide about 50 percent of all coalition forces’ troops, the next four to eight might provide another third, and then all other minor contributions make up the remainder. Most of the true burden-sharing occurs among a smaller group of core countries. Additional partners might add legitimacy but not play a major role in sharing operational demands.

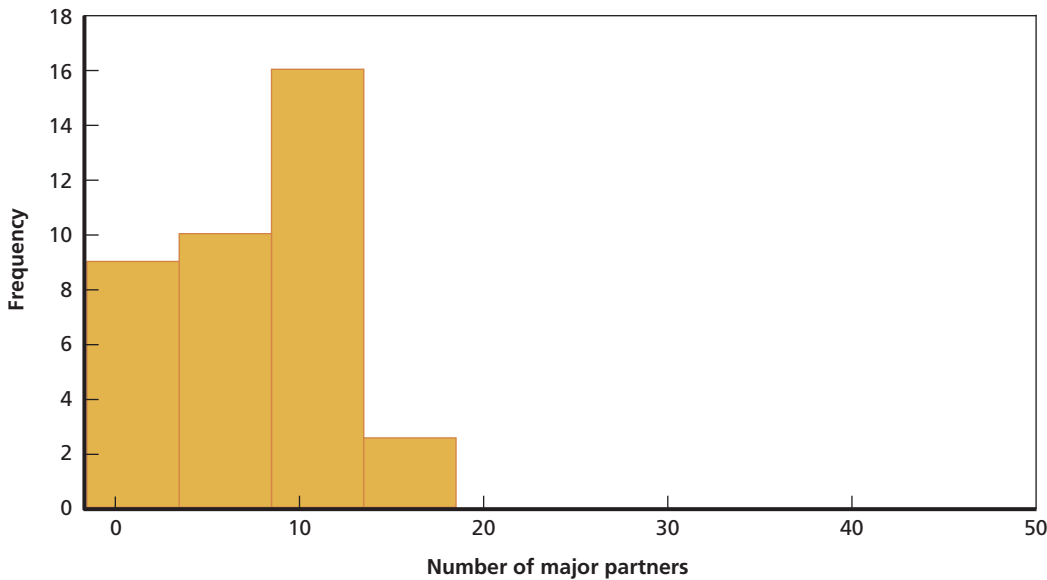
We do observe some variation in coalition size by activity type. Table 5.2 shows the average coalition size by activity type for major and minor partners. Although the small sample size makes it difficult to draw conclusions from these differences (or to say that the observed differences are statistically significant), they are still interesting.

Figure 5.1
Number of Minor Partners in U.S. Coalitions (1946–2018)



NOTE: *N* = 37 cases.

Figure 5.2
Number of Major Partners in U.S. Coalitions (1946–2018)



NOTE: *N* = 37 cases.

Table 5.2
Number of Major and Minor Partners in U.S. Coalitions, by Primary Activity Type (1946–2018)

Activity	<i>N</i>	Major Partners (mean)	Total Partners (mean)
Advisory, FID	1	17	28
COIN	2	10	44
Combat	9	7	15
Deterrence	8	5	13
Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief	3	11	26
Security	0	—	—
Stabilization	12	7	16
Interdiction	1	14	35
Lift and transport	1	9	31
ISR	0	—	—

NOTE: *N* = 37 cases.

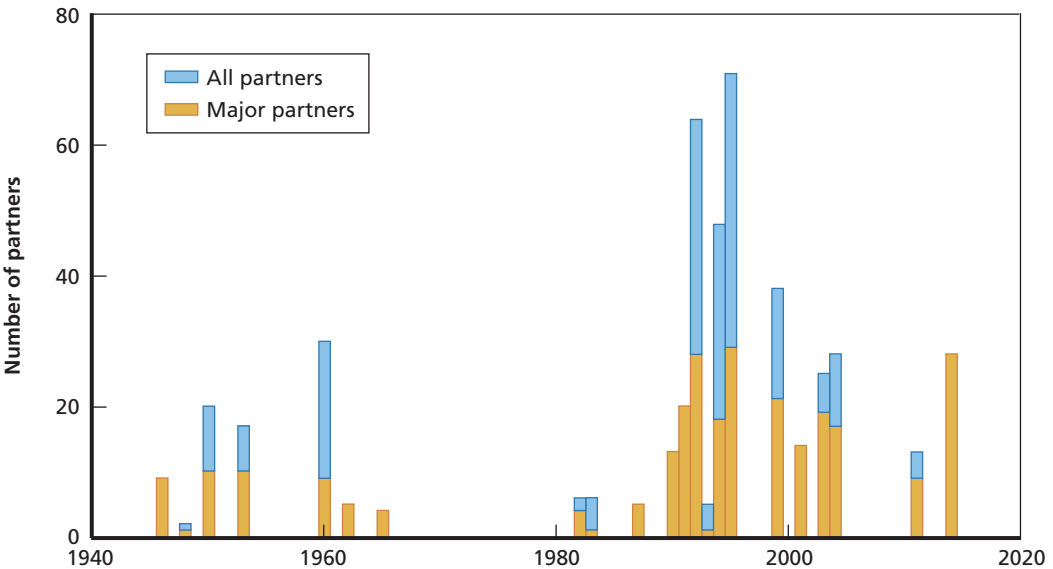
It is notable that the average ratio of major to total partners is largely similar for coalitions focused on combat, stability operations, and deterrence, especially considering that these are among the most-common U.S. intervention types. Coalition size for other intervention types is heavily influenced by specific interventions (e.g., Iraq and Afghanistan for COIN) because of the lower number of observations, which makes the results difficult to interpret meaningfully.

We can also consider how coalition size (measured by the number of major and minor partners) has varied over time. Figure 5.3 shows that there has not been a clear and continual trend of increasing or decreasing coalition size, regardless of whether we look at all partners or just major partners. There have been periods where coalitions had larger memberships interspersed with shorter periods of mostly smaller coalitions. Since the end of the Cold War, and especially the period since the 2003 invasion of Iraq, larger coalitions seem to have been more common, but there is little clear evidence that these coalitions have been increasing in size or will do so in the future.

Assessing the Hypotheses

In this section, we review our qualitative and quantitative analyses of factors that affect the likelihood of countries joining U.S. coalitions. For the quantitative analysis, we estimate our results using all states as potential coalition partners; in Appendix C, for

Figure 5.3
Trends in Coalition Membership Size, by Coalition Start Year (1946–2018)



NOTE: N = 37 cases.

additional robustness, we restrict the pool to states that satisfy various criteria (i.e., excluding adversaries and other such states that are unlikely to ever join a U.S. coalition). We have already defined those criteria and described why we made this choice (see Chapter Three). Although we focus our discussion on the results from models including all countries in the potential partner pool, the results are substantively similar for a more limited case universe. We show the full results in Table 5.3; we then revisit this table with each subsequent hypothesis.

H6. Relationship with the United States

Quantitative Analysis

In our models, we proxy for ties to the United States in three ways. The three measures assess the U.S. relationship with the would-be contributor, but each captures a different aspect of this relationship. First, we provide a variable for whether the United States has an alliance with the potential contributor as a measure of political and military ties. Second, we consider the percentage of the state's population that is English-speaking, which proxies for cultural similarities between the United States and the potential contributor. Last, we measure economic ties by considering the lagged total trade between the United States and the potential contributor.

We find quantitative evidence that the political, cultural, and economic closeness between the United States and a potential contributor plays a significant role in shaping the willingness of states to join U.S. coalitions. Table 5.4 presents the estimates from the multinomial model and the logit model (distilled from Table 5.3).

First, consider the estimated effect of the *U.S. alliance indicator*, which captures political and military ties, in the multinomial logit model, where results are presented in the second two columns. In the multinomial logistic regression, we estimate how each independent variable affects each possible outcome (i.e., minor partner and major partner) separately. Our empirical model predicts that preexisting alliances slightly increase the probability that a country will join a coalition as either a minor contributor (+1.3 percent) or major one (+2.0 percent); the latter estimate is statistically significant at the 1-percent level. Estimation of the effect in the logit model—found in column 4 of Table 5.4—suggests that an alliance between the United States and a potential contributor increases the probability that the state will join the coalition in any capacity by 3.6 percentage points. Recall that in the logit model, the outcome is not categorical but binary (i.e., nonpartner or partner), so only one effect is estimated per independent variable. For context, the unconditional probability that a state joins a coalition as a minor partner in our sample is 8.6 percent; as a major partner, 6.0 percent.

Next, we consider the effect of economic ties on the probability of coalition participation, measured by the logged sum of imports and exports between the United States and the potential coalition partner in the year preceding the intervention. The results again provide support for the hypothesis. Estimates from the multinomial logit model predicts that a 1-percent increase in trade between a country and the United

Table 5.3
Determinants of Coalition Support

	Multinomial Logistic Regression		Logit
	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Minor Partner</i>	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Major Partner</i>	<i>Partner</i>
(Baseline probability)	8.6	6.0	14.6
Alliance indicator: U.S.–potential partner	1.3***	2.0****	3.6****
Log lagged trade: U.S.–potential partner	0.2	0.9****	1.3****
Percentage English-speaking	1.7	2.1****	4.6****
Home region	7.3****	10.8****	19.5****
IGO sponsorship	3.4***	1.3	5.2***
Polity score	0.5****	0.0	0.5****
Log lagged per capita income	2.0****	0.1	2.1****
Recession indicator	–0.9	–0.5	–1.6**
Central America	–4.9*	–2.6*	–8.4*
Europe	–3.3**	–2.5*	–6.9*
West Africa	–2.7**	–1.8*	–5.4*
East Africa	–0.2	–0.5	–1.3
Middle East	–3.3	–2.7**	–7.1**
South Asia	–1.5	–1.4	–3.5
No ground component	–3.6*	–1.0*	–4.8*
Advisory	0.1	2.7	3.9
COIN	13.9****	1.9	16.4****
Combat	–2.1*	–0.7**	–3.0*
Deterrence	–3.2*	–1.5*	–5.1*
Post–Cold War indicator	–10.6*	–5.0*	–16.7*
Post-9/11 indicator	–0.7	0.3	–0.3
Year	0.1***	0.0	0.2**
Observations	4,549		
R-squared	0.222		0.240

NOTES: Results from three different models are displayed in this table. The second and third columns come from the multinomial logit model, in which we estimated changes in probability of minor and major partner outcomes separately. There were no coalition interventions in South America. East Asia is the base region.

* $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

Table 5.4
Determinants of Coalition Support: Relationship with the United States

	Multinomial Logistic Regression		Logit
	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Minor</i> Partner	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Major</i> Partner	<i>Partner</i>
(Baseline probability)	8.6	6.0	14.6
Alliance indicator: U.S.–potential partner	1.3***	2.0****	3.6****
Log lagged trade: U.S.–potential partner	0.2	0.9****	1.3****
Percentage English-speaking	1.7	2.1****	4.6****
Observations	4,549		
R-squared	0.222		0.240

NOTES: Results from three different models are displayed in this table. The second and third columns come from the multinomial logit model, in which we estimate changes in probability of minor and major partner outcomes separately. There are no coalition interventions in South America. East Asia is the base region.

* $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

States increases the probability of the state joining as a major contributor (0.9 percent) but not as a minor one (0.2 percent). The logit model estimates the effect of the independent variables on the likelihood of coalition participation in any capacity. The estimates suggest that trade entices potential partners to join a coalition and predict that a 1-percent increase in lagged trade with the United States leads to a 1.3-percent increase in the likelihood that a potential partner joins the coalition. Overall, we can say that trade does seem to increase the likelihood of coalition membership, but this relationship is weaker and less robust than the one between political ties and military contribution to U.S.-led coalitions.

Last, we consider the effect of cultural ties, looking at how the likelihood of joining a coalition varies depending on the share of the population that speaks English. In the multinomial logit model, we find no evidence that the size of the English-speaking population has an effect (17 percent) on the likelihood of a state joining as a minor partner relative to the base outcome of abstention. However, we observe a statistically significant and positive effect of cultural ties on the likelihood of a state joining a coalition as a major contributor. If the share of English speakers in a state increases by 1 percent, the model predicts that the state is 2.1 percent more likely to contribute as a major coalition partner. Next, we assess the effect of cultural ties on the binary outcome variable in the logit and linear probability models. In the logistic regression, we continue to observe strongly significant estimates. A 1-percent increase in the share of a country's English-speaking populace increases the likelihood that the state joins the coalition in any capacity by 4.6 percent. These findings indicate a strong relation-

ship between cultural ties and the likelihood of coalition participation. In our data, language does not vary over time. Language, like all other time invariant observed and unobserved characteristics, are effectively removed when we use the state-level fixed-effects model. In other words, we cannot compare state X having a high number of English speakers with state X having a low number of English speakers because, in our data, the percentage of English speakers is fixed over time. Cultural similarities greatly increase the likelihood of participation. The effect of cultural ties seems to drive attraction of major partners exclusively; we find no evidence that that cultural ties entice states to join as minor partners.

Qualitative Analysis

The expectation that states with closer ties to the United States will be more likely to join coalitions is also largely supported by our case study analysis. But our case studies also underscore that, although relationships with the United States can play a role in coalition formation, states often join coalitions without such ties. We find that NATO members and other close U.S. allies are consistently major contributors to the five coalitions that we considered and that ties with the United States clearly play a role in coalition formation for these states, but we also observed many states without traditionally close ties to the United States that have been willing to join U.S. coalitions for reasons ranging from security to side payments. In some instances in our five case studies, we observed countries that joined coalitions and contributed forces as part of an effort to improve their ties with the United States or to build political capital. This is true not only of nontraditional partners but even for some close U.S. allies. Finally, a relationship with the United States clearly does matter for those deciding not to join a coalition.

In Afghanistan, for example, the major contributors were largely (1) NATO allies with close trade, security, and political ties to the United States and (2) aspiring NATO members, such as Romania and Georgia, that used the intervention as a way to “audition” or demonstrate commitment to the alliance. These countries contributed out of obligation under NATO Article 5 but also to demonstrate visibly their support of the United States and to build political capital for the future. Notably, they made contributions despite having almost nothing at stake in terms of their own direct national security interests vis-à-vis the designs of Osama bin Laden. This lack of investment in the outcome seems to have affected the extent of member states’ contributions but not their willingness to participate. This willingness was very much conditioned on their ties to the United States and what was required to maintain those ties over the longer term. As Mattelaer has explained, “Europeans, at least by their own calculations, have hardly anything at stake in Afghanistan, apart from providing the minimum required to satisfy American expectations.”¹ Relationship with the United States can also explain

¹ Alexander Mattelaer, “How Afghanistan Has Strengthened NATO,” *Survival*, Vol. 53, No. 6, 2011, p. 137.

who did not join the coalition. Major U.S. adversaries, such as Russia and China, have been active in Afghanistan but did not join the U.S. coalition. Neither did such countries as Pakistan and India, although they did support U.S. efforts in more-symbolic ways. This is an important reminder that, although coalition membership itself might be more common for close U.S. security and trade partners, the United States often receives other types of support from noncoalition members that share U.S. objectives but cannot officially join a coalition for political or other reasons.

The Global Coalition Against ISIS features some examples in which the relationship with the United States mattered and others in which it did not. Although the coalition had 81 members and 29 troop-contributing partners, the largest contributors and the ones that made the biggest substantive contribution to the capabilities of the coalition were once again U.S. NATO partners and such countries as Saudi Arabia, another close U.S. strategic partner. Most members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development participated in the coalition in some way, and many of the non-NATO contributors were significant U.S. trade partners. Not all members had strong ties, past coalition experience, or formal alliances with the United States. Of these nontraditional partners, some (such as Morocco and the UAE) acted mainly to advance their own security, providing smaller contributions, and others provided only support to airstrikes.² Once again, countries that were ostensibly also fighting ISIS in Syria, such as Iran and Russia, did not join the coalition, although they were operating in the same theater with supposedly overlapping objectives. Thus, antagonistic political relationships often seem to be enough to thwart the formation of a coalition, even when objectives and goals overlap.

Similarly, relationships with the United States mattered in important ways in the coalition formed to fight the Gulf War but cannot explain all coalition member decisions. U.S. allies were motivated by a loyalty to the United States and/or the fear that inaction would result in military or economic abandonment by the United States. The United Kingdom, for example, had strong diplomatic and intelligence ties to the United States but also relied on it to maintain international security. Its desire to protect this relationship made it the second largest contributor to the effort.³ Other NATO states, which depended on U.S. financial and military aid, required more coercion from the United States but still contributed out of a sense of obligation and to avoid U.S. retaliation.⁴ Still, a relationship with the United States did not matter for all coalition members; even countries with ties to the United States—for example, Syria, Bangladesh, and Pakistan—joined the coalition largely for security reasons.⁵

² IISS, 1961–2018; RUCID.

³ Bennet, Leppgold, and Unger, 1994, p. 44.

⁴ Bennet, Leppgold, and Unger, 1994, p. 44.

⁵ Raanan Lipshitz, “The Road to Desert Storm,” *Organization Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1995, p. 251.

Ties to the United States also played a role in the EFP deployment but were less relevant for the coalition that conducted the post–World War II occupation of Japan. The coalition formed for the EFP deployment was driven and held together by the NATO alliance and the strong relationship that each partner had with the United States and with each other. Notably, however, in this instance, it was the European NATO partners pushing to build the EFP coalition using their own commitment to maintain the viability and credibility of the NATO alliance. For some contributors, participation reflected an effort to curry favor with the United States and to consolidate and ensure continued support for and participation in the alliance.⁶

In the case of post–World War II Japan, close ties between the United Kingdom and the United States, although relevant to coalition formation, played only a minor role in explaining British motives. British participation was more heavily influenced by geopolitics and a desire for influence than by alliance duties or obligations in this case. British leaders saw participation in the coalition as key to maintaining regional influence rather than as an effort to support a close ally or build ties with the United States.

On net, then, relationship with the United States does appear to play a significant role in the willingness of countries to contribute forces to U.S. coalitions. Alliances and economic and political ties to the United States were frequently cited across situations as reasons that the coalition members chose to participate. Of course, close U.S. partners often forgo participation in U.S. coalitions (e.g., occupation of Iraq), and large U.S. coalitions have consistently involved nontraditional members and nonpartners that join for a host of other reasons, such as influence and security. Thus, a country's preexisting relationship with the United States is not the only reason that states join, and the lack of close ties does not seem to be a deal-breaker in many contexts.

Summary

Our qualitative and quantitative results suggest that states with closer ties to the United States—whether military, political, economic, or cultural—do seem more likely to join U.S. coalitions. This result is supported by our quantitative analysis with the relationship being largest in substantive terms for alliances and cultural ties but weaker for economic ties. Our research confirms that a state's relationship with the United States often drives it to join the coalition—either because of a perceived obligation or a desire to maintain the relationship, protect economic benefits, or earn political capital or favor. Our case studies also underscore that the absence of a relationship with the United States does not prevent a state from joining a coalition. In each intervention we considered, there were “nontraditional” partners that joined because of the region, a shared goal, or a shared adversary. In addition, our research suggests that having a close relationship with the United States does not guarantee a state will join the coalition.

⁶ Atlantische Commissie, “NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence: Dutch and Canadian Perspectives,” YouTube, 2018.

There are frequent situations in which states opt out of coalition membership because they do not support the cause or they have other priorities.

Furthermore, expanding the aperture of qualitative evidence beyond our five case studies, we note by way of simple descriptive data that relationships with the United States might be a strong predictor of *major* contributors; as summarized in Box 5.1, 74 different countries qualified as major contributors in at least one of the 37 U.S. coalitions conducted between 1946 and 2018 (including troop-contributing host nations when applicable). Not surprisingly, the list of the top ten most-frequent major contributors to U.S. coalitions is rounded out by NATO states, led by the United Kingdom and France (23 U.S. coalitions each); what is perhaps more interesting is the diversity of regional powers in the Asia-Pacific and in the Middle East and North Africa that have qualified as major contributors between four to eight different times.

Box 5.1

Frequency of Major Contributor Status in U.S. Coalitions, by Country (1946–2018)

Partner Countries (including troop-contributing hosts)	Number of Times as Major Contributor
<i>France, United Kingdom</i>	23
<i>Canada, Italy</i>	16
<i>Netherlands, Turkey</i>	11
<i>Australia</i>	10
<i>Belgium, Germany</i>	9
<i>Indonesia, Spain</i>	8
<i>Bangladesh, Denmark, Pakistan, Poland</i>	6
<i>India</i>	5
<i>Jordan, Malaysia, South Korea, Thailand, UAE</i>	4
<i>Bahrain, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine</i>	3
<i>Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iraq, Kuwait, Nepal, Norway, Romania, Russia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tunisia</i>	2
<i>Afghanistan, Argentina, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, Fiji, Finland, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, Oman, Paraguay, Slovakia, South Africa, South Vietnam, Sweden, Uruguay, Zambia, Zimbabwe</i>	1

NOTE: Current NATO members are italicized. NATO members that have never qualified as a major U.S. coalition contributor are Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Portugal, and Slovenia.

Looking to the future, the finding that states with close ties to the United States are more likely to join coalitions has significant implications for planning and preparation for possible future conflicts. In the case of Russia, the United States already has a strong base of potential partners, including NATO allies and others, that have close ties and willingness to join military operations when required (though this willingness should not be taken for granted or assumed). The Pacific, however, is a tougher situation. Although the United States has several key allies, it has only lukewarm political and military ties with most states in the region (e.g., Vietnam, Philippines), more-limited economic ties, and weak cultural ties. This poses potential challenges to the United States when it comes to forming effective coalitions able to counter major adversaries, such as China. (To those ends, we again note the most-frequent major Asia-Pacific contributors identified in Table 5.5.) Furthermore, it is worth noting in the present context that having an alliance or some other close tie with the United States by no means guarantees that a partner or ally will join a coalition. The United States should not assume support in a coalition operation from even its closest allies.

A related question that we do not directly consider here—but that is highly relevant to a discussion about partnerships and future conflict—is whether states that have close ties with both the United States and its adversaries are more or less likely to join U.S.-led coalition operations. In other words, are there situations in which close U.S. allies do not contribute because of competing alliances or relationships? This is a relevant question for policymakers thinking about a potential conflict in Asia, where possible U.S. security partners also have relationships with China. Is it enough to build close ties with a potential partner or is undermining their ties to adversaries also required? The example of France in the Gulf War is instructive. France was a traditional ally of the United States, permanent member of the UNSC, and one of the

Table 5.5
Determinants of Coalition Support: Home Region

	Multinomial Logistic Regression		Logit
	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Minor</i> Partner	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Major</i> Partner	<i>Partner</i>
(Baseline probability)	8.6	6.0	14.6
Home region	7.3****	10.8****	19.5****
Observations	4,549		
R-squared	0.222		0.240

NOTES: Results from three different models are displayed in this table. The second and third columns come from the multinomial logit model, in which we estimate changes in probability of minor and major partner outcomes separately. There are no coalition interventions in South America. East Asia is the base region.

* $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

first 12 NATO states. France contributed significant resources to the U.S. coalition. However, the French military maintained separate objectives and command structures from the United States—making sure to publicly express this divergence throughout the conflict. This is because France wanted to protect its ties with Arab and North African partners, which were concerned that the United States wanted to occupy the Middle East. However, the UNSC formally rejected France’s limited participation as “appeasement.”⁷ The French public also expressed a strong desire to support the United States and the United Kingdom. This pressure eventually caused the National Assembly to vote to allow the use of French forces in the Gulf.⁸ In this case, it was only the pressure of an international organization and public opinion that drove a strong U.S. ally to choose the United States over ties with other partners. This suggests that competing alliances can be a powerful impediment to the ability of the United States to win coalition support. We return to this in the conclusion of this chapter and the report.

H7. Home Region

Quantitative Analysis

Our next hypothesis considers the effect of geography, positing that states are more likely to join coalitions when the conflict takes place in their home region. Results from the quantitative analysis, shown in Table 5.6 (distilled from Table 5.3), strongly support this hypothesis and are significant, robust, and persistent. Depending on the model specification and empirical strategy, we estimate that, when an intervention takes place in a country’s home region, the probability that the potential contributor will join the coalition increases by 19.5 percent (see column 4 of Table 5.5). States are 7.3 percentage points more likely to join as minor partners and 10.8 percentage points more likely to join as major partners when interventions occur in their home region. Across both specifications and in all outcomes, the estimates of the effect are positive and statistically significant at the 1-percent level.

Although the findings illustrate that the U.S. military is wise to search for regional partners when building a coalition, we know little about where the home region effect is strongest. To investigate this issue, we constructed an additional model specification in which the general home region indicator is replaced by a set of indicators for specific home regions (e.g., European, Central American). All other model components remain the same. We expect the specific home region indicators to be positive across the board because we have evidence that the aggregate home region effect is positive. Table 5.6 lists the estimated coefficients from the multinomial logit, logit, and fixed-effects regressions, respectively.

⁷ Englehardt, 1991, p. 49.

⁸ Bennet, Leppgold, and Unger, 1994, p. 59.

Table 5.6
Determinants of Coalition Support: Specific Home Region

	Multinomial Logistic Regression		Logit
	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Minor</i> Partner	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Major</i> Partner	<i>Partner</i>
(Baseline probability)	8.6	6.0	14.6
Home region x Central America	13.1***	0.2	12.0***
Home region x Europe	13.2****	28.6****	42.1****
Home region x West Africa	46.8***	26.4	74.9****
Home region x East Africa	0.8	7.1	7.5
Home region x Middle East	-3.0*	11.4****	7.4***
Home region x South Asia	3.6	3.5	8.1
Home region x East Asia	-4.7*	14.0	12.5
Observations	4,549		
R-squared	0.222		0.240

NOTES: Results from three different models are displayed in this table. The second and third columns come from the multinomial logit model, in which we estimate changes in probability of minor and major partner outcomes separately. There are no coalition interventions in South America. East Asia is the base region.

* $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

We observe particularly strong home region effects in Europe, the Middle East, and West Africa. The estimated coefficient for the West African home region effect is large, but there are fewer situations in which an intervention takes place in West Africa and West African states are potential allies (15) than there are involving Europe and European allies (268) or the Middle East and Middle Eastern potential contributors (178). If a coalition intervention develops in Europe, European states are 13.2 percent more likely to join as minor partners and 28.6 percent more likely to join as major partners. In the logit model, the estimated effect is 42.1 percentage points. In the Middle East, the home region effect marginally decreases the likelihood of coalition participation as minor partners (-3.0 percent) but substantially increases the likelihood of joining the coalition as a major partner (11.4 percent). The estimated aggregate effect is positive and statistically significant in the logit (7.4 percent) model as well.

Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis also provides strong evidence that the region of the intervention matters for state decisions about joining coalitions. Accounts of the Gulf War and the coalition that conducted it consistently note that, for the regional partners (Middle East, North Africa), membership in the coalition was driven by the clear and

immediate threat posed by Saddam's violation of sovereignty as state leaders feared they would become the Iraqi military's next target. Had the intervention occurred in another region, many of these local partners might not have been willing to contribute forces or other resources to the coalition effort.⁹ Furthermore, the contributions of regional partners were sizable. Based on our data, the United Kingdom and Egypt contributed the largest numbers of forces (other than the United States) at 35,000 each, followed by Saudi Arabia with 20,000–40,000, Syria with 20,000, France with 15,000–20,000, and Kuwait with 10,500–14,000. In other words, regional partners were major contributors to this intervention. This level of regional commitment is indicative of the significance of the perceived threat and those partners' willingness to take an active role in their defense.

Membership of the Global Coalition Against ISIS provides further support for the argument that region matters to participation. In this case, participation of regional partners reflected the proximate and immediate security threat unfolding in their region and a response to the threat it posed to their security. Jordan, for example, which shares Iraq's western border, was particularly exposed. Likewise, Saudi Arabia (which shares the longest border of all of Iraq's neighbors and is believed to have been the home of the largest number of foreign fighters involved in Syria and Iraq after Russia and Tunisia) was also under direct threat from ISIS.¹⁰ The contributions that regional partners made to the coalition were significant and reflected their own national stake in the intervention outcome. Both Jordan and Saudi Arabia flew combat sorties against ISIS—as did other Arab states farther afield, notably the UAE and Bahrain. Jordan also hosted a U.S.-led military task force designed to bolster it against spillover.¹¹

Region also played a role in other instances explored in our analysis, although the relationship is not as strong in all cases. In Afghanistan, states in the region did not provide ground forces to support U.S. or NATO operations. However, most Central Asian states did provide other types of operational support, such as allowing their territory to be used for transport; providing use of military facilities; or offering intelligence, logistical support, and/or overflight rights in exchange for substantial amounts of aid and other incentives.¹² Thus, region mattered to participation in the operation

⁹ Bennet, Leppgold, and Unger, 1994; John T. Fishel, *Liberation, Occupation, and Rescue: War Termination and Desert Storm*, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, August 31, 1992.

¹⁰ Joanna Cook and Gina Vale, *From Daesh to 'Diaspora': Tracing the Women and Minors of Islamic State*, London, United Kingdom: International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, 2018.

¹¹ The initial deployment was called Central Command Forward—Jordan (CF-J) but was later renamed Combined Joint Operations Center—Jordan (CJOC-J). See Beth Ellen Cole, Alexa Courtney, Erica Kaster, and Noah Sheinbaum, *Preserving Stability Amidst Regional Conflagration: U.S. Engagement in Jordan from 2011 to 2016*, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2017.

¹² For instance, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Pakistan initially provided U.S. basing rights for operations in Afghanistan, while Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan granted U.S. overflight rights during Operation Enduring Freedom. Even Russia granted U.S. overflight permission in 2009.

in an indirect way, but regional partners, in this case, did not officially join the coalition by providing ground forces and were clearly motivated by incentives more than by fears of regional instability.

The EFP deployment was a NATO operation aimed to specifically protect Europe (especially the Baltics) and participation reflects this focus, with the United States providing fewer forces and allowing European allies to provide the bulk of both military forces and resources. (Canada was the only other non-NATO contributor.) Although NATO missions typically have robust participation from member countries, the fact that this mission was to defend Europe—i.e., members' own territory—increased members' willingness (and feeling of obligation) to join. Participation in the coalition has been diverse and inclusive; most NATO allies provided at least some direct military support.¹³

Finally, regional ties played a role in support to the coalition conducting the post-World War II occupation of Japan. Although the United States hoped to be the sole power in Asia, the United Kingdom sought to leverage the resources of the Commonwealth—specifically, in such places as India, Australia, and New Zealand—to maintain some of its regional influence and power. Thus, the reason that forces from these specific places were involved (and that the United Kingdom sought to be involved at all) was very much tied to regional economic and political interests at stake and the goal of continued regional influence.¹⁴ Notably, this force composition is very different from that of the occupation force in the British zone of occupied Germany, which was made up of all European partners (again, a regional coalition).

Summary

Our qualitative and quantitative analyses suggest fairly unambiguously that states are more likely to join a coalition when the intervention is occurring in their own region. Beyond the key case studies examined, we find additional qualitative evidence in a diverse set of U.S. Cold War and post-Cold War cases. For instance, major contributors to combat and stability operations in Korea (1950–1957) and in Vietnam (1960–1975) were almost entirely from the Asia-Pacific region (e.g., Australia, New Zealand, India, Laos, Philippines, Thailand). Likewise, coalition stability interventions in Congo-Leopoldville, the Dominican Republic, and Grenada during the Cold War were dominated by regional peacekeepers; those in the Balkans in the post-Cold War period were disproportionately supported by European forces. (Of course, we also recognize a handful of prominent post-Cold War coalition stability operations—such

¹³ Of the 29 NATO states, all but six have contributed ground troops to EFP deterrence initiatives as of this writing: Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Iceland, Montenegro, and Turkey.

¹⁴ Bates, 1993; Roger Buckley, *Occupation Diplomacy: Britain, the United States and Japan 1945–1952*, Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

as in Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and Liberia—in which few, if any, local states qualified as major contributors.)

There appear to be several reasons for these findings. First, nations are more likely to perceive a meaningful national security threat and to want to participate in the response. Second, they might simply feel more obligation to join when the intervention occurs in their backyard. Third, they might be largely motivated by an opportunity to gain access to incentives, aid, or other benefits. Finally, they might join to ensure that they have a say in the intervention processes and policies and to prevent external domination of the neighborhood. This can explain how the United States was able to build such a diverse coalition during the Gulf War and the Global Coalition Against ISIS and would be relevant to any sort of conflict or coalition that occurred in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command area of responsibility. It is possible that if a major security threat to national stability or sovereignty were to emerge in the region, states would be more willing to partner with the United States, both to control any outcome and to have a say in postconflict policy choices.

H8. Shared Interests (Formation)

Our third hypothesis focuses on shared interests and the role they play in state decisions to join coalition interventions. First, it is worth being explicit in what we mean by this term in this context. *Shared interests* could be mutual goals or a common threat—in essence, a shared focal point that can tie coalition members together, giving them a common frame of reference. There are at least two possible hypotheses. States might join coalitions when they have different interests and objectives than the leader, viewing joining as a way to influence outcomes. In such a case, it is possible that shared objectives are not required and that states might be willing to join with a broad set of divergent goals and interests. On the other hand, it might be that states are most likely to join when they do share common goals and interests with the coalition leader.

Our quantitative analysis and case studies suggest that having shared interests does seem to support coalition membership: States do seem somewhat more likely to join when they share interests with the United States. However, it is by no means the case that the objectives of different partners must be wholly the same or entirely overlapping. Diversity of interests, including those of states with very narrow self-interested goals, can provide a level of cohesion and commitment that helps hold the coalition together. In other words, coalition membership appears to rest on the existence of a shared set of results but choices of means and side objectives pursued along the way can differ widely.

Quantitative Analysis

We quantitatively assess shared interests in two ways. First, we consider trade flows between the potential partner and the intervention target. The United States is more likely to intervene in places where it has economic interests; therefore, if a potential

partner also has economic interests in the target country, that would provide a shared interest. Second, we consider the congruence of the UN voting records of the United States and the potential partner. Although we are specifically focused on shared interests regarding the intervention, it is reasonable to assume that if states have similar voting preferences across a wide variety of issues in the UN—note, the *UN agreement* variable reflects voting similarities across an entire UN session—they might also have shared interests regarding the intervention in question. Neither is a perfect proxy, but together they can provide some insight.

Note that the coefficients for trade are not in Table 5.3, which lists all coefficient estimates in the primary model. Data on UN voting congruence are sparse; their absence makes an observation unusable in the estimation of all model parameters. For illustration, see the “Observations” count in Table 5.7: We have only 1,401 observations to estimate the model parameters, whereas 4,225 are used in the primary analysis. Table 5.7 lists only the relevant coefficients for this hypothesis. We employ the full set of covariates found in Table 5.3; they are simply omitted for brevity’s sake. The complete list of estimates can be found in Appendix C.

As shown in Table 5.7, we find that both (1) trade between the potential partner and the target state(s) and (2) voting congruence between the potential partner and the United States are both statistically significant predictors of contributions to U.S. led coalitions. Estimates from the multinomial logistic model predict that a 1-percent increase in trade has no effect on the likelihood that a state joins as a minor partner, but larger trade flows with the target state(s) improve the odds that a potential contributor will join as a major partner (0.2 percent). Similarly, in the logit model, a 1-percent increase in trade with the target leads to an increase of 1 percentage point in

Table 5.7
Determinants of Coalition Support: Shared Interest

	Multinomial Logistic Regression		Logit
	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Minor</i> Partner	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Major</i> Partner	<i>Partner</i>
Baseline probability	12.4	8.5	20.8
Log lagged trade: Target–potential partner	0.4	0.2****	1.0****
UN agreement: U.S.–potential partner	42.9****	8.3****	72.8****
Observations	1,401		
R-squared	0.374		0.386

NOTES: Results from three different models are displayed in this table. The two center columns come from the multinomial logit model, in which we estimate changes in probability of minor and major partner outcomes separately. In this model, we added “UN agreement: U.S.–pot. partner” and “Log lagged trade: Target–pot. partner” to the specification, but the other coefficients are omitted from the table to save space. See Appendix C for a comprehensive list of coefficients. **** $p < 0.01$.

the likelihood that the state will contribute in any capacity—an estimated effect that is statistically significant at the 1-percent level. For context, in this restricted sample ($N = 1,401$), the baseline probability of minor partnership is 12.4 percent and major partnership is 8.5 percent.

The measure of UN voting congruence ranges from 0, indicating complete disagreement within a UN voting session, to 1, indicating entirely identical voting behavior. The coefficients in Table 5.7 estimate the effect of a one-unit change in the explanatory variable (i.e. “UN agreement: U.S.–pot. partner”) on the percentage change in the probability of the potential partner joining the U.S.-led coalition. As seen in columns 2 and 3 of Table 5.7, the multinomial logistic model predicts that shifting from complete UN voting dissonance (0) to harmony (1) increases the likelihood, on average, that a state joins as a minor partner by 42.9 percentage points and as a major partner by 8.3 percent. In the logit model, where, again, the outcome is binary (i.e., either partnership or abstinence), a shift from no UN voting agreement to complete agreement improves the likelihood of coalition participation by 72.8 percent. Estimates across both models and all outcomes (minor partner, major partner, and partner) are statistically significant at the 1-percent level. The size of these relationships is substantial, but it is worth noting that this UN congruence score is likely to vary by much less for an average set of states and even for a group of potential coalition partners than it does in the extreme example here.

Qualitative Analysis

A review of our case studies supports the finding of the quantitative analysis that shared interests do matter to the decisions that states make about whether to join a U.S.-led coalition, but our case studies also add nuance, suggesting that even states with divergent interests might join a coalition to pursue national aims. Our qualitative analysis further suggests that although shared interests might be a factor in determining whether states join a coalition, they are far from the most important ones.

The EFP coalition is an example in which shared interests are important but states also have divergent priorities and reasons for joining. The shared interests of NATO partners are clear: to deter a Russian advance and solidify the alliance. But EFP members differ significantly in their objectives vis-à-vis Russia and their notions about how best to respond to that risk.¹⁵ For example, front-line countries that border Russia tend to take the Russian threat more seriously than the other members, and they are more prepared to go to great lengths to improve their own security. For them, the coalition is largely about security.¹⁶ Others are more ambivalent about the deterrence objectives;

¹⁵ “Common Declaration of the Defence Ministers of the Enhanced Forward Presence Host and Framework Nations on the Implementation of EFP,” June 29, 2017.

¹⁶ Stephanie Pezard, Andrew Radin, Thomas S. Szayna, and F. Stephen Larrabee, *European Relations with Russia: Threat Perceptions, Responses, and Strategies in the Wake of the Ukrainian Crisis*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1579-A, 2017, p. 5.

instead, they see within the coalition the opportunity to pursue their own narrower objectives. Italy, for example, wants NATO to focus more on Europe's southern front (i.e., the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and North Africa) and sees deploying troops to the Baltics as part of a *quid pro quo*.¹⁷ Elisabetta Trenta, Italy's minister of defense, made this explicit during a September 2018 visit to the Italian contingent in Latvia. The deployment, she said, is a "token of Italy's solidarity towards its NATO allies." She continued, "and it is exactly in the name of this solidarity that, during the last Summits, we have asked that greater attention be granted by NATO also to the Southern flank, the Mediterranean—a strategic area for Italy—where risks of different nature are concentrated: in the first place, human trafficking directed toward our shores."¹⁸ France more or less seeks the same thing. It wants to demonstrate its support for other NATO countries' concerns in the hope that those countries might then support French interests. In other words, NATO allies have been willing to join the coalition despite differing national objectives and national means because of their shared interests and commitments.

The case of the Global Coalition Against ISIS is another one in which members share a core threat and common set of interests but have widely divergent objectives and thoughts about the best way to achieve those objectives. From the start, there was clear agreement across the coalition about the threat posed by ISIS. Among the most-militarily capable partners that also made the largest contributions to the Defeat ISIS campaign, there was a general agreement that ISIS represented a particularly virulent strain of terrorism, threatening regional stability, posing a risk of genocide to minorities, and raising the prospects of attacks in the West given the large flows of foreign fighters who joined the group from Europe. Iraq's neighbors, particularly the Arab states, had an even more focused view of the threat, fearing spillover from Iraq and Syria into their own territory. However, there were also clear divergences in objectives and priorities on key issues, such as whether to intervene in Syria, how to work with the Kurds, and what the end-state goal of an expansion of the intervention into Syria would be. Turkey, for instance, joined the coalition out of concerns about the ISIS threat but otherwise had a very different set of objectives vis-à-vis Syria and the Kurds—specifically, to elevate the threat of the People's Protection Units (a Syrian Kurdish militia that operated along the Turkish border and has links to the Turkish Kurdistan Worker's Party) over the threat posed by ISIS.¹⁹ Differing objectives, then, did not prevent states from joining the coalition, but having a set of shared core inter-

¹⁷ baldefcolblog, "Is the Italian Participation to the Enhanced Forward Presence at Risk?" *Blog on Baltic Security*, October 17, 2018.

¹⁸ Italian Ministry of Defence, "Ministry of Defence: Minister Trenta Visits Poland and Latvia," press release, September 25, 2018.

¹⁹ Sam Heller, *Turkey's 'Turkey First' Syria Policy*, The Century Foundation, April 12, 2017.

ests does seem to have been important. The shared perceived threat emanating from ISIS appears to be what drove coalition partners to contribute forces.

The case of the Gulf War is another good example of the “shared ends, differing means” view of coalition formation. Coalition partners were united in their core interests and objectives: to liberate Kuwait and contain Saddam’s aggression. Most also shared a commitment to protecting the norm of territorial sovereignty and agreed on the severity of Saddam’s threat to that norm. Partners also shared a clear understanding and common perception of the threat. For many states, particularly the regional members, the security concern was the primary reason they joined the coalition—to protect their own national security and prevent continued aggression from Saddam. However, member states also held a variety of additional and sometimes conflicting narrower objectives. States differed as to whether they perceived Saddam’s occupation of Kuwait as a direct national security threat or more generally as a threat to norms of sovereignty, and this difference shaped their goals, level of commitment, and desired outcome. States also differed in their objectives regarding the United States. Some sought to build closer ties, some to avoid the costs of nonparticipation, and others to ensure enough influence to prevent a long-term U.S. presence in the region. That states were working toward different aims was a challenge for the coalition, but the immediacy of the shared threat held the partnerships together.

In the case of Afghanistan, coalition partners once again shared a set of core interests and desired ends. Coalition members shared a common perceived threat (in broad terms and at least at the start): terrorists and militant groups that sought to retain their safe haven and resist Western influence. In the post-9/11 environment, states were ready and willing to sign onto these core interests, believing that action against terrorist safe havens was essential to international security. But partners also had their own, narrower objectives. Our analysis suggests that many partners (including close U.S. allies) were involved in Afghanistan mostly to satisfy the United States—whose aid they saw as key to their own security—rather than because they had clear and consistent views on the objectives in Afghanistan or the goals of the operation. Some states, such as Romania and Bulgaria, used participation in the coalition to make the case for their inclusion in NATO. Differing national objectives and only a diffuse threat in the early years of the conflict meant that coalition members had divergent views of political objectives that they were pursuing and their prioritization.²⁰ Although some members of the coalition (particularly the major English-speaking nations—the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia) operated as though they were primarily conducting COIN operations, others (such as Germany, whose experience with such operations was much more limited) viewed their role as primarily to assist in stabilizing the country and aiding postconflict enforcement.²¹ Still others (particularly

²⁰ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, p. 534.

²¹ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, pp. 532–533.

France) might have had significant experience with COIN campaigns but did not wish to commit extensive resources to the conflict.²²

Of all the case studies, shared interests seem least relevant to the postwar occupation of Japan. In this instance, coalition members had largely distinct objectives and consistently pursued those objectives at the expense of any more-general coalition goals and priorities. Ostensibly, all partners involved in the mission had stabilization of Japan as their primary interest, along with postwar reconstruction. This shared interest was relevant to the formation of the coalition; below the surface, however, there were more-substantial differences. Although the United States sought to stabilize and rebuild Japan and simultaneously to assert its influence in the region, the United Kingdom similarly saw the coalition as a chance to extend Commonwealth and British influence in the region. Specifically, British participation in the occupation of Japan sought “to assert some influence on future United States surrender and occupation policies.”²³ Furthermore, the formation of the BCOF was complicated by diverging national agendas early on as each partner jockeyed to ensure its own independent influence, to leverage participation for national status, and to advance domestic agendas. Although the United Kingdom pushed the intervention to maintain influence and prestige, Australia acted to improve its own status and build economic ties, New Zealand joined only reluctantly to maintain commonwealth unity, and India was under direct British rule and so was forced to intervene (though it welcomed the status gains from such an intervention, as did Australia).²⁴ These conflicting objectives did not prevent coalition formation, but this case study underscores that states need some core common interest even if they also pursue a wide variety of self-interested motives.

Summary

Across the five case studies, it seems that the role of shared interests remains far from straightforward. Coalition formation does seem centered on some core shared interests or ends. States are more likely to join when there is a common threat or a common goal or end state. However, this does not mean that coalition members cannot also be pursuing a variety of individual goals with their own set of means. States consistently join coalitions to advance their own independent priorities; even when they share objectives with other members, they might perceive those priorities differently and have different ideas about how to pursue them. Diversity of objective is not necessarily a bad thing when it comes to coalition formation. It can create a more diverse coalition, and this might have advantages for cohesion, longevity, and legitimacy. However, diversity of

²² Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, pp. 533–534.

²³ Buckley, 1982, p. 87.

²⁴ Ann Trotter, *New Zealand and Japan 1945–1952: The Occupation and the Peace Treaty*, London: Athlone Press Ltd., 1990, pp. 48–49; Gordon Daniels, “New Zealand and the Occupation of Japan,” in Ian Nish, ed., *The British Commonwealth and the Allied Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952*, Boston, Mass.: Global Oriental, 2013, pp. 66–67.

objectives can also create challenges for coalitions in achieving key objectives, agreeing on strategy, and operating effectively. One question is whether shared interests are as important as the role played by home region and ties to the United States in explaining why states form coalitions. It is difficult to compare the relative importance of these different factors. All likely matter and are important in the decision about forming a partnership. States seem considerably more likely to join interventions that occur in their own region and might be especially likely to do so when they have strong ties with the United States already and when they have shared interests. However, we observe in our analysis that even close allies and states with shared interests might choose not to join a coalition if the cause is perceived to be of low importance, if the burden too high, or (as we discuss in the next section) when the coalition lacks international legitimacy.

H7. Intergovernmental Leadership

Our analysis in Chapter Four showed that international legitimacy was a key consideration for the United States when deciding whether to work through a coalition. In this section, we consider whether international legitimacy, as measured by intergovernmental approval or leadership, is a factor considered by states when deciding whether to join a coalition.

Although leadership and sponsorship are distinct, we consider them together. Interventions led by an IGO might have a commander from that IGO (e.g., a NATO commander); an IGO-sponsored intervention might only have the approval or the backing of the IGO. In either case, the effect is largely the same—that of establishing approval and legitimacy at a level above the national.

Our analysis finds reasonably consistent support for the role of IGO leadership or sponsorship in driving coalition participation. Even when partners might join in the absence of IGO involvement, across case studies and in our statistical analysis, IGO involvement or approval is associated with an increased likelihood that a given potential partner joins the coalition.

Quantitative Analysis

Table 5.8 (distilled from Table 5.3) contains the estimates from both models testing the hypothesis that IGO sponsorship will draw partners through enhanced legitimacy. We find that the results consistently support the hypothesis. In the multivariate model, IGO sponsorship significantly increases the likelihood that a state joins as a minor partner (3.4 percent) but not as a major one; the latter estimate is statistically insignificant. As a reminder, the observed likelihood that a state joins the coalition as a minor partner is 8.6 percent, and 6.0 percent of potential partners make major contributions to U.S.-led coalitions. Again, only the former is a significant effect. In the logit model, where the outcome measures merely whether a state joins or abstains, IGO approval increases the likelihood that a state contributes by 5.2 percent, which is statistically

Table 5.8
Determinants of Coalition Support: IGOs

	Multinomial Logistic Regression		Logit
	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Minor Partner</i>	% Change in Probability of Joining as <i>Major Partner</i>	<i>Partner</i>
(Baseline probability)	8.6	6.0	14.6
IGO sponsorship	3.4***	1.3	5.2***
Observations	4,549		
R-squared	0.222		0.240

NOTES: Results from three different models are displayed in this table. The two center columns come from the multinomial logit model, in which we estimate changes in probability of minor and major partner outcomes separately. There were no coalition interventions in South America. East Asia is the base region. * $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

significant. Thus, the quantitative analysis provides evidence for the theory that IGO support will draw additional support.

Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis provides consistent support for the role of IGO leadership or sponsorship in driving coalition participation. In our case studies, IGO leadership or sponsorship seems to matter a great deal in some situations but less in others. Support for the hypothesis seems strongest in the instances of Afghanistan and the Gulf War. In both instances, IGO sponsorship or approval played a role in widening membership and persuading reluctant partners to join. In the case of Afghanistan, the fact that members had chosen to invoke Article 5—for the first time in the alliance’s history—was significant and drove the commitments of many NATO allies who might not have committed forces otherwise. Wide domestic public support in NATO countries, at least at the start of the operation, was bolstered by institutional NATO approval, and this provided further impetus to allied military contributions.²⁵ It is not clear that participation would have been as extensive without NATO involvement, given that many European allies did not perceive a truly direct or immediate threat from the situation in Afghanistan.

In the Gulf War, it was UN approval and the UNSC resolution that bolstered support and gave the United States leverage to encourage participation from a wider group of allies (including regional partners) and even to accrue nonmilitary contributions from traditional adversaries that might otherwise have been opposed (e.g., Russia). Following the UN-mandated ultimatum against Saddam, some UN member

²⁵ Fabrice Pothier, *Winning European Hearts and Minds on Afghanistan*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Europe, October 10, 2008, p. 84.

states felt compelled to contribute to maintain their own credibility by then committing forces to uphold that ultimatum. The Bush administration leveraged this UN mandate to bolster domestic public support and to push potential partners to contribute forces.²⁶

IGO sponsorship also mattered for EFP participation. Unlike other coalitions described in this report, it is NATO and not the U.S. military that is in charge of these recent European deterrence missions. Thus, it is not just a NATO-sponsored mission but a NATO-led mission with the United States participating as any other ally. As noted elsewhere, the mission has been uncharacteristically diverse in terms of burden-sharing among NATO partners (even for a NATO operation)—with participants from across the alliance. All NATO members except Turkey and Iceland (which has not sent armed forces but has deployed military observers) have contributed to the deployment. NATO leadership might play a big role in explaining why and how the coalition attracted and retained such diverse membership.

Two of our case studies did not have formal IGO sponsorship: the postwar occupation of Japan and the Global Coalition Against ISIS. Although IGO sponsorship clearly mattered to participation in the other case studies, the lack of IGO sponsorship in these two does not seem to have played a big role. Coalition membership in post–World War II Japan was governed by geopolitical factors and was intentionally limited. The United States accepted help only reluctantly, seeking to establish itself as the sole and principal power in Asia, as would be reflected in its policies in the occupation of Japan.²⁷ IGO sponsorship or involvement was not sought—and, furthermore, not needed, given the smaller number of partners and their ability to coordinate directly. IGO involvement also was not needed for the purposes of legitimacy, given the postwar context and the consensus that some kind of reconstruction was needed in Japan. Finally, starting immediately at the end of World War II, there were not all that many active international organizations to become involved. Most of the major IGOs that we think of now were only formed after the end of World War II.

The Global Coalition Against ISIS did not have an official IGO sponsor, but its more than 80 formal supporters (not all of which provided troops) functioned almost as an IGO, providing international approval and legitimacy that encouraged more-active military participation among the core coalition members.²⁸ In addition, the

²⁶ Bennet, Leggold, and Unger, 1994, pp. 44, 51.

²⁷ Bates, 1993, p. 218; Wood, 1998, pp. 6–7.

²⁸ As Ambassador Brett McGurk commented at a Brookings Institution roundtable in 2019,

We had to get the semblance of a coalition together before we actually launched something big. And we did, we formed about—we started in Jeddah with about 12 countries, so that the night, the night we really started airstrikes we had several Arab partners in with us in the operation. But that was a big decision point. . . . When I look back, I don't know how that would have gone, had the U.S. just acted unilaterally at that key moment. (Brookings Institution, "The Counter-ISIS Coalition: Diplomacy and Security in Action," September 10, 2019)

Global Coalition Against ISIS operated under UNSC Resolution 2170, which provided an international framework and a signal of international support for the intervention.²⁹ For Western countries seeking to join, the broad international support of the intervention (and especially the support of Muslim nations and regional players) made participation more palatable. For regional coalition members, the broad coalition encouraged participation by providing some insurance against a U.S.-led occupation or a long-term Western presence.

Summary

On net then, IGO leadership or sponsorship seems relevant to coalition formation because it provides a layer of legitimacy that increases the willingness of states to join the coalition. However, it is clear that the importance of IGO leadership or involvement varies over time, mattering more as norms of sovereignty and the preference for multilateral interventions became stronger after the end of the Cold War. Beyond the qualitative evidence provided by our in-depth case studies, a quick survey of the full universe of U.S. coalition interventions between 1946 and 2018 shows that all but one of the 17 instances between World War II and the Gulf War (during the Cold War)—the UN Operation in the Congo—were ad hoc U.S.-led missions, even though IGOs (such as the UN, OAS, and OECS) might have lent the veil of legitimacy in such places as Korea, Dominican Republic, and Grenada. By contrast, with only a couple exceptions not covered in the case study analysis (specifically, the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq and 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami relief mission), every U.S. coalition since 1991 has involved some degree of approval or joint leadership from the UN, NATO, EU, and/or ECOWAS/AU.

IGO approval might not matter for all states. Some might join willingly without formal international support. IGO involvement does matter for states on the margin, however, and, as a result, can diversify a coalition and extend the legitimacy of an operation in a way that the average coalition cannot. Notably, IGO sponsorship can bring with it logistical challenges and limitations. In an IGO-led mission, for example, the United States might need to work through formal structures, rely on consensus, and defer to partners in ways that prevent decisive action and limit flexibility. Thinking about future conflicts, IGOs could play an important role. In the event of a conflict with Russia in Europe, NATO would play a key role in building legitimacy and encouraging wide participation. In the case of continued conflict in the Middle East, past experience and regional tensions mean that the United States might need to rely on IGOs—or, at the very least, might be better able to build wide support for continued U.S. involvement with IGO support. Finally, in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, hesitancy among regional states to challenge China even implicitly might mean

²⁹ UN, Security Council Resolution 2170, 2014.

that coalitions are easier to build under the umbrella of IGOs than under direct U.S. sponsorship.

H10. Status-Seeking

Another reason (and the last hypothesis we consider here) that states might join coalitions is to advance their own international status—to be seen as major players on the international scene or at least be involved in decisionmaking that might affect their interests going forward. It is difficult to quantitatively operationalize this concept of status-seeking in a way that is consistent with what we describe in this chapter. States that seek to increase their status might be small states seeking to gain some kind of leverage, rising or revisionist states seeking to punch above their weight, states seeking to boost their economic potential, or major powers seeking to advance or underscore their great-power position of influence. As a reminder, we draw a distinction between states that respond to a status-seeking motive and those that are enticed to join a coalition by incentives provided by a coalition leader. As noted in Chapter Two, past work has underscored the role that monetary, economic, and political incentives—both explicit and implicit—have played in motivating states to join coalitions.³⁰ These incentives can come in the form of side payments, favorable trade policies, closer political ties, or military equipment sales. States might join to avoid punishment rather than to receive rewards. In this section, however, we focus on the use of coalition membership not to gain access to these types of incentives but to advance national standing and status within the international system. The gains of such a strategy are entirely intangible, and they are not incentives provided by any one coalition member; rather they come from the international system itself. Because status-seeking encapsulates a variety of motivations and is rewarded with intangible benefits, each of which is hard to measure, we choose to focus our analysis of this hypothesis on our qualitative assessment.

There is evidence in our case studies that states use coalition contributions as a way to increase international legitimacy and national status. This is true of small states (such as Serbia) but also of larger, more-developed states (such as Canada) that see coalition membership as a way to advance their international position and signal to other states their relevance to geopolitical events. Specific examples of states using coalition membership to advance their international status exist in each case study. In Afghanistan, many NATO partners contributed forces largely to appease the United States, but some, such as Canada, took on larger roles as a way to signal their importance within the international system more broadly. Canada contributed significantly more forces than would be expected given the size of its military and compared with the contributions of others. It did this in part to increase its role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and to claim a more significant role on the international stage.³¹

³⁰ Henke, 2019b.

³¹ Massie, 2013.

Throughout the war in Afghanistan (and also Iraq), aspiring NATO members (such as Georgia, Bulgaria, and Romania) used that intervention as a status-seeking tool to prove their commitment to the alliance and boost their chances of entry by demonstrating sufficiency in interoperability, deployability, and sustainability goals formalized in each country's membership action plan.³²

Status-seeking was also a clear driver of coalition membership during the post-World War II occupation of Japan. In joining the United States, for example, the British sought to leverage the collective influence and resources of the Commonwealth to build and assert its influence in the region. That is, the British contribution was an effort to bolster the status of the Commonwealth as a decisionmaker in the intervention. The status-seeking motive extended to the other commonwealth participants as well—especially Australia, the largest coalition contributor among the British Commonwealth, which sought to elevate its status as a national power and garner prestige through its participation.³³ Although a member of the British Commonwealth, Australia sought to distinguish itself as an independent power in its own right. For example, Australia insisted all its occupational forces serve under an Australian commander.³⁴ India's motives for joining the coalition were markedly similar to those of its Commonwealth peers. India viewed the postwar geopolitical landscape as an opportunity to elevate India's honor, prestige, and influence abroad—particularly in Asia.³⁵ This was reflected in India's insistence on its inclusion on international bodies such as the Far Eastern Commission (FEC), Allied Council for Japan (ACJ), and the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE). Despite its pending independence, India continued to foster a sense of pride and duty as a member of the British Commonwealth, as reflected in its role in the BCOF.³⁶

Status does not appear to have been a major driver of contributions to the Gulf War coalition, but it does seem to have been a consideration for several members. First, both Syria and Egypt viewed membership and leadership of the Arab contingent as a

³² As of this writing, Georgia was the largest non-NATO troop contributor (and third largest overall) to the mission in Afghanistan; likewise, Georgia was typically the largest non-NATO member to provide troops to the war in Iraq. Similarly, even before achieving formal NATO accession in 2004, “[Bulgaria and Romania had] acted as de facto Alliance members since the Kosovo and the Afghanistan campaigns” (Boyka Stefanova, “NATO’s Mixed-Policy Motives in the Southeast-European Enlargement: Revisiting Balkan Geopolitics,” *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2005). Also see Neil Hauer, “The West Takes NATO for Granted. One Country Still Wants in,” *The Atlantic*, April 3, 2019; and Adrian Pop, “Romania’s Challenge,” *NATO Review*, March 1, 2003.

³³ Wood, 1998, p. 9.

³⁴ Trotter, 1990, pp. 48–49.

³⁵ Rajendra Singh and Bisheshwar Prasad, eds., *Post-War Occupation Forces: Japan & South-East Asia*, Bombay, India: Orient Longmans, 1958, pp. xxxii, 96–97.

³⁶ Ian Nish, “India and the Occupation of Japan,” in Ian Nish, ed., *The British Commonwealth and the Allied Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952*, Boston, Mass.: Global Oriental, 2013, pp. 97–98, 110.

way to assert their regional influence and a sort of pan-Arabism. Egyptian officials, for example, representing a leading regional power with a stake in the contemporary political order, saw Iraq's invasion as a bid to overturn the regional balance of power and used their own membership in the coalition as a way to both counter a destabilizing change and promote Egypt's role as a regional leader and unifier.³⁷ Syria's ambitions were more limited, but the country used the intervention as a way to reintegrate itself into the Arab fold and to promote broader Arab unity. For example, Lesch notes that Syria proposed that its "forces would protect the holy places; as a pan-Arab act, their presence would help prevent further fragmentation of the Arab nation."³⁸ Another country using membership in the Gulf War coalition for status was the Czech Republic, which saw membership in the coalition as its first post-Soviet opportunity to assert its independence and participate in the international arena. (Participation also might have been used to advance its position as it lobbied for membership in the EU and NATO.³⁹) For that reason, the contribution was small but meaningful. Thus, in this case, status was not a major motivator, but it did affect participation of a few states, two of them central to the coalition's ultimate legitimacy. Similarly, status was not a major driver of coalition membership but was relevant to some of the smaller countries and partners. For example, Serbia, Cameroon, Macedonia, Moldova, Ukraine, and even Poland and Austria likely sought coalition membership at least partially as a way to advance their international standing and status.⁴⁰ Although their token contributions might have boosted their standing somewhat, however, the forces they ultimately committed were too small to give them a major role in decisionmaking or to make a substantive difference in the capabilities available for ongoing counter-ISIS operations.

Status-seeking appears to be less of a significant factor in the EFP coalition, largely because this is a NATO mission, and all NATO partners are more or less obligated to commit to it. However, it is not impossible that the diversity of participation among even small NATO allies reflects their efforts to sustain relevance.

Summary

Although not relevant in all situations or to all partners, there are clearly instances in which states seek coalition membership to advance their international position, status, and legitimacy. Although these situations often involve smaller states seeking to "punch above their weight," others can involve larger states or developing states that aspire to

³⁷ Ann Mosely Lesch, "Contrasting Reactions to the Persian Gulf Crisis: Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 1, 1991.

³⁸ Lesch, 1991, p. 42.

³⁹ Chris Hedges, "War in the Gulf: Czechoslovaks; Prague to the Desert Sands: Soldiers with a Vision," *New York Times*, February 20, 1991.

⁴⁰ Fredrik Doeser and Joakim Eidenfalk, "Using Strategic Culture to Understand Participation in Expeditionary Operations: Australia, Poland, and the Coalition Against the Islamic State," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 2019.

an international status greater than the one they have right now. Notably, it is not just membership in U.S. coalitions that states seek to exploit as means to advance status. Many China scholars have noted that China also used involvement in international UN military operations to assert its status as a major power (for example, its counter-piracy operations in Djibouti).⁴¹ Policymakers might be able to leverage this drive for status when recruiting partners. However, it is worth noting that the set of states seeking to join coalitions for status might vary over time and across interventions.

Summary

Our analysis finds some support for each of the hypotheses considered in this chapter and highlights how and when such factors as relationship with the United States, IGO sponsorship, opportunities for status-seeking, shared interests, and the region of the intervention shape the decisions that states make about when to join U.S. coalitions (see Table 5.9). In each instance, there are caveats. For example, states are consistently more likely to join U.S. coalitions when the intervention is in their home region and when they have close ties to the United States. However, most U.S. coalitions also have nontraditional partners that might not be close with the United States but see joining a specific coalition as in their interests—because of the intervention being in their region or because of shared interests with the coalition. Similarly, IGO sponsorship clearly matters for some states and can help expand the diversity of the coalition, but there are also states that might join without IGO approval. States might join coalitions because they share interests with the coalition leader, but they also are likely to bring their own nationally oriented objectives. Finally, status-seeking seems to be an important motivating factor for a select group of states.

Among these five factors, it is difficult to rank one as more important to state decisionmaking than another. Instead, states might join a given coalition for any number of mutually reinforcing reasons. For close U.S. allies, protection of that relationship might be paramount; other states might be more strongly motivated by overlapping interests. For nontraditional U.S. partners, such factors as IGO sponsorship and region might take on outsized importance in determining whether coalition membership makes sense. It is likely that it is the interaction of these different factors that leads states to join coalitions and not any one in isolation.

Furthermore, we do not claim that these five factors are the only ones that might influence decisions to join coalitions. As noted previously, we chose to focus our analysis on a select set of hypotheses, specifically those that emerge most strongly from the literature on coalition interventions and those that would be useful inputs to the

⁴¹ Courtney J. Richardson, "A Responsible Power? China and the UN Peacekeeping Regime," *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 2011.

Table 5.9
Drivers of Coalition Formation

Factor	Matters for	When
Relationship with United States	U.S. allies and trade partners	Building reliable coalition core
Home region	Countries in the region of the intervention, especially non-U.S. allies	Legitimacy is important
Shared interests (formation)	All states	Diversity of a coalition is important, supporting coalition cohesion
IGO sponsorship	All states	Legitimacy is important
Status-seeking	Small states, revisionist states, states seeking status or international influence	Seeking to increase diversity of coalition without costly concessions of payoffs

planning and decisionmaking processes of policymakers and military planners who are thinking about how to build the broad coalitions needed to fight the wars of the future. Two other factors that receive broad support from the literature on coalition formation are the domestic politics of the potential partner and the role of implicit and explicit incentives. Domestic politics and government institutional factors might affect a state's choice to join a coalition or to remain outside it. For example, in the case of the intervention in Afghanistan, there was broad support for participation (at first) in NATO countries that might have factored into state decisionmaking. Similarly, we know that states have historically joined coalitions in return for monetary payments, economic benefits, military experience, and aid. Incentives were used to induce wider participation in the Global Coalition Against ISIS, the Gulf War, and in Afghanistan; they were also used to encourage participating states to provide more forces. Decisions about coalition membership are likely to be highly context specific—that is, dependent on the specific conflict or crisis and its timing. Overall, then, the decisions that states make about where and when to intervene are complex and multifaceted, relying on many factors simultaneously.

For U.S. policymakers and military leaders, there are a few key takeaways. First, there are many paths to coalition-building. The United States can build diverse coalitions by appealing to different states on different dimensions, depending on the state and the interests at stake. One key path will be building stronger political, military, and economic ties. Different types of relationships are not interchangeable, but any type of relationship can increase the likelihood that a given state joins the United States in the event of a crisis. Equally important, however, is the insight that alliances do not guarantee participation. The United States should not assume coalition support, even from close allies, when designing contingency plans. Second, our analysis indicates that even states that are hesitant to partner with the United States might do so when the crisis is in their region. Third, our case studies underscore the role of status-seeking

in driving intervention participation for both small states and larger ones. This provides a key point of leverage for the United States: States seeking status might be especially vulnerable to recruitment into the intervention coalition and especially willing to accept side payments or other intangible benefits in return for their participation. Fourth, we observed that IGO sponsorship can increase the likelihood that potential contributors decide to join a coalition, which suggests that working through or enlisting the support of an IGO can be an effective strategy for policymakers seeking to build a diverse set of partnerships for a small- or large-scale operation. Finally, we noted that shared interests are important but that states can and do join coalitions to pursue their own national aims; this suggests that a full match of objectives might not be a requirement as the United States seeks to form coalitions with new partners. Instead, relationships and membership can be transactional, and states might choose to join to advance their own independent aims. Such transactional aims could be leveraged to build coalitions for future interventions.

What Makes Coalition Interventions Successful?

In this chapter, we consider factors that appear to affect the likelihood that coalition interventions achieve their political objectives. As noted elsewhere, the empirical challenges associated with the research question considered in this chapter are the most extensive. There are several reasons this is the case. First, the question of what makes an intervention successful is a challenging one to study empirically because so much depends on context. Past work has shown that there is no one set of factors likely to make an intervention successful. The elements most strongly linked to success are likely to vary depending on the type of conflict, the type of intervention, the operating environment, and many other factors. This is further complicated by the fact that we only have 37 coalition interventions in our sample. This makes it difficult to conduct rigorous quantitative analyses that compare successful coalitions with unsuccessful ones—and that comparison is required to answer the research question posed in this chapter. Instead, we have to rely on descriptive statistics and case studies, neither of which is likely to provide definitive and fully convincing results. Still, we use both methods in this chapter to gain some insight into this question of coalition success. Although we expect that our findings will be less clear and less definitive than those in the previous two chapters, we are still able to provide some useful insights.

Assessing the Hypotheses

As noted in Chapter Three, the question we focus on in this chapter is whether the United States generally has more or less success in achieving its political objectives using coalition interventions than it does when conducting unilateral interventions. This is a narrower question than whether coalitions or unilateral interventions are more effective from the perspective of other coalition partners or the target state. We consider specifically characteristics of the coalition that the United States is able to control, and we assess which characteristics appear most and least likely to help the United States pursue its own interests and its stated goals for the intervention. For this analysis, we use the political objectives collected in previous RAND work for all U.S. military interventions and the assessments made in prior work about the extent to

which these objectives were achieved.¹ For the purpose of this analysis, we considered the average degree of success achieved across objectives for each intervention. As noted in Chapter Three, in these data, each intervention could have multiple objectives and those objectives could vary over time as needed. We then assessed the extent to which these objectives had been achieved on a three-point scale: success (3), some success (2), and no success (1). The research team relied on multiple coders and a rigorous adjudication process in all coding decisions and consulted with experts as needed. For the purpose of the analysis in this chapter, we then took an average success measure across all objectives for each case. Of course, this is an imperfect measure: It assumes that all objectives of the intervention are equally important, and it relies on averages of categorical data. Still it can be useful as a measure of relative success across interventions and across coalitions. As a way to check robustness, we consider one alternative measure of success: change in GDP per capita of the target state between the start of the intervention and five years after the intervention. This is a far-from-perfect assessment of the degree to which an intervention achieved U.S. political objectives, or even whether the intervention was successful. Income is an imperfect measure of success, especially where the intervention might not focus on economic well-being, and it is difficult to attribute economic gains or losses directly to an intervention because of the variety of other possible relevant factors. Still, the measure provides a different lens on the question of intervention success.

Table 6.1 describes the specific objectives and success scores for each of the objectives for all five of our case studies. We list the average success scores for each in Table 6.2. This provides important context as we consider the effects of various other factors on intervention outcomes. Table 6.2 also summarizes the results of our analysis.

H11. Coalition Interventions Are More Successful Than Unilateral Ones

From the perspective of a policymaker, this is a key question: Are coalition interventions more likely to be successful than unilateral interventions? If the answer is yes, then seeking multilateral interventions might be the way to go. If the answer is no, then coalition interventions might not be preferred or even desired, in spite of all their benefits. In reality, the answer is likely to be, “it depends,” meaning that coalitions are more successful in some situations and less successful in others (all else equal). In this section, we explore the qualitative and quantitative evidence in support of and against the general effectiveness of coalition interventions compared with unilateral ones.

Quantitative Analysis

In this analysis, our objective is to estimate the causal effect of coalition formation on the average level of objective success. In an ideal quasi-experimental setting, we would

¹ Kavanagh et al., 2019. This methodology was described in detail elsewhere, so we provide only a short summary here of how we assessed the success of each intervention at achieving its objectives. See Chapter Three and Appendix A of the referenced report for more details.

Table 6.1
U.S. Objectives in Case Study Coalition Interventions

Intervention	Objective	Success
Post–World War II Japan	Late August 1945 to late September 1945: Liberate Allied prisoners of war in Japan.	3
	Prevent the remilitarization of Japan.	3
	Repatriate internally and externally displaced Japanese citizens.	2
	Provide humanitarian relief to the Japanese population.	2
	Promote longer-term political and social stability through democratic institution-building (i.e., marginalization of the emperor to role of state figurehead) and economic aid and reconstruction.	3
	After the start of the Cold War: Contain the expansion of Soviet and Chinese influence and spread of communism in East Asia.	2
	After the start of the Korean War: Secure access to strategic air and shipping lanes and staging areas for deployment of personnel and equipment to the Korean Peninsula.	3
Gulf War	Liberate Kuwait.	3
Afghanistan	December 2001, ISAF objective: Assist the Afghan Interim authority in maintaining a secure environment in Kabul to allow it and the UN to operate safely.	2
	May 2002: Conduct humanitarian operations.	3
	May 2002: Build Afghan government capacity to stabilize the country and prevent the reemergence of a terrorist safe haven.	2
	December 2009, after the Obama administration's strategy review, until 2014: Disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and remove its capacity to threaten the United States and its allies.	2
	December 2009, after the Obama administration's strategy review, until 2014: Counteract Taliban gains.	2
	December 2009, after the Obama administration's strategy review, until 2014: Build Afghan government capacity.	2
	Post ISAF, 2014–ongoing: Prevent terrorist groups from using Afghanistan as a safe haven.	1
EFP	Deter Russian aggression.	3
	Reassure allies, demonstrate commitment to collective defense.	2
OIR	Degrade and destroy ISIS.	2

NOTES: Objectives were coded on a 3-point scale. For the purpose of this table, we use the average value across all objectives for a given intervention. 2.5 or more is a high score; moderate is 1.75 to 2.5; low is anything less than 1.75.

Table 6.2
Factors Shaping Success of Coalition Interventions in Achieving U.S. Political Objectives

Analysis	H11 Coalitions More Successful	H12 Stabilization Missions	H13 Shared Interests (success)	H14 Experience	H15 Number of Partners
Quantitative	None	None	None	None	None
Quantitative	Mixed	Mixed	Supported	Mixed	Mixed

observe a large number of U.S. interventions, in which some (at random) become coalitions and others (in an equally arbitrary manner) become unilateral interventions. We would then simply measure the differences between the two distributions. However, our sample contains only 115 U.S. military interventions between 1946 and 2018, of which 37 are coalitions. What’s more, coalitions form nonrandomly. Recall the Chapter Four discussion about the determinants of U.S. coalition interventions—that is, instances in which the United States chooses to join in coalitions.

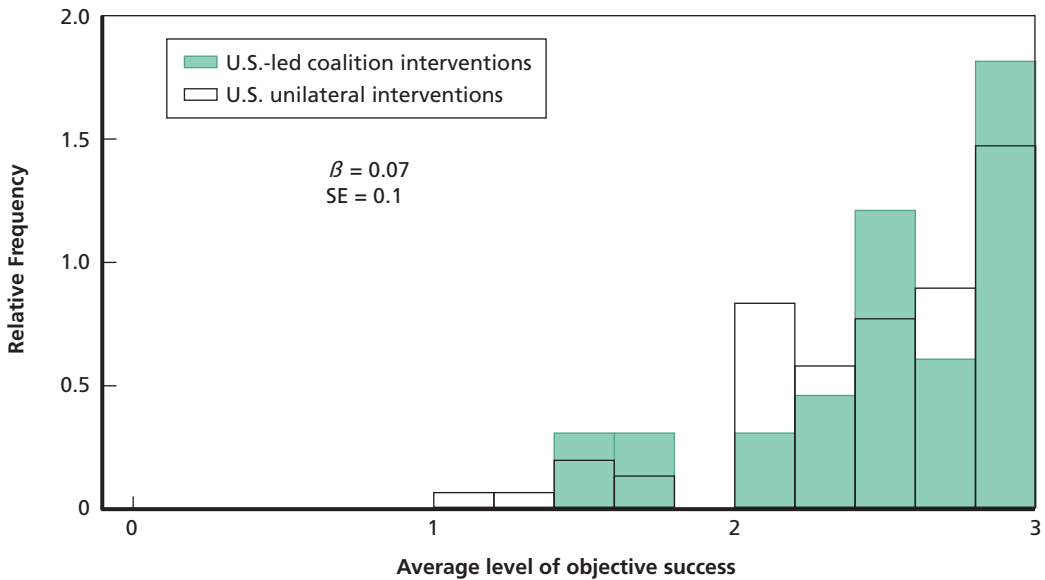
We start simply by comparing the success of coalition and unilateral interventions in a descriptive sense.² Figure 6.1 plots the distribution of average success across coalition and unilateral interventions in overlapping histograms. The y-axis is the density of the distribution or, put another way, the relative frequency of each outcome along the x-axis (i.e., the average objective success). We plot relative frequencies (rather than frequencies) because the distributions are so different in size. There are only 37 coalitions, but 78 unilateral interventions. We observe some differences in success scores measured on our 1–3 scale; for example, a greater percentage of coalition interventions appear between 2.5 and 3 than is the case for unilateral interventions, and the minimum score for coalitions is higher than that for unilateral interventions. But differences between the distributions are relatively small and not readily apparent. A *t*-test of the two distributions suggests that, although we can identify some small differences (0.07), the two distributions are not meaningfully different at this statistical level.

However, this analysis provides only a high-level view and does not control for relevant factors, such as intervention size or period. To gain insight into the effect of coalitions on the success of objectives, we must create an empirical model that is parsimonious while minimizing omitted variable bias. To solve this problem, we turn to a model selection technique called *double-selection lasso*. In the lasso method, we earmark a set of independent variables of interest, and we identify a pool of potentially relevant predictor variables. From this pool, lasso selects the model features.³ In our model,

² We include only 33 coalitions in the analysis because we do not have objectives and success scores for four interventions added to the data after the completion of the 2019 report for which the objective and success codings were generated (Kavanagh et al., 2019).

³ As a reminder, the lasso method does not estimate coefficients or conduct statistical inferencing for the selected model parameters. Instead, the double-selection lasso technique creates the model specification by (1) selecting

Figure 6.1
Average Success of Coalitions and Unilateral Interventions in Achieving Political Objectives



NOTE: SE = standard error.

lasso selects COIN, deterrence, and stability activity type indicators as factors relevant to predicting the likelihood of a successful outcome. In addition, the procedure selects our metric of threat, or the count of territorial claims in which the target country is an aggressor. Finally, lasso factors in the average number of troops deployed during the intervention, which serves as a proxy for high operational demands. A priori, this is a reasonable model. All components seem theoretically important in explaining an intervention's outcome and likely to influence the likelihood of coalition formation. We would expect that such things as degree of threat, activity type, and operational demands would all have an impact on the likelihood that an intervention achieves its political objectives. Table 6.3 summarizes the results. The lasso technique estimates a positive but statistically insignificant effect of coalition on the average level of objective success. More specifically, the model predicts that coalitions increase the average level of objective success by 0.07. For context, the objective success index ranges from 1 to 3; on average, U.S.-led coalitions pursue 3.85 objectives per military intervention. This result falls below traditional levels of statistical significance and is also so small as to not be substantively meaningful. We test the relationship in an additional multivariate model in which we select the parameters. This yields a consistent result: a positive,

relevant predictors for coalitions in a lasso regression, (2) selecting relevant predictors of objective success through a second lasso regression, and (3) using the predictors that were relevant in both models to estimate the effect of coalitions on success and produce the sole test statistic. See Belloni, Chernozhukov, and Hansen, 2014.

Table 6.3
The Effect of Coalitions on Objective Success

Dependent Variable	Average Objective Success		Change in Income Five Years After Intervention	
	OLS	Lasso Model	OLS	Lasso Model
Coalition indicator	0.10	0.07	0.11	−0.05
Post–Cold War indicator	−0.08		−0.19**	
Combat and COIN	−0.04		−0.58*	
Stability	0.15		−0.64**	
Deterrence	0.33****		−0.12	
Advisory	−0.09		0.00	
Average annual U.S. troops	0.00		−0.36**	
Europe	0.27***		−0.02	
East Asia	0.32****		−0.08	
Number of objectives	−0.08*		0.00	
Observations	111	111	95	95
R-squared	0.23		0.36	

NOTES. We estimate the effect of coalitions on average objective success in a multivariate linear model (column 2) and in a lasso model (column 3). The lasso technique does not produce test statistics for covariates; therefore, these columns are blank. The selected covariates are COIN, deterrence, stability, territorial claims, and average annual U.S. troops. In columns 4 and 5, we present estimates of the identical models on another measure of success: the change in per capita income in the target state(s) over the proceeding five years. The selected covariates are advisory, no ground component, stability, territorial claims, Central America region indicator, and the count of U.S. troops. OLS = ordinary least squares.

* $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

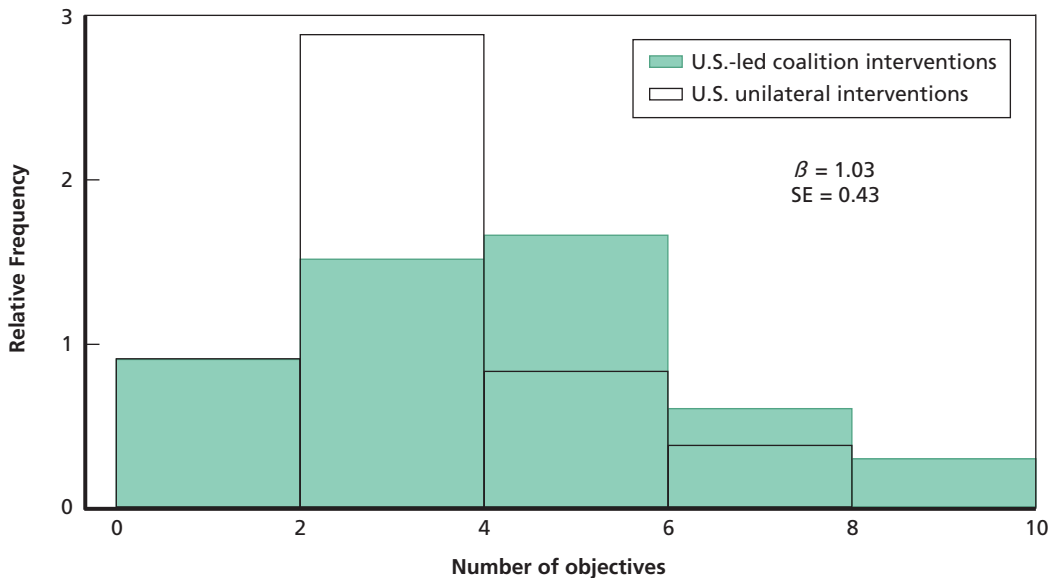
but ultimately statistically insignificant effect (0.10). In other words, coalitions have no clear effect on success. They might help in some situations and hurt in others, or they might have no real effect at all on outcomes.

For robustness, we also check the effect of coalition interventions on another measure of success: the per capita income of the target state (or states). This measure might not reflect the objectives and interests of the United States or the coalition as a whole as precisely as other measures do, but it does capture another dimension of success, is readily available, widely recognized, and less prone to criticisms of subjectivity. To implement the test, we calculate the average change in per capita income between the intervention's end year and five years afterward in the target state(s) for each intervention. This variable is then used as the dependent or outcome variable in the same models and estimation techniques (i.e., linear regression and lasso).

Again, we observe no difference between the success of coalition and unilateral interventions in terms of per capita income. This finding is somewhat counterintuitive. As shown in Chapter Five, coalitions often attract states in the same region as the target state(s)—a finding that is both statistically significant and robust. These coalition members have greater incentive to provide political and economic stability to neighboring countries; proximity is a key determinant of trade flows.⁴ Despite this increased incentive and the cultural and regional expertise derived from coalition members, there is no observable benefit from coalition interventions to economic performance following the interventions. However, our failure to detect such an effect could easily reflect the empirical challenges we face (e.g., low sample size, nonrandom treatment assignment) rather than coalition failure to improve an intervention's success as measured by per capita GDP growth.

We do find, however, that coalitions pursue more objectives per intervention than the United States pursues in unilateral interventions. The average number of objectives in a coalition intervention is 3.85; unilateral interventions, on average, pursue 2.82—a difference of 1.03, which is politically and statistically significant. We plot histograms of the total number of objectives pursued in coalitions (green) and in unilateral interventions (white) and compare the distributions via a *t*-test in Figure 6.2. The results are both intuitive and consistent with the results in the previous chapter. Interventions

Figure 6.2
Number of Political Objectives of Coalitions and Unilateral Interventions



⁴ James E. Anderson, "The Gravity Model," *Annual Review of Economics*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2011.

that are complicated or have many objectives might also be those that have higher operational demands and therefore might be more likely to involve coalition support.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, might provide additional insights on whether and how coalitions contribute to success. Case studies could allow us to identify the contexts in which coalitions seem to advance political objectives and the contexts in which they do not matter that much. We cannot directly address the relative effectiveness of coalitions on intervention outcomes using only five case studies, but we are able to consider the extent to which having coalition support was crucial to successes achieved in each intervention. Our review suggests that coalitions can help the United States achieve its aims in some contexts but that it would be a mistake to assume that forming a coalition ensures intervention success. The clearest example of a case where intervention outcomes and coalition support seem unrelated was the BCOF force in Japan. In this case, the United States was able to largely achieve its objectives despite a dysfunctional coalition that provided minimal support and fell apart quickly. Although the United States sought coalition support to manage what it expected would be significant force demands, those demands ended up being significantly lower than expected; ultimately, the United States operated mostly on its own. The common goals of elevating the prestige and unity of the British Commonwealth were never achieved and BCOF members were not able to directly contribute to broader aims of stabilization and demilitarization. Assigned to the rural areas of Japan, far separated from the center of power in Tokyo, members of the BCOF failed to reap any substantial dividends—politically, militarily, or economically.⁵ Over time, the coalition collapsed as successive member states withdrew.⁶

At the opposite end of the spectrum, operations such as the Gulf War, OIR, and EFP relied heavily on the involvement of partners to achieve the successes they did (or have had so far). In the case of EFP, the coalition contributed to success less by providing a large number of forces and more by signaling a clear commitment from a diverse group of NATO allies to the alliance and the common objective of deterring Russia. As noted elsewhere, the EFP coalition involved partners from across the alliance, and it was the universality of the commitment that provided the greatest deterrent signal, by underscoring the continued strength and viability of the alliance and the continued commitment of the alliance's member states. Practically speaking, having a broad coalition of NATO allies affirms the alliance's resolve and its viability, sends a stronger deterrent signal, and secures domestic and international support.⁷

⁵ Buckley, 1982, p. 102; Trotter, 1990, pp. 70–72.

⁶ Buckley, 1982, p. 102; Bates, 1993, pp. 168–169.

⁷ Costs come up occasionally in Stoicescu and Järvenpää, 2019.

In both OIR and the Gulf War, the value of the coalition in achieving U.S. objectives relied on both the military contributions of partners and the legitimacy derived from the coalitions' diverse memberships, particularly the Arab memberships. In the case of the Gulf War, for example, the contributions by Western and Arab partners were significant from an operational perspective and a political one. Operationally, NATO allies contributed significant ground forces and provided additional security and firepower to U.S. troops, all of which hastened Saddam's defeat. Arab partners also deployed significant assets, although many of their troops remained in defensive postures to prevent Iraq from trying to advance into their countries. Egypt sent 35,000 ground troops, which tied with the United Kingdom for the second largest ground contribution. Saudi Arabia hosted the United States and its allies for six months leading up to the start of Operation Desert Storm, which provided space and time for coalition partners to train together without the threat of hostile attacks. Additionally, the United States relied on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to supply major proportions of necessary logistics and sustainment, such as fuel, food, water, and money.⁸ However, coalition forces also played a key role in enhancing the political legitimacy of the intervention domestically, in the Western world, and in the region as well.

Similarly, in OIR, both military and political contributions allowed the coalition to achieve gains that a unilateral intervention might not have. Partner forces made substantial military commitments that eased the burden on the United States and filled niche capability gaps that the United States might otherwise have struggled to fill. Traditional U.S. partners—Australia, France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom—arguably provided the greatest military support to the operation. In the first three years of the campaign, when air strikes were a crucial tool to reclaiming territory, those four partners generated 81 percent of the non-U.S. strikes conducted in Iraq.⁹ In addition, all four countries provide sizable contingents to train local forces—and France and the United Kingdom deployed special operations forces to the Syrian side of the border to engage in an advise-and-assist capacity with the Syrian Democratic Forces.¹⁰ These contributions were meaningful and advanced the cause of the operation. It is hard to imagine the counter-ISIS operation having the success that it had through 2019 without the support of key regional players that provided necessary access to airspace and military installations and other logistical support. However, equally important was the regional legitimacy that majority-Muslim coalition members provided to the operation. Specifically, these members undermined

⁸ Douglas W. Craft, *An Operational Analysis of the Persian Gulf War*, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, August 31, 1992, p. 23.

⁹ "US-Led Coalition in Iraq and Syria," undated. All data referenced in this paragraph are drawn from the official strike releases of Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve, France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Australia, and Canada.

¹⁰ Lara Seligman, "Britain, France Agree to Send Additional Troops to Syria," *Foreign Policy*, July 9, 2019.

the ISIS narrative that the Global Coalition Against ISIS was nothing more than an invasion of Westerners seeking to seize land and oil from the Middle East. This added legitimacy was essential in allowing the Global Coalition Against ISIS to operate freely and effectively throughout the operation. Certainly, there were operational challenges created by the diversity of partners as well, stemming from conflicting objectives, but these challenges were offset by the benefits of access and legitimacy that the coalition provided.

The case of Afghanistan falls somewhere in the middle and is more difficult to assess. The intervention has been mixed when it comes to success generally. In the early stages of the war, the United States intervened mostly without partners, and its ability to act quickly and decisively is one reason that it was able to achieve key objectives. Later, the United States brought in partners for the reconstruction phase of the mission and experienced more difficulty in achieving mission objectives. The second phase of U.S. operations in Afghanistan involved a large number of partners; many NATO allies made sizable contributions of ground forces (already described in Chapter Four) and, in some instances, also air and naval forces. Given the high resource demands of stabilization and nation-building activities, the additional resources were valuable to the United States, especially as it simultaneously conducted combat operations in Iraq. As already noted, much of what the United States received from allies in terms of operational support was procedural in nature—they offered logistical support and help in coordination rather than substantially augmenting U.S. capabilities.¹¹

Why was this coalition possibly less beneficial than expected in terms of achieving the objectives of the intervention? There are many possible reasons, but one is the role played by national caveats that created significant logistical challenges. These, in turn, prevented the coalition from taking full advantage of the larger number of coalition partners. According to a 2019 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction report, “[T]here were an estimated 50 caveats in Afghanistan affecting ISAF troops” in 2006, 40 percent of which were tied to geography, thus stymying “agility.”¹² Twenty of the 27 nations contributing troops to the effort had limited their “operations outside originally assigned locations [and in] conducting counternarcotic operations with ISAF.”¹³ These caveats had other real implications for combat operations. In 2009, for example, the caveats, coupled with troop limitations, provided the insurgents with “breathing room and forced the United States to nearly double the number

¹¹ Johnston, 2019.

¹² Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Divided Responsibility: Lessons from U.S. Security Sector Assistance Efforts in Afghanistan*, Arlington, Va., June 2019, p. 127.

¹³ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2019, p. 127.

of troops deployed to Afghanistan.”¹⁴ These restrictions led to more divisions within NATO and thus further shifted the burden on the United States.¹⁵

The coalition also complicated the mission in other ways. For example, the NATO alliance’s decisionmaking process is based on consensus-building and, as a result, hampered the efforts to pursue U.S. objectives and restricted NATO’s ability to devise strategy or take decisive action in a constantly changing, unconventional environment.¹⁶ The geographic division of labor among allies also served to undermine NATO efforts in theater as different partners experienced different threat levels, risk, and violence. The geographic division also exacerbated typical challenges faced by any multinational coalition because the forces were no longer colocated.¹⁷ Finally, the military contributions provided by partners left gaps that created vulnerabilities and prevented true progress. Mobility, flexibility, and personnel posed significant challenges that often stemmed from shrinking resources because of smaller defense budgets—leading those units to become less capable of operating jointly with U.S. forces and creating additional gaps and vulnerabilities for U.S. forces to overcome.¹⁸ Still, even though the coalition might have impeded efforts to pursue U.S. objectives in some ways, it is hard to argue that the United States would have done remarkably better had it continued to operate alone. Even as coalition contributions declined, U.S. forces have struggled to make and sustain gains.

Overall, our case studies suggest that coalitions have benefits and are useful in some situations but can bring new challenges that work against intervention success in others. In each of the case studies in which the United States operated with a coalition, that coalition provided some significant advantages. In many instances, the more important of these advantages were political rather than military in nature, but this might be particular to the situations chosen and the fact that most are from the post–Cold War period when the United States faced no real peer challengers. In some situations, without the political legitimacy provided by the coalition, it is not clear whether the intervention would have happened at all. However, there are also situations in which the United States benefited from acting more or less alone. Coalitions do bring challenges, and those challenges can interfere with efforts to achieve key objectives. We describe these challenges in greater detail throughout this chapter.

Summary

The answer to the question of whether coalitions are more successful than unilateral interventions, from the U.S. perspective, is really “it depends.” Coalitions can increase

¹⁴ Saideman and Auerswald, 2012, p. 67.

¹⁵ Saideman and Auerswald, 2012, pp. 67–68.

¹⁶ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, p. 533.

¹⁷ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, pp. 534–535.

¹⁸ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, p. 534.

the odds of success when there are concerns about legitimacy or when operational demands are high. Otherwise, the United States operating unilaterally is often just as effective. Looking back over the larger set of case studies, coalitions have been clearly beneficial in the case of long, drawn-out missions with high operational requirements that the United States could not meet on its own (e.g., the World Wars, Korea, and Vietnam) and in the case of major, high-tempo post–Cold War air campaigns to conduct combined airstrikes and enforce no-fly zones (e.g., Bosnia, Kosovo, Libya, Iraq, and Syria). However, planners cannot know before an intervention how long it will last or what the operational requirements are likely to be (even if there are indicators that suggest when an operation will have high demands). As a result, they may not always know when it would be wise to form a coalition and when an intervention will be manageable as a unilateral mission. Coalitions also have seemingly increased the chances for *sustainable* success in postconflict stability and peacekeeping missions (discussed in more detail in the next section) in which the United States did not perceive a strong direct security threat and/or was able to sustain elite and popular domestic support for open-ended troop deployments (e.g., Bosnia, Croatia, Haiti, and Rwanda).

However, in assessing the effect of coalitions on success, we must also consider the U.S. experience with unilateral interventions. The United States has been successful working through coalitions but also working unilaterally. Trying to summarize the set of unilateral interventions in which the United States had a high degree of success yields some interesting observations. First, we find that unilateral successes (again, focusing on achievement of U.S. political objectives) appear most common for deterrence missions—although we caveat that much of this success accrued with changes in the international system at the end of the Cold War. The United States has also often achieved its political objectives unilaterally when the intervention required only some kind of naval action, such as a show of force, deterrent, or other activity. (Here, however, we also note that the few major instances of coalition naval operations—while usually part of broader, joint ground and air operations—also have enjoyed a relatively high record of tactical and operational success, including, at times, coalition interdiction and naval embargo, as well as sanction-enforcement operations focused on adversaries in North Korea, Iraq, Yugoslavia and Serbia, Libya, Somalia, and others.) The United States has less frequently conducted major combat operations or large stabilization missions on its own. This does not necessarily mean that coalitions are required for these operations, but it does suggest that these types of situations are historically ones in which the United States has chosen to work with partners, out of necessity or choice. In the next section, we will explicitly consider the case of stability operations and whether there appears to be any evidence that coalitions increase the likelihood of success in these types of operations.

H12. Coalition Interventions Are More Successful Than Unilateral Ones Specifically for Stabilization Missions

If coalitions do not increase the odds of success overall, another possibility is that they support success for certain types of interventions. One candidate would be stabilization missions in which resource demands are often high and long-term. However, because they are complex and resource-intensive, and because sprawling objectives can lead to disagreements, coordinating coalition operations might be especially difficult and fraught. This is a hypothesis that is difficult to assess both qualitatively and quantitatively. We simply do not have enough stabilization operations to conduct a regression analysis, and assessing this hypothesis with our sample is challenging because of both the small dataset and the mixed U.S. record in conducting successful stability operations—unilaterally or in coalitions. However, we can still explore the data we do have and extract some insights and observations.

Quantitative Analysis

Although we lack the data needed for an assessment using regressions, we can look at descriptive patterns to identify trends. First, it is worth remembering that of the 17 stability operations in which the United States was involved between 1946 and 2018, 12 have been coalitions.¹⁹ This does not mean that coalitions are necessarily preferred or required for these missions, just that the United States historically has tended to rely primarily on coalitions in these contexts. Table 6.4 shows the mean success for coalition and unilateral interventions by activity type and lists the number of interventions of each type in parentheses. The most notable observation is the lack of major differences across all activity types in terms of degree of success—especially stabilization, where the two means are nearly identical. However, the number of observations undermines our ability to make a robust comparison by activity type. For interventions with “lift” as the primary activity type, for example, we have only one coalition and one unilateral observation. Thus, despite a somewhat large difference in average success, there simply is not enough information to make a real comparison. For stabilization specifically, we have a larger number of observations but still find no real evidence that coalitions have better success rates than unilateral interventions. For other activity types, there are slight differences. For deterrent interventions, coalitions seem to have a slightly higher rate of success; the same is true of combat and humanitarian interventions. But for advisory missions, unilateral interventions have the higher rate of success. However, further analysis and *t*-tests indicate that these differences fall below the threshold for statistical significance. Based on this evidence, then, we cannot say that coalitions are consistently or systematically associated with better stabilization operation outcomes. We also do not find evidence that success rates differ significantly between coalition and unilateral interventions for other activities.

¹⁹ The unilateral stability missions have included post–World War II operations in China and South Korea, the 1958 intervention in Lebanon, and the peacekeeping forces in Panama in 1990 and in Kuwait in 1991.

Table 6.4
Average Success of U.S. Objectives in Coalitions
Versus Unilateral Operations, by Primary Activity Type

Activity	U.S. Coalition	U.S. Unilateral
Advisory	2 (1)	2.35 (13)
COIN	1.88 (2)	
Combat	2.45 (8)	2.17 (4)
Deterrence	2.83 (7)	2.54 (35)
Humanitarian	2.83 (2)	2.63 (14)
Security		2.42 (4)
Stabilization	2.54 (12)	2.59 (5)
Interdiction		2.67 (1)
Lift	2.8 (1)	1 (1)
ISR		2.33 (1)

NOTE: This table presents mean successes, with the number of interventions listed in parentheses.

Qualitative Analysis

Although our quantitative analysis fails to find support for this hypothesis, we can also assess the idea qualitatively by looking at our case studies. Only two of our case studies concern U.S. stabilization missions, and they provide fairly different perspectives on coalition value to achievement of U.S. objectives. As just described, in the case of Afghanistan, the nature of the operation, its operational demands, and its extended duration certainly made the coalition *seem* necessary and the best option. Without a full counterfactual analysis, we cannot say that the United States would have achieved a better outcome if it had chosen to operate unilaterally. We can only point out that having a coalition did not guarantee success but did make some contributions toward achievement of U.S. objectives, as already described.

Although coalition forces might have played a role in stabilization in Afghanistan, our other stabilization case study, the postwar stabilization of Japan, tells a different story. As already noted, coalition forces played little or no role; the BCOF forces were largely peripheral to many of the gains that were achieved; and, as a result, the general Japanese populace viewed the BCOF as “playing soldiers, while it was the Americans who were helping them to build their new country.”²⁰

In our three other case studies, which were not stabilization missions, the coalitions played a more unambiguously positive role in supporting the achievement of U.S.

²⁰ Bates, 1993, p. 219.

objectives. In some ways, coalitions even seem to have been necessary for achieving those objectives. However, these successes similarly do not appear to have been a result of the activity or type of intervention but rather a result of the specific context of the intervention, the nature of the objectives, and the international and domestic political requirements.

We find little clear support, then, that coalitions are best in certain operating environments. Instead, coalitions seem most crucial to success where, as already noted, they help overcome major obstacles to the intervention—either political legitimacy or operational demands, regardless of activity type. Since the end of World War II, the United States has rarely engaged in a large-scale, lengthy stability operation without a set of coalition partners. The country has, however, conducted other major operations unilaterally.

Summary

On net, then, we find no significant evidence that coalitions are specifically preferred to unilateral interventions in the case of stability operations. However, this is not to say that there are not situations in which stability operations benefit from or require coalitions. There are plenty of anecdotal instances in which coalition participation proved important for the execution of a stability operation or the burden-sharing aspect of the coalition helped offset some of the high costs of such an operation. As previously noted, key examples include instances in which U.S. elite and popular support could not be maintained indefinitely, and other partners assumed the mantle of coalition leadership after U.S. withdrawal—for instance, after the October 1993 Battle of Mogadishu in Somalia, in which numerous U.S. special operations forces casualties were sustained, or attacks on UN peacekeepers during post-genocide stability in Rwanda in 1994. Similarly, after the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began, the overstretched U.S. military was willing to deploy as the entry force to establish initial security in places such as Liberia (in 2003) and Haiti (in 2004) but was unwilling to sustain a large residual ground presence; had Washington not been able to hand off leadership to ECOWAS and/or the UN quickly, these interventions likely would not have had the success they did. Likewise, there is little doubt about the same counterfactual in the Balkans: Unilateral U.S. action in Bosnia, Croatia, or Kosovo likely would not have been as successful as the coalitions that were formed.

Nevertheless, we do not find a systematic pattern suggesting that coalitions are more successful than unilateral efforts for stability operations. In part, this is certainly because of the lack of sufficient data to rigorously test this hypothesis. The lack of a clear pattern also might result from selection effects—whether the United States chooses coalitions only for the hardest stability operations. It is also possible that these interventions would have turned out much worse without coalitions. But without more data, we cannot draw any definitive conclusions other than to say that we lack the data needed to support this hypothesis.

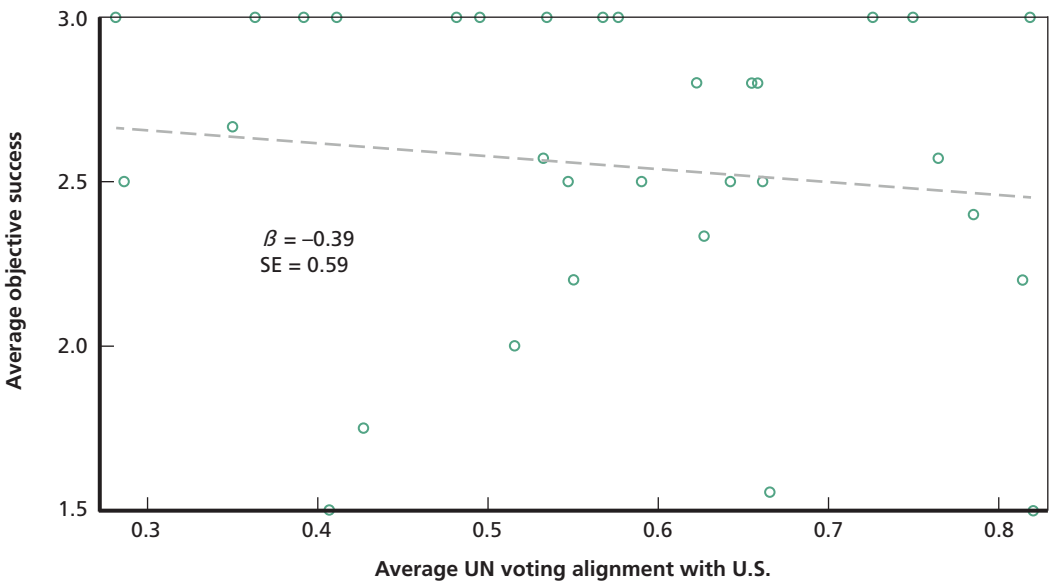
H13. Shared Interests (Success)

In the previous chapter, we considered the role of shared interests and concluded that although having some kind of shared interest, threat, or desired end state is important to coalition formation, states can and do have their own national objectives in addition. Here we consider the role that shared interest plays in success at achieving U.S. political objectives. Again, we consider common objectives, goals, and threats. The evidence from our case studies in this instance is fairly convincing that having a shared interest is important to intervention outcomes. However, our analysis allows us to be more specific and argue that not just shared interests but also shared threats—especially severe shared threats—seem key to success at achieving U.S. political objectives. We observe that having a severe shared threat can help coalitions overcome some of the challenges and pitfalls of multilateral operations. We also find that although having multiple national objectives or differing threat perceptions does not prevent coalition formation, it can interfere with the ability of a coalition to achieve its ultimate objectives.

Quantitative Analysis

For the quantitative analysis, we again use UN voting data to create a measure of shared interest among coalition members. For each coalition partner, we calculate its voting similarity to the United States in the year of the UN session in which the intervention began. The values range from 0 (i.e., complete disagreement) to 1 (i.e., complete unanimity). We then calculate the average UN voting agreement of all the coalition’s partners and use it to test the effect of shared interest on objective success. Figure 6.3 plots the relationship between the two variables. The average voting agree-

Figure 6.3
UN Voting Congruence and Average Objective Success



ment score is on the x-axis and the average objective success on the y-axis. A simple univariate regression tests the effect of shared interest (i.e., UN voting congruence) on success. The effect estimate, shown in Figure 6.3, is both negative (-0.39) and statistically insignificant. We list the results of the regression in Box 6.1.

Although there is no empirically demonstrable relationship between the two variables, we again note the difficulties of quantitative analysis in this setting. First, shared interest is not randomly assigned. For example, the average voting congruence of coalition members likely correlates with the coalition size or period (e.g., post–Cold War), which might also influence a coalition’s success. In reality, there are several potential confounding variables (both observed and unobserved) that affect the shared interest of the coalition and, simultaneously, its likelihood of success. But we are unable to control for these factors in our analysis. Many are unobservable—and, furthermore, we lack sufficient data to design sophisticated models that might be able to hurdle the challenge of nonrandom assignment. Second, even if shared interest were randomly assigned to a subset of coalition interventions, a simple means comparison of average objective success would still be fraught with large standard errors and low statistical power because of our small sample size.

With these caveats established, we conclude that the quantitative analysis fails to identify any relationship between shared interest, as measured by UN voting congruence, and objective success. The regression results in Box 6.1 and the plot in Figure 6.3 show the statistically significant relationship.

Qualitative Analysis

Our qualitative analysis underscores the important role of shared threats in coalition outcomes—where these exist, coalitions tend to hold together more strongly and to be better able to overcome divergent objectives and intracoalition differences. In the case of OIR, it was the shared interests and shared threat that allowed such a large and diverse coalition to form and to hold together in the fight against ISIS. Despite being

Box 6.1
The Effect of Shared Interest on Objective Success

Independent Variable	Change in Average Objective Success
UN voting similarity	-0.391
Observations	33
R-squared	0.142

NOTES: The dependent variable is an intervention’s average objective success. The coefficients listed are the estimated marginal effect of a change in the independent variable: UN voting harmony of the coalition.

geographically diverse, states in the Global Coalition Against ISIS experienced many of the same concerns and fears about the threat posed by ISIS. For example, consider the specific threat posed by returning foreign fighters (many of whom came from Europe) to their countries of origin. Haesebrouck notes that many of the countries that participated in airstrikes—including France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands—were large origin countries of foreign fighter flows to Syria and Iraq.²¹ Thus, both the general and immediate threat posed by ISIS pulled a wider swath of Europe into the coalition as a matter of national security. The threat faced directly by the host also mattered. As prospective coalition members sought legal authorization within their own countries to deploy military forces against ISIS, they were helped by the Government of Iraq officially requesting international military assistance.²² Finally, the severe threat posed by ISIS to the national security of regional partners helped draw those nations into the Global Coalition Against ISIS, providing much-needed legitimacy and logistical support. Partners' particular vulnerabilities, along with strong U.S. urging,²³ helps explain the direct military participation of these states in the coalition.²⁴ One factor that buttressed the coalition's cohesion was ISIS attacks on partners outside the Iraqi and Syrian battle space. The November 2015 attacks by ISIS members in Paris only strengthened French resolve. Similarly, the burning alive of a captured Jordanian fighter pilot who crashed in Syria by ISIS fighters only served to redouble Amman's commitment to the military campaign against ISIS.²⁵

In addition to motivating the formation of the diverse coalition needed for the counter-ISIS mission, the shared threat helped the coalition hold together in the face of operational challenges and diverging priorities—for example, between Turkey and the rest of the coalition. Specifically, Turkey appeared to elevate the threat of the People's Protection Units—a Syrian Kurdish militia that operated along the Turkish border and has links to the Turkish Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK)—over the threat posed by ISIS.²⁶ Yet, because of the continued threat posed by ISIS, the coalition was able to

²¹ Tim Haesebrouck, "Democratic Participation in the Air Strikes Against Islamic State: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 4, 2018, p. 270.

²² Iraq Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Annex to the Letter Dated 20 September 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations Addressed to the President of the Security Council," 2014.

²³ Brookings Institution, 2019.

²⁴ "With Details and Numbers: The International Coalition Confronting ISIS [Bi Al-Tafasil wa Al-Arqam: Al-Tahaluf Al-Dawli bi Muwajahat Da'ish]," *Al-Arabiya*, September 12, 2014.

²⁵ Jordan launched Operation Martyr Muadh, named after the pilot, Muadh Al-Kasasbeh, who was burned to death by ISIS militants in Raqqa. France launched attack sorties by ten fighter jets on Raqqa.

²⁶ Heller, 2017. Turkey's particular agenda meant that it often operated as a veto player within the coalition, opposing steps that other coalition partners believed would speed the defeat of ISIS—such as a direct train-and-equip mission to the People's Protection Units, stabilization of liberated areas held by the Syrian Democratic Forces, and inclusion of Syrian Kurds in the UN-led Syrian peace process.

hold together until the very end of 2019 (when the most severe threat from ISIS seemed to have passed) and to avoid the most-negative implications from Turkish interference.²⁷

In the Gulf War, the shared perceived threat and shared interest in reversing Saddam's aggression and preventing further aggression served a similar purpose of bringing together a diverse coalition. The inclusion of regional support (both political and military) did play a role in the mission's ultimate success. In this instance, partners shared many interests, which supported successful outcomes. For many coalition partners, Saddam's invasion of Kuwait was a normative threat and a clear example of the exact type of aggression that the UN was intended to prevent when it was first forged in 1945—with Article 1 (1) of the UN charter defining one of the organization's purposes as "the suppression of acts of aggression" and Article 2 (1) describing the organization as "based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members."²⁸ The shared interest in upholding international norms and international law motivated a diverse set of states to join the coalition, both inside and outside the region. NATO partners, for example, were eager to contribute, especially compared with the 2003 invasion of Iraq, in which the United States had to pay its coalition members for their continued participation.²⁹ For Arab partners, Saddam's violation of sovereignty was more an existential threat than a normative one, as state leaders feared they would become the Iraqi military's next target. An additional shared interest that served to create cohesion was economic. Saddam's seizure of Kuwaiti oil fields threatened the stable and free flow of oil from the region, on which the international economy and many of their domestic economies depended. A Saddam monopoly over oil or instability in the region that cut exports would have caused a disruption in the global economy and damaged the domestic economies of coalition members.³⁰ The significant and overlapping shared threats can explain the cohesion of the coalition and its ability to overcome operational divisions and fears of inviting the U.S. military into the region. For example, despite historic resistance to U.S. interference, Saudi Arabia allowed the United States to train with coalition partners in its territory for the six months leading up to the invasion.³¹ The cohesion also had other operational benefits. For example, Craft notes that "this cohesion . . . provided the foundation for military action in support of the political and economic sanctions by ensuring basing, manpower and funding."³²

²⁷ Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, "Trump to Arm Syrian Kurds, Even as Turkey Strongly Objects," *New York Times*, May 9, 2017.

²⁸ United Nations, Charter of the United Nations, 1945, Chapter I.

²⁹ Weitsman, 2013, p. 121.

³⁰ Bennet, Leggold, and Unger, 1994, p. 41.

³¹ Craft, 1992.

³² Craft, 1992, p. 4.

In the case of EFP, shared interests in deterring Russia have worked to hold the coalition together and support successful outcomes, but diverging threat perceptions have undermined coalition cohesion and coherence with growing implications for the effectiveness of the mission. Certainly, all partners perceive that Russia poses some threat, but (as already described) partners differ significantly in how they perceive the severity of that threat. Many Europeans regard the Russian threat as less acute than is the case for the United States, and they tend to be more reluctant to counter that threat through military measures.³³ In addition, front-line countries that border Russia tend to take the Russian threat more seriously than the others, and they are more prepared to go to great lengths to improve their own security.³⁴ These internal disagreements have not yet undermined the efficacy of the EFP deployment, but they do create cracks in the partnership that might become problematic in the future.³⁵ One clear example of this was French President Emmanuel Macron's 2019 comments citing his lack of confidence in the U.S. commitment to NATO and his desire for a reset of relations with Russia.³⁶ In reality, these fissures might be emerging exactly because the Russia threat is not yet immediate. If Russia overtly violated NATO borders in a manner that indisputably triggered Article 5, there probably would be little hesitation among key allies to join together to repel the threat.

In the case of post–World War II Japan, shared interests were weaker, and there was limited perception of a shared threat. Although the intervention was ultimately successful, the coalition itself fell apart pretty quickly, largely because coalition members differed significantly in their priorities and objectives and did not face a real threat to unite them in transcendence of these differences. The lack of a true and motivating threat in post–World War II Japan might explain the gradual collapse of the coalition and the fact that the United States never seriously tried to engage coalition partners in the reconstruction effort.³⁷

In Afghanistan, shared interests and the initial perceived threat from the Taliban were strong, but, as the stabilization mission wore on, the threat became more diffuse and partner experiences varied widely. Weakened shared interests and diverging perceived and experienced threats seem to have undermined the coalition and explain some of the limits on its ability to achieve objectives. Although all partners faced some threat of insurgent attacks and Taliban resurgence, geographic division in Afghanistan meant that partners actually did not experience a truly shared exposure to threat, but instead different levels of risk and violence. These differences further exacerbated the

³³ Pew Research Center, "NATO Solidarity Higher Among People Who Consider Russia a Major Threat," May 22, 2017.

³⁴ Pezard et al., 2017, p. 5.

³⁵ "Common Declaration of the Defence Ministers . . .," 2017.

³⁶ "Emmanuel Macron in His Own Words (French)—Transcript," *The Economist*, November 7, 2019.

³⁷ Buckley, 1982, p. 102; Bates, 1993, pp. 168–169; Trotter, 1990, pp. 45–52.

effects of coalition members' lack of political will to deploy the number of troops warranted by the operational exigencies of the conflict, undermined cohesion, and created challenges that inhibited progress.³⁸ For example, facing different levels of threat, coalition partners differed drastically in their preferred responses and strategies in the face of insurgent threats. Finally, neighboring countries also were not directly or substantially involved, again partly because they did not perceive a threat and did not share the motivations or objectives of the NATO coalition. The success of the mission in Afghanistan has been mixed. Some progress has been made on some objectives, but it was not clear (as of March 2020) whether the coalition would hold if the United States followed through on plans to withdraw. The lack of a strong shared threat did not help this mission work toward success, but it is not clear that even a stronger set of shared interests would have helped the United States and its partners achieve their objectives in this case. It is hard, then, to draw strong conclusions from this case.

Summary

In the five case studies described here, coalitions that shared a common threat reaped meaningful advantages in terms of cohesion and commitment that helped them overcome some of the challenges associated with coalition warfare. Coalitions that lacked an immediate shared threat experienced cracks of various kinds and divisions that perpetuated and worsened communication gaps and weakened the political will of key coalition members to commit forces to ongoing military operations. Although our ability to generalize is limited, this finding—that having a shared threat matters—is consistent with previous research. The added value of the case studies here is that we have been able to explore the mechanisms through which the shared threat translates into better outcomes, and we have identified examples of how sensitive this link appears. In two of our case studies, even small differences in perception of the threat created cracks in coalition cohesion with implications for intervention outcomes. We can say with some confidence that having a shared threat can be helpful in uniting a coalition in ways that support achievement of key objectives and that the lack of a shared threat can be a challenge, but we cannot say with any certainty that having a shared threat is required or a necessary condition for a successful coalition operation.

H14. Past Experience

Partners that have fought together before and have experience working and training together, as part of either a formal alliance or a more informal partnership or coalition, might have advantages and a head start at overcoming challenges of coordination, communication, and interoperability. NATO partners, for example, conduct many training exercises to increase their skill at working and fighting together, and the United States similarly trains with other allies and partners. In this section, we

³⁸ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, pp. 534–535.

consider whether past experience appears to influence the likelihood that a coalition achieves its political objectives.

Quantitative Analysis

We again face serious data constraints in testing the relationship between past partnership experience and coalition objective success. We also face the challenge of quantitatively measuring coalition experience. For each coalition, we tally the number of times that coalition partners have participated in past U.S.-led interventions. But this metric creates additional difficulties in the analysis. In other low-observation settings, we have relied primarily on *t*-tests, univariate regressions, and descriptive statistics, but here we construct a multivariate regression to test the hypothesis. In this model, we control for two additional variables: We order the coalition interventions chronologically and rank them (e.g., first [1], second [2], third [3]) and the size of the coalition as measured by the number of partners. The first variable confounds the analysis because the experience metric will naturally grow over time. Our objective is to compare coalitions with different levels of partner experience, not to compare recent interventions with older ones, so we control for the variable in our statistical model. If we just compared the raw total tallies of interventions, we would certainly capture the strong correlation between *coalition order* (the term we use to determine when the coalition happens chronologically) and *coalition experience* (i.e., lower order, less experience). Similarly, larger coalitions will have more experience as measured by our metric simply because larger coalitions will have had more opportunities for past coalition participation (i.e., more partners, more potential for past experience).

The model tests whether experience is associated with coalition success while controlling for the effects of coalition order and size. The results are presented in Box 6.2.

We ultimately lack evidence to conclude that past coalition experience increases the likelihood of objective success. The effect size is exceptionally small and falls short of statistical significance. An additional past partnership in a coalition is predicted to improve the average objective success score by 0.001. As a reminder, the index ranges from one to three so the estimated effect is negligible and statistically insignificant. We note that it is a priori unlikely that we would uncover statistically significant or otherwise robust findings in the small sample in which standard errors are often large and confidence intervals wide. What's more, we are limited by a measure of experience that is somewhat crude, albeit available and tractable. Although past coalition participation captures experience, other measures (e.g., bilateral trainings) might better capture experience and ability of coalition partners to interoperate and achieve objective success. Given these caveats, we cannot assert that coalition experience improves the likelihood of objective success using the observable empirical relationship.

Box 6.2
Coalition Success and Experience

Independent Variable	Change in Average Objective Success
Experience	0.001
Coalition order	-0.022
Coalition size	0.000
Observations	33
R-squared	0.056

NOTES: The dependent variable is an intervention's average objective success. The coefficients listed are the estimated marginal effect of a change in the independent variables.

Qualitative Analysis

With quantitative analysis providing little evidence of an effect in either direction, we next consider the qualitative evidence. As a starting point, the BCOF troops that operated alongside U.S. forces in postwar Japan offer some evidence that new military partnerships might be particularly challenged by issues of communication, coordination, and interoperability. Despite serving under the common aegis of the waning British Commonwealth and Empire, the BCOF was the first Commonwealth occupational force; hence, the subsequent “rivalries and foul-ups were only to be expected.”³⁹ The force was beset by gaps in communication, competing command structures and priorities, and a lack of integration that undermined efforts to operate as a unified force. These disparities were quickly apparent; the BCOF was sidelined and the majority of partner nations would withdraw in short order.

In several of the other case studies examined, the benefits of past coalition fighting or joint training experience among long-term allies seem readily apparent. For instance, in the case of the Gulf War, a unique divided command structure that put Saudi Arabia in command of regional partners and the United States in command of Western partners had the added benefit of capitalizing on the established history of force integration among most of the Western partners. Many of the states were members of NATO and therefore familiar with fighting alongside the United States. The states that were not, such as Argentina, had conducted joint exercises with the United States in the past, which facilitated efficient integration.⁴⁰ This allowed the coalition to minimize some of the logistical challenges that have affected other large coalition

³⁹ Buckley, 1982, p. 93.

⁴⁰ Juan Carlos Neves, “Interoperability in Multinational Coalitions: Lessons from the Persian Gulf War,” *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 1995, p. 52.

interventions. The benefits extended to naval operations: Despite a lack of formal command hierarchy, the navies worked together well. This was partly because of the existing structures and practices in which they participated. The first was NATO; 11 of the 13 participating navies were NATO members. The other two nations, Argentina and Australia, had been conducting exercises for years with the U.S. Navy.⁴¹ DoD's *Final Report to Congress, Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, acknowledged how valuable this was to the mission's success, saying, "[U]niform procedures and communications methods developed during years of NATO, Australia–New Zealand–United States (Anzus), and various bilateral exercises greatly improved the Coalition's ability to work together effectively."⁴²

In the Global Coalition Against ISIS, the most-substantive contributions also came from fellow NATO members that had experience operating with the United States and with non-NATO partners offering smaller contributions only. Coalition partners provided aerial refueling capabilities and strike aircraft, reducing the burden on the U.S. Air Force. There is some evidence that past air campaigns, such as that conducted in Libya, provided lessons that benefited coalition partners in OIR in terms of the effective conduct of joint multinational and high-intensity air operations. They gained experience coordinating and enlisting effective local partners.⁴³ The coalition also benefited from more-extensive knowledge about the aircraft capabilities of key partners, a gap identified in the Libyan operation.⁴⁴ Notably, the Global Coalition Against ISIS also benefited from experience that the United States and key NATO allies gained working with such partners as the UAE, Qatar, and Jordan in the context of the air war in Libya.⁴⁵ OIR was ongoing at the time of this writing in 2020, so reflections on interoperability among partners is still preliminary. Thus far, however, what is most notable is the absence of major challenges cited in initial reporting, which might suggest that shared experience operating as part of a coalition since 2003—and in the Middle East, specifically—has been useful in preparing coalition forces for such operations. It is also noteworthy that more-significant challenges facing the coalition cited in early reporting are not owed to interoperability between the coalition partners but to interoperability between the coalition partners and local surrogate forces.⁴⁶ Problems do exist between NATO partners when it comes to information-sharing, however. The

⁴¹ Neves, 1995, p. 52.

⁴² Neves, 1995, p. 52.

⁴³ Karl Mueller, "NATO's Campaign in Libya Offers Salient Lessons for the Air War Against ISIL," *Defense One*, November 25, 2014.

⁴⁴ Jason Greenleaf, "The Air War in Libya," *Air and Space Power Journal*, March 2013.

⁴⁵ Mueller, 2014.

⁴⁶ Center for Army Lessons Learned, *ARCENT Transition to Combined Joint Operations Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve: Lessons and Best Practices*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, March 2016.

Center for Army Lessons Learned identifies information-sharing limitations at CJTF OIR Headquarters that were owed to coalition partners' different levels of access to classified material—a problem that has consistently plagued U.S. coalitions.⁴⁷ This appears to be an area where past experience has not led to significant improvement.

In the Afghanistan case, the value of past NATO experience has been similarly mixed in easing some of the challenges of coalition warfare. Despite a large and diverse coalition, analysis of the early days of NATO operations in Afghanistan underscores the relatively short learning curve experienced by the coalition. It was able to achieve a significant degree of jointness relatively quickly that extended beyond that achieved in other operations. This is likely in large part thanks to previous experiences operating and training together.⁴⁸ The coalition in Afghanistan benefited from past experience fighting as a coalition in a few ways. First, the institutional infrastructure and strong political ties between partners played an important role. These had been built up over decades.⁴⁹ Second, although the C2 structures in Afghanistan were not perfect, they benefited from the experience gained in past coalitions.⁵⁰ Third, past experience allowed the NATO coalition eventually to come to some agreed war aims. This set of strategic aims came late, but the fact that partners were eventually able to agree reflected their past experience with consensus-driven decisionmaking. The coherent aims supported some progress in the period after 2009.⁵¹ More generally, the NATO alliance and member experience working together created a useful forum for the development of strategy.⁵² Finally, operations in such places as Bosnia and common training experience did support better interoperability among NATO partners, although interoperability is still a challenge.⁵³

However, as in other situations, past NATO experience did not eliminate challenges within the coalition. First, the divided geographic structure of the operation meant that partners were not always fighting together; rather, they were often operating in parallel, reducing their ability to benefit quite as directly from years of experience. Overlapping authorities and dual-hatting created further challenges.⁵⁴ Second, past experience and processes in some ways impeded NATO efforts in Afghanistan. The alliance was a product of the Cold War, created as a system of self-defense and thrown into the Afghanistan war to engage in long-term counterterrorism, COIN, sta-

⁴⁷ Center for Army Lessons Learned, 2016.

⁴⁸ McInnis, 2013.

⁴⁹ McInnis, 2013.

⁵⁰ McInnis, 2013.

⁵¹ Johnston, 2019.

⁵² Johnston, 2019.

⁵³ Johnston, 2019.

⁵⁴ Johnston, 2019.

bility, and nation-building operations. As a result, “in combination with institutional constraints, the alliance faces limits in sustaining political support among its members for a prolonged counterinsurgency campaign.”⁵⁵ Past efforts by NATO forces to address gaps and build their effectiveness for traditional conflicts, such as that against Russia, might have created new challenges as the force developed was less than ideally suited for operations in Afghanistan.⁵⁶ This was also true operationally; most NATO training was aimed at a force-on-force conventional conflict. In practice, “[t]he alliance is notoriously short on crucial military hardware, such as tactical airlift, specialized infantry, and military assistance units that would be vital for an operational scenario such as in Afghanistan.”⁵⁷ In this way, past experience was no help and perhaps even an impediment to adaption in the new environment. Furthermore, despite past experience, NATO allies failed to overcome their communications challenges or stovepipes, many of which were long-standing issues.⁵⁸ A telling snapshot of these issues lies in the lack of interoperable communication systems forcing the 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade to rely on WhatsApp at the company level and below.⁵⁹

The experience of the EFP coalition has been similar in some ways to that of the one in Afghanistan, despite the different environment. Past experience working as a coalition has had some meaningful benefits in this case. For example, experience in Afghanistan has provided significant gains in terms of logistics, sustainment, and support, which have benefited the EFP mission.⁶⁰ Experience in Afghanistan also provided benefits in terms of intelligence-sharing (both processes and platforms).⁶¹ The EFP organization (into regional battlegroups) also drew from the Afghanistan experience of managing the country in security zones (which brought some challenges in unity of effort but did accomplish the operational goal).⁶² Past experience operating in crisis situations and progress toward interoperability gained in training conducted over the past ten years have also been beneficial in preparing the EFP to operate as an effective deterrent presence.⁶³ Still, past experiences have not allowed NATO forces to overcome all challenges. Many of these challenges have to do with communication, interoper-

⁵⁵ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, pp. 531–532.

⁵⁶ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, p. 534.

⁵⁷ Noetzel and Schreer, 2009, p. 534.

⁵⁸ Chad C. Serena, Isaac R. Porche III, Joel B. Predd, Jan Osburg, and Brad Lossing, *Lessons Learned from the Afghan Mission Network—Developing a Coalition Contingency Network*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-302-A, 2014, p. 3.

⁵⁹ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2019, p. 133.

⁶⁰ Johnston, 2019.

⁶¹ Johnston, 2019.

⁶² JFC Brunssum Public Affairs Office, “Enhanced Forward Presence,” *Northern Star*, August–September 2017.

⁶³ JFC Brunssum Public Affairs Office, 2017.

ability, and C2. For example, mixed units of varying technological levels usually have to accommodate themselves to the contingent with the lowest level, diminishing the advantages offered by the high technology of others. Bridging different systems, moreover, requires work, adding to the burden on officers and slowing down interactions.⁶⁴

Interestingly, as coalition partners have come to recognize areas of weakness and the need for continued training, they have exploited the EFP operation as a training opportunity. The deterrence mission, with its lower threat environment, provides the time for allied forces to strengthen their interoperability skills, learn how to communicate with one another and iron out shared techniques, practice operating in a cold and forested environment, and focus on high-intensity conventional warfare.⁶⁵ The French Army, for example, is pleased to deploy its heaviest armored units—a rare occurrence—and send them to a climate radically different from the French Army’s usual African stomping grounds.⁶⁶ The Spanish Army, which has never before deployed its Leopard tanks, has the same perspective.⁶⁷ These and other armies often highlight the large logistical effort required to sustain forces in the Baltics, suggesting that they welcome the occasion to exercise their logistical capabilities and armored warfare skills. The German Army, for example, has showcased the effort required to ship military cargo by rail, indicating that involvement in the EFP has improved its ability to do so and strengthened its critical partnership with the German rail service.⁶⁸ The British Army also makes the training value explicit. In an official video about EFP, for example, a British Army officer argues that the British Army gets a great deal out of the deployment not just because of demonstrated solidarity and resolve but also because of “the training benefit” of deploying a fully resourced armored battlegroup forward—with all the sustainment and logistics effort that entails.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ This was a key finding of the French Army, which frequently deploys task forces formed by elements from different regiments that are not issued the same technology and therefore operate at different technological levels. See, for example, Force Employment Doctrine Center [Centre de Doctrine d’Emploi des Forces], *Electrons in the Field: First Feedback on the Digitization of the Battlespace* [Des électrons dans la brousse: Premiers retours d’expérience de la numérisation de l’espace de bataille], Paris, 2007, p. 18.

⁶⁵ Ministry of the Armed Forces [Ministère des Armées], “French Soldiers in the Baltic [Des soldats français dans la Baltique (#JDEF)],” January 16, 2018; German Army, “Inspector Visits Troops in Lithuania: ‘I Experienced Even Deeper Integration’ [Inspekteur besucht Truppe in Litauen: Noch tiefere Integration erlebt],” July 5, 2019.

⁶⁶ Ministry of the Armed Forces [Ministère des Armées], 2018; French Army—Military Operations [Armée française—Opérations militaires], “[MissionLYNX] VBCI and Leclerc Tanks in Crossing Exercise—Estonia [(MissionLYNX) VBCI et chars Leclerc en exercice de franchissement—Estonie],” YouTube, April 25, 2017.

⁶⁷ Spanish Army [Ejército de Tierra español], “Destination Latvia [Destino Letonia],” YouTube, March 14, 2018; Santiago Recia, “Mission of the Spanish Army in Latvia [MISIÓN DEL EJERCITO ESPAÑOL EN LETONIA],” YouTube, May 3, 2017; Spanish Army [Ejército de Tierra español], Spanish Army [Ejército de Tierra español], “Reinforced Advanced Presence #eFP [Presencia Avanzada Reforzada #eFP],” YouTube, July 3, 2017.

⁶⁸ Tino Jacobsen, “German Army Initiates Military Cooperation with Deutsche Bahn Railway Company,” *World Socialist Web Site*, February 12, 2019.

⁶⁹ British Army, “Enhanced Forward Presence,” webpage, undated.

Summary

Our analysis finds mixed support for the hypothesis that experience as a coalition contributes to achievement of coalition objectives. Our quantitative analysis found little evidence to support this hypothesis, and our case studies provide only mixed support. In our qualitative analysis, we found clear instances in which experience mattered and contributed to success. Across the five case studies, we find mixed support for the argument that past coalition experience can improve coalition effectiveness and support achievement of U.S. objectives. Our case studies highlight some of the ways that past experience has been valuable. The Gulf War provides some of the clearest examples of operational successes that resulted from past joint training. In some situations at the other end of the spectrum, such as Afghanistan, past experience and habits built over time preparing for conventional conflicts have been liabilities in more-unconventional environments. On the other hand, the coalitions in most of our case studies continue to face significant obstacles to communication, C2, and interoperability despite past experience.

There are many reasons why this might be the case. First, there might be context-specific dynamics to multinational coordination that require bespoke solutions in each operation. Second, the skills and processes that support interoperability might be ones that are difficult to institutionalize, meaning that as new commanders rise to the top, they must relearn at least some of what their predecessors have already experienced. Finally, it could be that the process of cross-nation cooperation and achieving full interoperability are so challenging that gaps remain despite decades of experience. On net, we can only say that past experience operating and training together might support the success of coalitions in many ways, but they do not eliminate the challenges of interoperability and might even be an impediment if they create obstacles to flexibility.

H15. Number of Coalition Partners

There are two possible predictions about the effect of membership size on coalition outcomes. On the one hand, more partners might mean more capabilities and wider legitimacy, which might favor success. On the other hand, more partners might mean more coordination and communication challenges and more potential divergence of priorities that undermine progress toward key objectives. We consider these hypotheses both qualitatively and quantitatively in this section.

Quantitative Analysis

Our quantitative analysis relies primarily on descriptive statistics to assess the relationship between success and number of partners. We find little clear evidence of a trend through this lens, whether we measure coalition size through the total number of partners or the number of major partners. Visualizations of both comparisons are shown in Figures 6.4 and 6.5. We also considered whether there might be a relationship between the number of partners and the number of objectives an intervention had and whether

there were notable trends in coalition size by activity type. We found no relationship between number of objectives and coalition size. We found some differences in coalition size by activity type, but (as elsewhere) these are difficult to interpret because of our small sample size. Interestingly, the patterns for combat, deterrence, and stabilization missions (three of the most-common U.S. intervention types) have, on average, a similar number of major partners; stability operations are slightly larger when all partners are considered. The quantitative analysis, then, fails to find any consistent relationship between number of partners and intervention outcomes. This result is, in reality, not all that surprising, especially given the fact that we had two contradictory theories for how coalition size might affect intervention outcomes. In some situations, the added size might be beneficial from a legitimacy or capability aggregation perspective. In others, however, it might have the opposite effect of creating additional coordination challenges and barriers. We will use our case studies to further explore these relationships.

Qualitative Analysis

The five case studies provide evidence of both mechanisms. On net, although the gains in legitimacy derived from having a large, diverse coalition are sometimes necessary, there appear to be substantial downsides that can complicate progress toward U.S. objectives, at least in the instances we examined.

Smaller coalitions in our sample do appear to have success at achieving U.S. political objectives. It is not clear whether this is because of their size, but the ability to avoid some of the logistical challenges of larger coalitions does appear to have been

Figure 6.4
Coalition Success and Membership Size

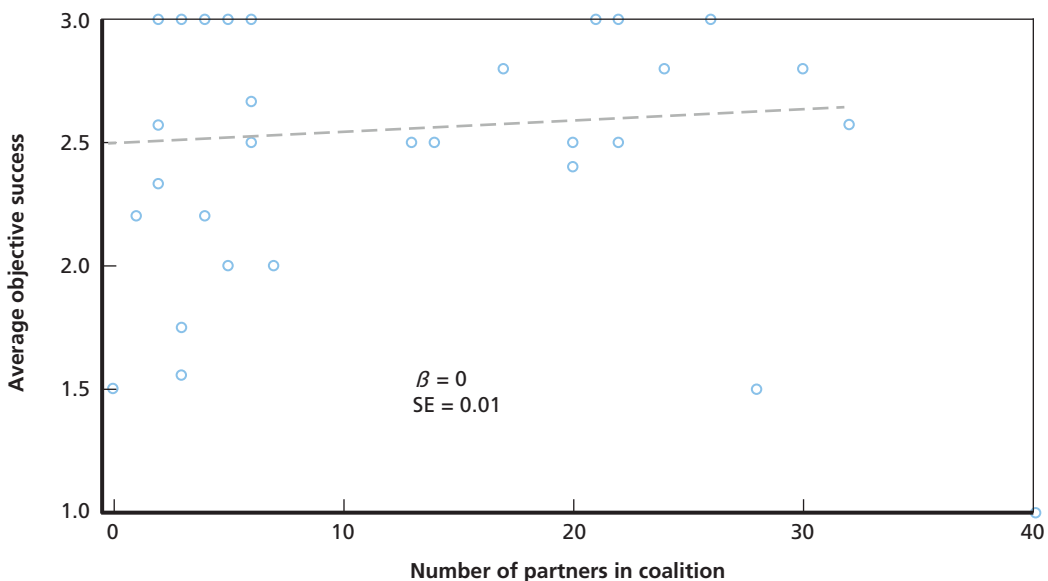
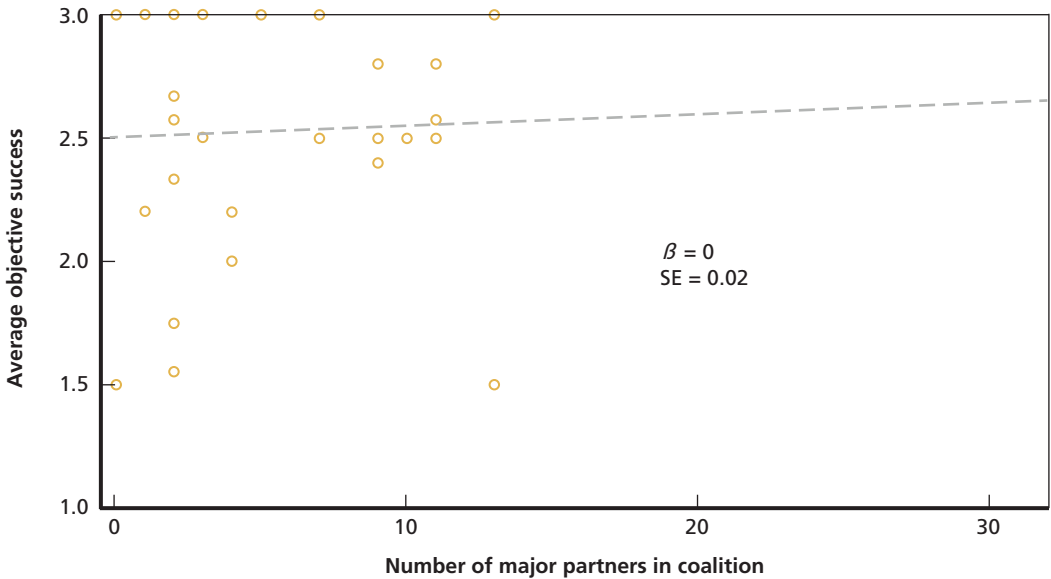


Figure 6.5
Major Coalition Partners and Success



an advantage in these instances. The postwar occupation of Japan, for example, relied on a very small number of partners at its start, and the United States intentionally sought to limit the number of partners to maximize its own influence and control. Even among the smaller number of partners, there were divergences in enthusiasm and objectives, and each partner sought to have its own independent role. A smaller number of weaker partners allowed the United States to operate in a largely unilateral fashion and to marginalize coalition partners, especially as the coalition itself began to fall apart. In the end, this ability of the United States to operate more or less independently appears to be one factor that favored success.⁷⁰ Similarly, the initial combat phase of the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan was conducted with limited support from partners (only the United Kingdom and some Afghan partners provided support in this early phase).⁷¹ In this case, the smaller number of partners seems to have been an advantage because it allowed the United States to act quickly and decisively. Although these smaller coalitions provided flexibility, however, they were also similar in that neither had high operational requirements and both had preestablished legitimacy without the presence of a coalition.

Other coalitions—the Global Coalition Against ISIS, the Gulf War coalition, the EFP coalition, and the coalition involved in the Afghanistan stability operation—were

⁷⁰ Buckley, 1982, p. 98; Trotter, 1990, pp. 69–70.

⁷¹ Kreps, 2008; Kreps, 2011.

larger and faced costs and benefits as a result of the greater number of partners. In OIR and the Gulf War, the larger coalition size had significant advantages in terms of legitimacy gained and (to some extent) operational strength. However, the larger coalitions did present some challenges. One of the clearest manifestations of these challenges is the existence and effects of multiple conflicting caveats and restrictions that were placed on forces by different partners. For example, in OIR, the large number of partners led to differing objectives and differing rules of engagement, which resulted in a complicated web of requirements and conditions on who could do what and where. Many contributing partners, for instance, restricted their forces from operating in Syria. The initial Canadian parliamentary approval for air combat against ISIS restricted the Canadian Air Force to operating within Iraq, although a subsequent approval narrowly passed along party lines did expand the authority to include Syria.⁷² Denmark had a similar evolution, at first restricting its air operations to Iraq and only expanding its mandate to include Syria in the second year of the campaign.⁷³ Other countries placed blanket limits on combat operations regardless of geography. For instance, Germany provided only support capabilities, such as ISR, and agreed to send those assets only at the request of France after the November 2015 attacks by ISIS in Paris.⁷⁴ In addition, the preferences of the Turkish government had a major impact on the strategic approach underlying the military campaign, arguably leading the coalition to adopt suboptimal approaches to defeating ISIS in deference to those concerns. Although having many participants was an advantage from the standpoint of legitimacy and firepower, it created unique challenges—not only in terms of communication and interoperability but also in terms of where the coalition could engage and with what means.

In the Gulf War, the size of the coalition provided many benefits in terms of operational capabilities and legitimacy. There were operational challenges, but coalition leaders managed these challenges in part with a divided command structure in which Saudi Arabia commanded the regional partners (Arab and Muslim countries) while the United States commanded other contributors. This allowed the size of the intervention to be a real asset rather than an impediment. Specifically, the Gulf War coalition had two “separate but parallel lines of authority with U.S. and Saudi Arabian forces remaining under their respective national command authorities.”⁷⁵ The two nations established a Joint Directorate of Planning and a Coalition, Coordination, Communication, and Integration Center to manage combined operations.⁷⁶ Liaison

⁷² Mark Kennedy, “Parliament Votes 149–129 to Widen Canada’s Mission Against ISIS to Syria and Extend It for a Year,” *National Post*, March 31, 2015.

⁷³ “Denmark Expands Military Mission Against Islamic State into Syria,” Reuters, April 19, 2016.

⁷⁴ “Germany to Support Military Campaign Against ISIS After French Appeal,” NBC News, November 26, 2015.

⁷⁵ Weitsman, 2013, p. 119.

⁷⁶ Weitsman, 2013, p. 119.

officers from each coalition partner maintained communication between U.S. Central Command General Norman Schwarzkopf and their respective commanders via frequent trips to the center. The frequent, transparent communication and good personal relationships between commanders allowed the coalition to overcome any potentially negative effects of a divided command structure and create mechanisms to manage the large number of diverse partners.⁷⁷ This divided structure also provided a mechanism to deal with the many national caveats. For example, Egypt and Syria did not want to be part of efforts to fight directly against Iraq but were willing to help restore Kuwaiti control over Kuwait City. The structure also helped maintain the perception that Western and Arab partners were sharing the burden more equally.⁷⁸

This is not to say that the size and diversity of the coalition did not bring challenges. The two-pronged structure created ambiguity regarding who had authority over whom, which created some issues for effort cohesion. The size of the coalition also made divergent and contentious interests inevitable. For example, the United States expressed interest in removing Saddam from power, but this would have alienated key coalition partners—especially the Arab nations whose leaders did not want their own rule challenged. The United States, therefore, formally abandoned the idea of making the removal of Saddam an objective.⁷⁹ Communication was also a challenge. The horizontal command structure made communication about parallel efforts even more important than usual. Liaisons from each partner nation were supposed to bolster communication among partners.⁸⁰ Overall, then, coalition size was largely an advantage in the operation, providing superior capabilities and greater legitimacy, but it was not without its challenges.

For the EFP, it appears that the larger number of coalition partners has contributed directly and extensively to the deterrent signal sent by the coalition force. Although there have been interoperability and other challenges that result from coalition size, they do not appear to offset the benefits of the larger number of partners. As noted elsewhere, all NATO members except Turkey have contributed to the EFP force in some way—even Iceland, which has no armed forces and instead has deployed civilians and members of its Coast Guard. This diversity has been central to coalition success. Politically speaking, having a broad coalition of NATO allies is important for several reasons. First, it affirms the alliance's resolve and its viability. It also sends an important message to Russia regarding alliance solidarity and reminds Moscow that, unlike attacking Georgia or Ukraine, attacking one of the Baltic States or Romania

⁷⁷ Robert H. Scales, Jr., "Trust, Not Technology, Sustains Coalitions," *Parameters*, Vol. 28, No. 4, 1998–1999.

⁷⁸ Bard E. O'Neill and Ilana Kass, "The Persian Gulf War: A Political-Military Assessment," *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 2007, p. 226.

⁷⁹ O'Neill and Kass, 2007, p. 232.

⁸⁰ Mark M. Kauzlarich, *Command and Control Challenges During Coalition Operations*, Newport, R.I.: Naval War College, June 14, 1996, p. 10.

is tantamount to attacking the entire alliance. Second, the number and diversity of partners also provides legitimacy in the eyes of the contributing countries, whose governments and electorates might be more willing to deploy forces in the name of a multinational coalition than they would otherwise. Finally, the diversity adds to the deterrence value of the coalition by increasing the political price to be paid for attacking it. Not just one country would suffer casualties in an invasion; several would. The larger number of partners also brought with it several challenges. As already described, there have been divergences in priorities and objectives, different assessments of the Russian threat, and challenges with interoperability and communication.⁸¹ These differences have revealed cracks in the coalition and created constraints on coalition expansion and, to some extent, effectiveness.

Finally, in the Afghan stabilization mission, the effect of the larger number of partners seems more ambiguous. There were legitimacy and operational gains from having a large number of partners, but there were also real challenges. As already described, the large number of partners created not only the challenge of divergent priorities and objectives, but also significant interoperability challenges on several different levels. There were difficulties between the United States and its NATO partners, the coalition and the host, and Afghan partners themselves, thus restricting coordination.⁸² As the coalition grew in size (a requirement given the expanded mission and the scope of the operational tasks), more challenges also began to arise. The coalition now needed a single coherent and accessible coalition, command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C5ISR) network, but this was not achieved.⁸³ Instead, technical issues prevented system compatibility, and cultural differences created barriers to information flow. Different cultures, languages, processes, and capabilities made it difficult for the coalition to coordinate in the initial stage of the war. Finally, as in the case of OIR, national caveats, created significant logistical challenges that prevented the coalition from taking full advantage of the larger number of coalition partners. These caveats were described in a previous section, but we review them here. Specifically, in 2006, “there were an estimated 50 caveats in Afghanistan affecting ISAF troops,” 40 percent of which were tied to geography, thus stymying “agility.”⁸⁴ Twenty of the 27 nations contributing troops to the effort had limited their “operations outside of originally assigned locations [and in] conducting counternarcotic operations with ISAF.”⁸⁵ These caveats had other real implications for combat operations. In 2009, the caveats, coupled with troop limitations, provided the

⁸¹ “NATO Solidarity Higher Among . . .,” 2019.

⁸² Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2019, p. 72.

⁸³ Serena et al., 2014, p. 3.

⁸⁴ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2019, p. 127.

⁸⁵ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2019, p. 127.

insurgents with “breathing room and forced the United States to nearly double the number of troops deployed to Afghanistan.”⁸⁶ These restrictions led to more divisions within NATO and thus shifted the burden further on to the United States.⁸⁷ Thus, although there certainly were advantages to having a larger number of partners for such a challenging and complex mission, that large number was also an impediment to progress along several dimensions. It is impossible to say whether the coalition would have made more progress with fewer partners. However, it does seem that the benefits from the diverse coalition membership were not fully realized in this instance.

Summary

Our analyses suggest that the relationship between coalition size and intervention outcomes depends somewhat on context. There are clearly situations in which large and diverse coalitions have advantages in terms of legitimacy and access to resources. However, there are also situations in which large coalitions struggle with coordination and communication problems that, in turn, create challenges for operational effectiveness. This might be a case where the key is “right-sizing” the coalition; that is, ensuring that the coalition is the right size for the intervention and its objectives. Small coalitions might be best when possible, but there might be instances in which larger coalitions are required—for legitimacy or for operational purposes, for example. In these instances, the benefits of having a large coalition might be worth the costs.

Summary

In this chapter, we considered evidence for the five hypotheses that focused on determinants of coalition success. In general, our results were mixed. This was partly because of the small dataset. With only 37 coalition interventions, we are limited in our ability to compare across situations and identify systematic patterns and trends. Our quantitative analysis is limited because of this, the nonrandom nature of coalition formation, and the impact of selection effects. Our case studies help fill this gap somewhat, but even those do not tell a consistent story. What seems important to success in one case has a limited effect on success in other situations. This emphasizes the fundamental role played by context in shaping intervention outcomes and determining which specific intervention characteristics most directly contribute to success. What works in one context, for one threat, or in one situation might not work in another context or against a different adversary. This result is consistent with past RAND work on determinants of success in U.S. military interventions writ large.

⁸⁶ Saideman and Auerswald, 2012, p. 67.

⁸⁷ Saideman and Auerswald, 2012, pp. 67–68.

Turning to the five hypotheses considered in this chapter, we found no evidence that coalitions are consistently more successful than unilateral interventions, but our research underscored that they can sometimes contribute to success when they create the legitimacy needed to win sufficient support or when they help address fundamental operational demands. We did not find evidence that coalitions were more or less supportive of success than unilateral interventions for any one activity type. We found mixed evidence when it came to the effects of experience and size. Although there was no clear quantitative trend, our case studies suggest that, on average, more experience in training or fighting as a coalition can support success. However, the case studies also caution that experience does not guarantee success and can be an impediment to innovation. When it comes to size, smaller interventions in our dataset had some advantages, but larger ones are often needed to meet operational or legitimacy requirements, despite the challenges that can bring in terms of collective action. Finally, we found more-consistent evidence in our case studies that coalitions with clearly shared threats and more-severe threats tended to have better outcomes in terms of achieving stated political objectives; the threat pushed them to cooperate more effectively and to overcome coordination and other challenges. Comparing this with the finding in the previous chapter that having shared objectives was often but not always a factor predicting coalition membership suggests an interesting dichotomy. Sharing goals or threats might not predict membership, but it might have a beneficial effect on outcomes where it exists. However, even a shared threat is not a guarantee of objective achievement, even in the limited set of situations considered here.

It is worth noting a variety of other factors contributed to the success of the situations considered here, including adversaries that were weaker than expected, dominant U.S. military strength, and extensive amounts of U.S. resources. Our goal here was not to enumerate all those factors that contributed to success but to focus in on a handful with direct relevance to key policy debates and decisions. Our results have some implications for policymakers; we mention those here and consider them in more detail in the next chapter. Perhaps most importantly, there is no formula for a successful coalition intervention. Instead, context matters a great deal and drives key outcomes. Second, it might be wrong to assume that larger and more-experienced coalitions will be best in challenging interventions. Instead, large coalitions might only be worth the challenges they pose when they are required. More-experienced coalitions might be better positioned to be successful, but this is not a guarantee. Furthermore, context matters even with experienced coalitions, and the same old routines might be counterproductive. Forming coalitions around a shared threat—but not necessarily shared objectives—also seems to favor success. The distinction might be important. Coalition partners that perceive a shared threat might be more likely to compromise and commit to working together. However, it might be acceptable and even beneficial to recruit and incorporate coalition partners with differing objectives. Having the ability to pursue their own priorities might strengthen the commitment of key allies and partners to

the coalition. Considering this in the context of the Pacific region, for example, this insight would suggest that the United States could form a coalition around a shared threat from China, even if partners differ in their objectives. Coercing adherence to U.S. objectives might not be necessary to coalition success. Finally, there is no reason based on the evidence here to think that coalitions will always be more successful than unilateral efforts, especially for situations in which operational demands or legitimacy requirements do not require a coalition. Thus, the decision to form a coalition should be a measured and intentional one rather than one taken as the default, because possible coalition partners exist, or because it is assumed to be necessary.

Conclusions

In this report, we have considered three sets of hypotheses regarding how the United States uses coalition interventions, what nations are likely to join them, and when these operations are successful. In this chapter, we summarize key insights, describe implications for the Army, and provide recommendations. Box 7.1 summarizes the evidence and findings on each of the hypothesis.

Why Does the United States Choose Coalitions?

We found strong support for two of our hypotheses about why the United States chooses to use coalitions and mixed support for the other three. The United States has tended to use coalitions to offset the operational burden of an intervention and to build the legitimacy needed to carry out an intervention. These findings are consistent with existing literature. We find that logistical concerns related to geography are not irrelevant to coalition decisions but that the United States can often overcome the challenges associated with distance without entering into formal coalitions that involve the provision of forces. Domestic considerations related to the political support of the general public and of the political elite appear to matter in some situations but not others and not systematically. Finally, although the United States has, since the end of the Cold War, tended to use unilateral interventions when the immediate threat to the United States is high, our broader analysis suggests that operational burden and considerations of legitimacy often mean that the United States is forced to rely on coalition support. Furthermore, we observe instances in which the United States expressed a willingness to intervene unilaterally if the costs of forming a coalition are too high.

This part of the analysis was largely descriptive in nature and does not suggest specific recommendations for Army leaders. However, the results do have implications for thinking about the future of interventions—and the future of coalitions, specifically. As the United States shifts to a focus on competing with and defeating near-peer adversaries, defense planners and policymakers must also consider what these conflicts might look like and how the United States will prepare for them. There are at least two possible directions, and each suggests something different about future trends in

Box 7.1 Key Findings Summary

Factor	Finding
Burden-sharing	Coalitions are more likely when operational demands are expected to be high.
Geography	The United States could use coalitions to gain access and sustainment or logistical support when interventions occur far from the United States, but they also rely on noncoalition partners and special agreements.
International legitimacy	Coalitions are more likely when the need for international legitimacy is higher.
Domestic politics	Domestic political considerations matter in some situations but are less relevant than other factors.
Degree of threat	The United States often prefers to act unilaterally when the immediate threat is high, but operational and legitimacy considerations mean that, even in high-threat situations, the United States sometimes has to rely on coalitions.
U.S. relationship	States with close ties to the United States are more likely (but not guaranteed) to join coalitions. States without close ties might join for other reasons.
Home region	States are more likely to join coalitions in their home region.
Shared interests	Shared interests are associated with a higher likelihood of joining a coalition, but states could also enter to pursue their unique objectives.
IGO	IGO sponsorship appears likely to increase willingness of states to join.
Status-seeking	States sometimes join coalitions to advance their status or reputation.
Coalitions more successful than unilateral	Coalitions can support success in some situations, but there is no systematic trend.
Coalitions more successful for stabilization ops	We found no consistent trend for this hypothesis.
Shared interests	Having some shared interest does seem to be associated with a higher likelihood of achieving U.S. objectives; shared threats seem especially important to coalition outcomes.
Experience	Experience with partners in the past provides some benefit but cannot overcome key coalition challenges.
Number of partners	Smaller coalitions can operate more efficiently, but sometimes larger coalitions are needed for legitimacy or burden-sharing.

coalitions. First, if we expect that future conflicts are likely to be larger-scale confrontations with such adversaries as Russia and China, then the United States will likely be forced to rely more heavily on coalitions to help meet the operational demands of a major-power war. These will be situations in which, despite the severe threat, operational demands and geography will force the United States to build coalitions and rely on partners.

However, our analysis also showed that during the Cold War, a period when the United States faced a major-power adversary, conflicts tended to operate through proxies, coalitions were used less often, and the United States more often intervened unilaterally (though carefully to avoid directly engaging with the Soviet Union). In this model, the relevance of coalitions would depend on trends in norms. In the Cold War, preventing the spread of communism far outstripped any demand for legitimacy. In the post-Cold War environment, legitimacy has been paramount, but will this trend continue in a threat environment that is more severe? If yes, then coalitions might continue to increase as a proportion of interventions. If no, then dependence on coalitions might depend on U.S. willingness and ability to shoulder the operational demands and the more general interest in engaging coalition forces. Importantly, one way in which legitimacy might continue to matter (even in the face of changing norms) involves questions of access—having regional partners and support can ease access and logistical challenges that are manifold in both U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and U.S. European Command. Still, a changed threat environment might change the way in which the United States uses coalitions.

Why Do States Join U.S. Coalitions?

Our analysis of coalition contributors suggests that states are more likely to join U.S. coalitions when they have close ties with the United States, when the intervention occurs in their own region, and/or when they can leverage membership to increase their status or standing. We found that states do seem to be motivated to join coalitions when they have core shared interests or desired end states, but we also observed that states very often join coalitions with their own narrower objectives that differ from those of the United States or the stated objectives of the coalition. Finally, we found mixed support for the argument that IGO sponsorship drives membership. IGO sponsorship does seem support coalition membership, but our research identified clear exceptions.

These results are useful for military planners who are thinking about what the U.S. Army needs to do to ensure that it is able to build coalitions when needed or desired to pursue objectives or operate in conflicts for which partners are required. Specifically, planners and policymakers can leverage the insights here to identify specific states that might be willing to join a coalition or are at least open to joining with

the right incentives. It also identifies areas where the United States might not need to focus when it comes to building coalitions. We offer additional thoughts here.

When it comes to building coalitions, establishing strong ties prior to a conflict or crisis can be beneficial. The Army should seek to build and strengthen these ties with potential partners along political, military, economic, and cultural dimensions.

Our analysis found that states with long-standing close ties to the United States tended to be more likely than other states to join U.S. coalitions. Furthermore, we found that this was true across types of relationships: military, political, economic, and cultural. Although the strongest relationship was found for military alliances, we found that military assistance and cultural ties (for example, the percentage of the country that speaks English) also mattered. To build relationships that encourage coalition partnerships, the U.S. government generally and the U.S. Army specifically have several options. First, military and diplomatic leaders could seek to expand the number of formal partnerships to which the United States is a member. That is a high bar and might be challenging in such places as East Asia, where potential partners have avoided bilateral relationships and are concerned about angering China. However, there are options below formal alliances, including unofficial partnerships and even close military or political ties built through interpersonal relationships, joint training and exercises, and personnel exchanges. Another option would be to establish ties with military assistance that could build a different type of military and economic relationship while also building partner capacity in ways that can support future operations. Economic ties can also matter. Increasing trade relationships with a country, for example, appears to increase the likelihood that a state joins a coalition. In other words, economic relationships and interdependence might also build connections that support coalition formation. Finally, our results suggest that cultural ties also matter. Although it is unlikely that a strategy of increasing the English-speaking population in a country is feasible, there are many other ways of using soft power and influence to expand cultural ties—through trade, educational exchanges, social media campaigns, and other methods. The U.S. Army can assist in these efforts by partnering with other organizations in the interagency on influence campaigns and personal relationships that can strengthen unofficial ties between the United States and potential partners. *Equally important to the observation that closer ties can encourage potential partners and allies to join U.S. coalitions, our results suggest that even allies do not universally join U.S. coalitions. As a result, the United States cannot and should not assume partner or ally support when conducting contingency planning.*

Where does the United States stand on building the relationships it needs to support future coalitions? The answer varies by region. In Europe, the United States has strong political and military ties, formal alliances, deep trade relationships, and strong cultural connections, but there are concerns that even this might not be enough to

guarantee support in the face of a major conflict. In the Middle East, the U.S. position is more uncertain. The United States has several partnerships but no formal alliances. Economic ties are stronger: The United States is a major trading partner of the region and funnels substantial military assistance to the region, in the form of foreign military sales and training and other support. Cultural ties to the United States are weaker, and past U.S. actions have engendered animosity in the region—more in some places than others. In the Pacific, the U.S. position is also fragile. The United States has several key military alliances in the region, but many other states have stringently avoided formal military relationships. Even close allies have shown hesitancy to anger or provoke China by drawing closer to the United States. Economic ties are strong; the United States is a major economic player in the region but is overshadowed by China in most situations. The U.S. decision not to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership looms large here; doing so would have built a strong set of economic ties that could have increased the odds of future coalition support. Finally, cultural ties are dominated by China in some places. The United States is already aware of the challenges that it might face in building coalition support in future conflicts with China and is working to close that gap. The findings in this report underscore the importance of that initiative and highlight the distance that the United States has to go in this area—but also the many different paths that the U.S. government could use to build the closer ties needed to support coalition membership.

There is some evidence that states seeking greater international status or influence might be primed for recruitment to a coalition, even if initially resistant. When forming coalitions, the United States should consider whether there are status-seeking states that might be willing to join without explicit or implicit payments or side payments.

Although we tested this hypothesis only with qualitative data, we found some evidence of states joining to advance their own status or standing in several of the intervention case studies we considered. In most of these situations, the partners in question were smaller states seeking to advance their place on the international stage. This was true in the coalitions formed in the Gulf War and to fight ISIS. In the post–World War II occupation of Japan, as another example, Australia and other members of the BCOF saw the intervention as a way to gain international standing and sought to establish their roles as independent contributors. In other situations, even larger states, such as Canada in the case of the war in Afghanistan, have used participation in a coalition to advance national standing and reputation. In part, these efforts aim to win the favor of the United States or to solidify relationships on which they are economically or militarily dependent, but they also sought to give partners a place at the table and a larger voice on the international stage.

This notion that the United States might be able to leverage the desire of some states to advance their international status when building coalitions is one that deserves

additional research, given the potential implications. Specifically, if the relationship observed in our research is one that can be generalized, then identifying those states most vulnerable to such appeals could be a useful means for the United States to extend and diversify future coalitions without significant costs. When thinking about possible future conflicts and the coalitions that would be needed to fight them, the European, Pacific, and Middle East theaters are very different. In each case, however, there are both smaller states that might seek more influence and rapidly rising states that might see coalition membership as a pathway to greater international political influence. Additional research in this area should (1) seek ways to test this relationship between status-seeking and coalition membership empirically and in a wider set of situations and (2) explore whether certain types of states are most likely to have status objectives.

IGO sponsorship or leadership might not be required for the formation of strong coalitions, but it can increase the willingness of potential contributors to join. Building and working through IGOs can help the United States successfully build coalitions for military interventions.

Our analysis shows that states are more likely to join military coalitions when there is an IGO sponsoring or leading the intervention. This result speaks to the importance of legitimacy when it comes to coalition formation. States do seem to be more willing to join coalitions when they have the approval of an international organization, such as NATO, the EU, or the AU. Our case studies show that IGO sponsorship is not a requirement, and coalitions have been successfully formed without having an IGO involved. However, our research also highlights the essential role that IGO involvement has played in numerous situations in building a diverse coalition and holding that coalition together in the face of challenges.

For the United States, building and working through IGOs might be one way to support the formation of diverse coalitions. Importantly, IGOs formed in one region can also serve as powerful legitimacy providers for interventions in other regions. For example, NATO has led interventions across the globe, and interventions supported by the UN have similarly spanned boundaries. IGOs can serve as the core foundation of an intervention and motivate wider participation. The United States does not have a similar Pacific-based, multilateral IGO that can support coalition formation in this way, and it is unlikely that the United States will be able to build such an organization in the region. Rather, it has a series of bilateral alliances that it must work through to achieve its aims, which could pose a vulnerability if a conflict in the region requires a coalition-led response. However, informal relationships could fill the gap. Exercises that bring multiple East Asian players together could be one way to foster multilateral ties, though perhaps not formal alliances. Furthermore, IGOs, such as NATO and the UN, can still provide some degree of support and legitimacy at the global level that could help build consensus around a coalition (though they could not provide logisti-

cal support in the same way). When thinking about and planning for future interventions, the United States should consider more carefully and earlier how it will leverage IGO support to build strong coalitions. IGO sponsorship should be incorporated into operational planning and exercises. IGO support is not something that can be built overnight; it is something that requires significant investment and consensus-building. IGOs do have long-term value, however. To the extent that the United States seeks to continue to exert international influence, maintaining and working through IGOs might be one efficient and effective way to do it.

What Makes Coalitions Successful?

Our results on factors driving coalition success were among the weakest. We found that coalitions do not favor success compared with unilateral interventions (overall or across activity types), and the effects of past coalition experience and number of partners are mixed. We found some qualitative support for an argument that shared threats can support cohesion and ultimately success, and we observed that shared threats seem more important than shared objectives in many situations. With only five case studies, we must be careful about generalizing, but our results suggest a few recommendations of Army planners.

Although coalitions can be beneficial and support success at achieving U.S. political objectives in some situations, there is no guarantee that they will be more effective than unilateral interventions.

Our analysis shows that although coalitions can have benefits—in terms of legitimacy gained or operational resources acquired—there is no guarantee that they will be any more effective than a unilateral intervention. Similarly, although large and diverse coalitions can bring benefits, they also bring significant challenges that can work against successful achievement of key objectives. Although the decision to enter into a coalition might be one of necessity, the choice of coalition structure, partners, and processes can play a role in determining whether an intervention achieves U.S. political objectives or does not. There are some interventions that are better conducted as coalitions and others that must be done in that way. One example of the former is the Global Coalition Against ISIS, a coalition that required regional support to be as effective as it was. Examples of the latter are large conflicts, such as the World Wars and (to a lesser extent) the Korean War, which required partners to meet operational requirements. In each of these instances, the challenges of coalitions were worth shouldering for the benefits they provided. However, there are coalitions that have been less effective at achieving key objectives, such as the one in Afghanistan (despite its size and diverse membership). The key to coalition success seems to be ensuring that the right partners are involved; this might mean not only partners that can con-

tribute larger numbers of forces but also small countries that can contribute essential niche or specialized capabilities. The number of partners might matter less for the United States than having key partners whose support and commitment are essential to good coalition outcomes. For example, in the case of Afghanistan, the first part of the intervention was largely unilateral but benefited from the support of key Afghan warlord partners who provided legitimacy.¹ In the intervention to counter ISIS, winning regional support and participation (from Iraq, for example) was key, as was support on the ground from the Kurds. The Gulf War coalition similarly benefited from having strong regional support. In each of these instances, having the right partners might have been more important than having a large number of partners, and the ability to work alongside influential local partners was important to success.

We do not suggest that past interventions conducted as coalitions that did not succeed should have been unilateral, and we do not argue for more unilateral interventions. Instead, our argument is that coalitions should be formed with a clear view of which partners are needed, why, and what role each coalition partner will serve. It should be a highly intentional and reasoned decision that recognizes the limits of the coalition and has realistic expectations; decisions should not be based on who is available or willing. In this view, coalition partners are not interchangeable. Rather, each partner serves a very specific function that supports intervention success. Therefore, operational plans for future contingencies should explicitly consider which coalition partners will be required and what their roles should be, and the U.S. military should then seek to build and exercise these relationships. In many situations, the most-important partners are not the ones with the most military resources but the ones that bring regional access and support. When a conflict breaks out, it is too late to think about which partners are needed and which roles must be filled. Planning is likely to be haphazard and coalition membership based on who is available and acts fastest. Advance planning also might help remove uncertainty about which partners might support a coalition in various contexts. However, the ability to have such conversations might be limited with some partners. For example, it would be easier to have these discussions in Europe than it would in the Pacific, where possible partners are more fearful of China.

Having some kind of shared interest, such as a perceived or real threat or desired end state, is important to coalition formation and success, but states also can—and do—have their own national objectives.

We observed in our case studies that coalitions were often formed around a shared set of interests or desired end states but that partners often also had divergent objectives. Examples are the objectives of the French and Italian forces in the EFP deployment (although sharing the concern about the Russian threat, they sought to advance national interests by joining the coalition) and of Turkey in the coalition against ISIS.

¹ Kreps, 2008.

Shared interests, such as a shared threat or overarching desired outcome (e.g., defeating ISIS, removing Saddam from Kuwait), are important to coalition formation but even more central to the ability of coalitions to achieve that outcome. (This is not to be confused with separate national-level objectives that might also exist, such as status-seeking, building ties with the United States, or operational experience.) In particular, we found that coalitions that shared a common threat and common view of that threat tended to have several advantages in terms of cohesion, communication, and commitment, although those that lacked such a shared threat tended to suffer from conflicting motivations, communication challenges, and failure to coordinate. For example, one of the reasons that the Global Coalition Against ISIS was so successful was that even as partners had varied and conflicting individual motives, they all shared a perception that the threat posed by ISIS was severe and immediate. This shared sense of the threat and understanding that action had to be immediate allowed for an expanded membership and allowed the diverse coalition to hang together for an extended period. The Gulf War coalition similarly benefited from a very clear and shared sense of threat. Nations differed in their specific objectives, and even in what they thought the end goals of the intervention should be, but they shared the sense that turning back Saddam's aggression was essential both to uphold international norms and to prevent a cascade of aggression. On the other hand, in other interventions we considered, coalition partners did not share a common threat or at least a common view of a threat. In the instances of Afghanistan and the EFP deployments, coalition partners differed in their experiences and perceptions of the threat's severity. These different perceptions created cracks and fissures that undermined coalition success.

Considering current threats, the United States faces challenges in both Europe and the Pacific in building a coalition with a common perception of the threat. We have already described the conflicting views of the Russian threat among NATO and EU partners. Similarly, in the Pacific, different Asian allies have different views of the threat posed by China, and this might be an impediment to forming closer partnerships in the region. One way to work toward stronger partnerships and to support the development of a future coalition might be to encourage the development of a common view of the threat posed by China. The U.S. Army might be able to play a role here through military exchanges and talks and through longer-term efforts in information-sharing aimed at creating a common language and definition of the threat posed by China to the United States and its partners in the region.

Experience with fighting as a coalition can support success at achieving U.S. political objectives. The U.S. Army should continue efforts to train and exercise with potential future partners but emphasize innovation over routine.

Our analysis shows that past experience training or fighting as a coalition can provide advantages that support success in future operations. This is not a surprising finding; we would expect that past experience operating as a coalition would yield

better interoperability and communication and that past experience also supports the development of processes and procedures that can make coalitions function effectively. Although our quantitative analysis had ambiguous results, our qualitative case studies provide examples of the benefits of experience. The best example is perhaps the Gulf War, in which past experience in coalitions and exercises supported ground, air, and naval operations and contributed to the achievement of key objectives. Past experience in this case also helped overcome the challenges created by the diversity and size of the coalition. In the Global Coalition Against ISIS, the United States was able to rely on its close NATO partners and literally decades of experience to support operations. Past experience was specifically useful in supporting communication, sharing operational responsibility, and facilitating operational support and logistics. We also have examples in which lack of coalition experience undermined an intervention—specifically, the new partnerships in the post–World War II occupation of Japan.

However, it is also clear that past experience does not guarantee success at achieving U.S. objectives and can even serve as an impediment if past practice stifles innovation. Afghanistan is a good example of such an instance. Specifically, past NATO operations and training had focused on a very different type of conflict and a very different type of adversary. As a result, the coalition faced challenges as it sought to adapt to a COIN mission against a nontraditional adversary and to take on stabilization and nation-building tasks.

Still, these instances seem to indicate that, on net, the benefits of experience outweigh the downsides. The United States should not assume past practice or exercises will guarantee favorable outcomes, but it should continue to invest in training and exercises with allies, partners, and potential partners. It is worth noting that past interventions have benefited not only from experience with formal allies but also from exercises conducted with frequent partners. As the U.S. military faces increasing financial pressure and cuts, the value of training and exercises should not be overlooked or downplayed. Investments in this type of experience today can pay off in the future. At the same time, training should be structured to ensure adaptability to multiple operating environments, which means it likely needs to be revised and updated often to factor in unexpected challenges and demands. The United States is already working toward developing better training to support future operations—for example, events such as the Defender series in Europe, Pacific Defender, and Pacific Pathways. These types of exercises are the type that our analysis suggests would be useful to future coalitions, and our analysis encourages their continuation despite resource pressures.

Codebook for the RAND U.S. Coalition Intervention Dataset

This appendix presents the codebook for the RUCID, which supports the quantitative analysis presented in this study. The foundation of this analysis is a dataset that has evolved over the course of recent RAND Arroyo Center research focused on historical trends in U.S. military interventions and projections of future demand for U.S. ground forces.¹ RUCID augments this body of empirical work by integrating quantitative and qualitative details from all instances of U.S. coalition warfare between 1946 and 2018, including information on both major and minor U.S. partners and major-contributor force size and activity types in the ground, air, and naval domains.

This codebook is intended to supplement the methodological discussion presented in Chapter Three; it provides a more comprehensive discussion of the challenges, choices, and decisions involved in the data collection and coding processes, and it defines in fuller detail the variables in the dataset. It is divided into five sections. The first outlines some of the source material. The second describes definitional issues involving military and coalition interventions generally and our approach to constructing the case universe of U.S. coalition interventions between 1946 and 2018. The third section explains the rationale and approach for distinguishing between major and minor coalition contributors in the coding of this dataset. The fourth provides additional information on other important coding decisions rendered in the construction of the case universe and coding of individual variables. The final section summarizes the four different coalition-level and major contributor-level configurations of the dataset (which permit quantitative analyses both annually and in aggregate), and it details and defines all of the variables coded in each of the four organizational permutations of the dataset. In Appendix B, we provide a full list of U.S. coalition and noncoalition interventions between 1946 and 2018.

¹ For more details on this foundational dataset, its research design, and its coding approach and methodology, see Kavanagh et al., 2017; and Kavanagh et al., 2019.

A Note on Coalition Dataset References

Because this dataset is derived from hundreds of different primary and secondary sources, it is impossible to cite each individually. However, we provide an illustrative sample of references here, highlighting as examples a handful of key sources that span multiple U.S. or coalition situations:

- Defense Manpower Data Center, *Worldwide Manpower Distribution by Geographical Area*, historical reports, 1950–2020.
- Eric V. Larson, Gustav Lindstrom, Myron Hura, Ken Gardiner, Jim Keffer, and Bill Little, *Interoperability of US and NATO Allied Air Forces: Supporting Data and Case Studies*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MR-1603-AF, 2003.
- Bruce A. Elleman and S. C. M. Paine, eds., *Naval Coalition Warfare: From Napoleonic War to Operation Iraqi Freedom*, New York: Routledge, 2008.
- UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, International Peace Institute Peacekeeping Database, 1990–2018. (Related: Chris Perry and Adam C. Smith, *Trends in Uniformed Contributions to UN Peacekeeping: A New Dataset, 1991–2012*, New York: International Peace Institute, Providing for Peacekeeping Issue Paper No. 3, June 13, 2013.)
- Timothy Warnock, ed., *Short of War: Major USAF Contingency Operations, 1947–997*, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.: Air Force Historical Research Agency, Air University Press, 2000.
- Myron Hura, Gary McLeod, Eric Larson, James Schneider, Daniel Gonzales, Daniel Norton, Jody Jacobs, Kevin O’Connell, William Little, Richard Mesic, and Lewis Jamison, *Interoperability: A Continuing Challenge in Coalition Air Operations*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MR-1235-AF, 2000.
- IISS, *The Military Balance*, Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 1961–2018.
- UN, “Troop and Police Contributors,” database, 1990–2020.
- Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, *Sea Power for a New Era: 2006 Program Guide to the U.S. Navy*, Washington, D.C., 2007, Appendix A, “Navy-Marine Corps Crisis Response and Combat Actions.”

Such cross-cutting reference materials were particularly useful for capturing newer and U.S.-centric data. In most instances, however, the quantitative dataset was constructed using supplementary coalition-specific and partner-specific data sources. For instance, as but one case illustration, the following resources were consulted to quantify annual changes in partner ground, air, and naval force contributions to the Korean War and post-armistice coalition:

- Gordon Rottman, *Korean War Order of Battle: United States, United Nations, and Communist Ground, Naval, and Air Forces, 1950–1953*, Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2002.

- Shawn P. Creamer, "The United Nations Command and the Sending States," *International Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2017.
- Jacob Neufeld and George Watson, Jr., eds., *Coalition Air Warfare in the Korean War, 1950–1953*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Air Force History and Museums Program, 2005.
- Paul M. Edwards, *United Nations Participants in the Korean War: The Contributions of 45 Member Countries*, Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 2013.
- Wayne Danzik, *Participation of Coalition Forces in the Korean War*, Newport, R.I.: Naval War College, 1994.
- Walter G. Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army, Center of Military History, 1992.
- Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu: United States Army in the Korean War (June–November 1950)*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army, Center of Military History, 1992.
- James F. Schnabel, *United States Army in the Korean War: Policy and Direction: The First Year*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army, Center of Military History, 1992.
- Charles Briscoe, "Across the Pacific to War: The Colombian Navy in Korea, 1951–1955," *Veritas*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 2006.
- Noëlle M. Van der Waag-Cowling, "South Africa and the Korean War: The Politics of Involvement," *Scientia Militaria*, Vol. 44, No. 1, 2016, pp. 224–237.
- P. M. J. McGregor, "The History of No 2 Squadron, SAAF, in the Korean War," *Military History Journal*, South African Military History Society, Vol. 4, No. 3, June 1978.
- Dimitrios Smokovitis, "Greece's Contribution to the Korean War (1950–1955)," in Guiseppe Caforio, ed., *Advances in Military Sociology: Essays in Honor of Charles C. Moskos*, Bingley, United Kingdom: Emerald Publishing, 2009.
- Nabarun Roy, "India's Forgotten Links to the Korean War," *The Diplomat*, October 27, 2018.
- Robert Barnes, "Between the Blocs: India, the United Nations, and Ending the Korean War," *Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Fall 2013, pp. 263–286.
- Choong Nam Kim, "The Impact of the Korean War on the Korean Military," *International Journal of Korean Studies*, Spring–Summer 2001.
- Laurent Quisefit, "The French Participation in the Korean War and the Establishment of a 'Path of Memory' in South Korea," *Societies*, No. 3, 2013, pp. 427–444.
- Thomas Callow, *Nationbuilding in Korea*, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.: Air War College, April 1995.
- Dagmawi Abebe, *Emperor's Own: Ethiopian Forces in the Korean War*, Asia at War Series 10, Warwick, United Kingdom: Helion & Company, 2019.
- "British Commonwealth Naval Operations during the Korean War—Part VII," *Royal United Services Institution Journal*, Vol. 99, No. 593, 1954, pp. 102–112.

- Chung Kyung Young, *An Analysis of ROK-US Military Command Relationship from the Korean War to the Present*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1989.
- Veterans Affairs Canada, “Canada Remembers the Korean War Historical Sheet,” webpage, 2018.
- Canadian Military History Gateway, “Peacekeeping: The Korean War,” June 1, 2017.
- Canadian Ministry of Defence, Directorate of History and Heritage, “Details/Information for Canadian Forces (CF) Operation United Nations Military Operations in Korea,” webpage, April 15, 2016.
- Government of Australia, Department of Veterans’ Affairs, “A Chronology of the Korean War,” webpage, February 12, 2019a.
- Government of Australia, Department of Veterans’ Affairs, “Policing the Cease-fire: Post-Ceasefire Operations, 1953–1957,” webpage, February 13, 2019b.
- Government of Australia, Department of Veterans’ Affairs, “Royal Australian Navy in the Korean War,” webpage, February 13, 2019c.
- Australian War Memorial, “British Commonwealth Occupation Force 1945–52,” webpage, August 28, 2020.
- Australian War Memorial, “Out in the Cold: Australia’s Involvement in the Korean War—Armistice and Aftermath,” webpage, November 12, 2019.
- Government of New Zealand, “New Zealand in the Korean War,” webpage, undated.
- MacArthur Memorial, “Under One Banner: The United Nations Command in Korea,” webpage, undated.
- D. M. Moore, “The South African Air Force in Korea: An Assessment,” *Military History Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 3, June 1984.
- “Concise History of the Greek Expeditionary Force (GEF) in Korea (1950–1955),” *Military History Issues*, blog post, undated.
- Ray Smith, *Peacekeeping Without the Secretary-General: The Korean Armistice Arrangements*, New York: UN Peace Operations Training Institute, undated.

Defining the U.S. Coalition Intervention Universe

In theory, as described in Chapter Three, our definition of U.S. military interventions draws on past RAND work. Based on this past work, we define a *U.S. coalition intervention* as any ad hoc military intervention that involves the United States and at least one other country (in addition to the host) for a common action. Two constituent parts implicitly underlie this compound definition: criteria for establishing the universe of U.S. military interventions (generally) and criteria for establishing the subset of situations involving one or more (qualifying) partners. To these ends, drawing on past work

for the U.S. Army, our research design proceeded first by circumscribing the full dataset of U.S. military interventions covering the period from 1898 to 2016 ($N = 145$) to those in the post–World War II period ($N = 115$) and then by scoping this case universe to a smaller subset inclusive of all U.S. coalitions between 1946 and 2018 ($N = 37$).²

In our foundational dataset (from which we which we circumscribed the universe of U.S. coalitions), the theoretical definition of a military intervention employed is specific to the type of forces used and the activities conducted by those forces. That is, in constructing the historical universe of U.S. military interventions, missions could qualify based (independently) on deployments in the ground, air, or naval domains. Specifically, we examined the following:

- **ground forces domain.** We defined a *U.S. ground intervention* to include any deployment of U.S. soldiers from the United States to another sovereign country that met or exceeded a size threshold of at least “100 person-years” in manpower requirement equivalence (in addition to satisfying certain activity type criteria, as described later). This ground force size threshold could constitute, for instance, 100 personnel deployed for one year or a larger number of forces deployed for a shorter period of time (i.e., 200 personnel deployed for six months or 1,200 personnel deployed for one month). We used this threshold because of its utility for force planners; on the one hand, it errs on the side of case inclusiveness—that is, it sets a relatively low bar for inclusion, even for coalition partners with small militaries. On the other hand, it excludes more-minor deployments and contributions that are unlikely to matter as much for force structure and coalition contingency planning purposes.³
- **naval forces domain.** We defined a *U.S. naval intervention* (in the post–World War II era) to include any deployment of sailors and marines satisfying at least one of two criteria: (1) the positioning or movement of a carrier strike group (or force size equivalent) to a theater of crisis or conflict (i.e., for purposes other than

² As discussed in Chapter One, there were several reasons for focusing on only on post–World War II interventions. First, the geopolitical situation in the first half of the 20th century was significantly different from the latter half and that of today. As a result, interventions during that earlier period provide insights that are less useful for military planners. Second, coalitions themselves were less common for the United States in the period before World War II. Military alliances were relevant, but there were fewer international organizations tying countries together and less emphasis on multilateralism in military operations generally. Furthermore, a great deal of U.S. military activity during this period was focused on the Central and South American region, where European military powers were less involved. Finally, the data we needed to collect and then use in our analyses are less available for the period before 1946.

³ Although this method permits a manageable set of incidents for purposes of analysis, it is admittedly imperfect. The threshold of 100 person-years means that we omitted from consideration any number of smaller-scale adversary deployments of military forces that could, because of their circumstances, be substantively interesting. We nevertheless upheld the threshold as a useful means of focusing attention on larger operations that could hold more-salient implications for DoD and help ensure a more consistent comparison of military interventions across states and over time.

- regular naval exercises or fleet readiness) and/or (2) the use of kinetic naval activities (e.g., firing of torpedoes or surface-to-air cannon fire, Tomahawk missiles).
- **air forces domain.** We defined a *U.S. air intervention* (in the post–World War II era) to include any deployment of airmen satisfying at least one of two criteria: (1) the positioning or movement of an approximate wing-year of aircraft (about 80 planes for 12 months, or force size equivalent) to a theater of crisis or conflict (i.e., for purposes other than regular air exercises or air-defense readiness) and/or (2) the use of kinetic air activities (i.e., substantial firing of air-to-air or air-to-ground missiles or close air-support cannon fire).⁴

In addition, to meet the definition of a *military intervention* (generally) in the RAND U.S. Military Intervention Dataset on which this effort was modeled, the foreign-deployed forces needed to be engaged in at least one of the ten activity types listed in Box A.1.

The primary reason for this activity type parameter in our definition of military interventions is to exclude from the dataset general forward deployments constituting the permanent U.S. posture footprint abroad (e.g., long-term baselines of peacetime garrisons, logistics and support hubs, weapons depots).⁵ Rather, U.S. forces needed to be engaged in one or more of the activity types we identified and not simply stationed overseas for convenience, because of inertia, or to maintain a strategic relationship. So, for example, U.S. forces in Western Europe during the Cold War were coded as a deterrent intervention (until 1989) and we included those in the complete U.S. case dataset. After the Cold War ended, those forces were no longer serving a clear deterrent purpose, though tens of thousands of U.S. forces remained in Germany, Italy, and elsewhere. Because of the lack of clear intervention activity, these garrisoned forces in Western Europe are not again considered a military intervention per se until 2014, when they again began to serve a clear deterrent function in the wake of Russia's revanchist geostrategic moves in Ukraine and Crimea.

After these definitional criteria were established for the coalition intervention dataset, our data-collection efforts proceeded in three phases. First, we had to identify the subset of all historical U.S. interventions in which partners collaborated for a common action. Second, we had to identify the list of all partners involved in these coalition situations and determine the major and minor contributors in each case (described in the next section). Third, for all major contributors and in aggregate, we had to code the ground, air, and naval force sizes, activity types, and other coalition variables pertinent to each case (described in the final section of this appendix).

⁴ For purposes of this dataset, airstrikes or combat close air support conducted by naval fighter aircraft (or U.S. Air Force fighters launching from carrier strike groups) are considered kinetic air activities rather than kinetic naval activities.

⁵ Also excluded are noncombatant evacuation operations and paramilitary operations, such as covert actions conducted by civilian intelligence agencies, contractors, mercenaries, and nonstate actors.

Box A.1**Taxonomy of Coalition Intervention Activity Types**

Activity Type	Activity Type Description
Advisory, FID	Interventions involving U.S. military advisers or trainers. Examples: operational training and institutional assistance and advice, accompanied missions, or other types of support.
COIN	Interventions involving COIN activities, which include “comprehensive civilian and military efforts,” ^a often in nontraditional environments and against guerrilla or other nonstate actors.
Combat; conventional warfare	Interventions involving traditional military operations and fighting, characterized by large formations of organized military forces on both sides.
Deterrence	Interventions involving activities intended to dissuade an adversary from taking an action not desired by the United States, both immediate and longer term. This might include intimidation interventions aimed at the same purpose.
Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief	Interventions involving humanitarian and relief operations, including responses to natural disasters and conflict.
Security operations	Interventions involving protection of U.S. assets or personnel during periods of threat or unrest.
Stability operations	Interventions involving operations to stabilize or maintain peace in postconflict situations. This might include operations following coups or other situations causing unrest among the civilian population.
Interdiction	Interventions involving interdiction, including those that use blockades or no-fly zones.
Lift and transport	Interventions involving lift and transport, including those involved primarily with moving equipment or personnel from one location to another, usually in support of an ongoing intervention.
ISR	Interventions involving intelligence and reconnaissance, including those in which collection of information from adversary or other forces is a key part of the operation.

NOTE: The final three activity types (interdiction, lift and transport, and ISR) are considered applicable only for air and naval components, not for ground troops.

^a Headquarters, U.S. Department of the Army, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*, Field Manual 3-24, Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5, May 2014, p. iii.

During the first phase of data construction, multiple coders from our research team reviewed every U.S. military intervention between 1946 and 2018 ($N = 115$) to identify potentially qualifying coalition situations. To merit inclusion, a case had to involve U.S. military forces working in operational and/or strategic coordination with the armed

forces of at least one other foreign-deployed country; the partner deployment also had to satisfy our definition of a military intervention as already described (i.e., qualifying activity type and minimum size threshold of 100 person-years).⁶ We set a standard of inclusiveness for this iterative process; that is, during initial passes through the data we erred on the side of flagging false positives as possible coalition situations. From an initial collection of more than 50 plausible instances, the research team winnowed the universe of U.S. coalition interventions to a final list of 37 cases between 1946 and 2018. (See Appendix B for complete lists of U.S. coalition and noncoalition interventions.)

During this vetting process, borderline situations were excluded for a couple of general reasons. In several instances, we found evidence of cooperation between U.S. and partner forces, but the partner forces were of an insufficient size to meet our definition of a military intervention, as already described. This was particularly common in several humanitarian assistance missions. For instance, during Pakistan earthquake relief from October 2005 through March 2006, some 19 countries contributed about 1,200 troops (in addition to U.S. forces), but the largest non-U.S. contingent was a deployment of some 125 Australians for less than six months (i.e., about half shy of the equivalent of 100 person-years). We only found one natural disaster response case in which U.S. partner forces exceeded a 100-person-year threshold.⁷ Similarly, we note that there are numerous historical instances in which the United States provided token contingents to international peacekeeping coalitions well beneath the 100-person-year threshold, such as the UN missions in Darfur, South Sudan, and Eritrea and Ethiopia; because U.S. force levels did not meet our definitional size criteria for a U.S. military intervention, we likewise exclude these UN instances from our list of U.S. coalitions.

Second, and often relatedly, in several instances we found insufficient evidence of operational and/or strategic coordination between different international contingents on the ground to constitute a coalition *per se* (i.e., to satisfy the definitional component “for a common action”). This was true, for instance, in several recent and ongoing U.S. counterterrorism operations in central and eastern Africa (e.g., Combined Joint Task Force–Africa, multinational efforts to defeat Boko Haram in Lake Chad Basin). In these instances, we found evidence of other forces (often apparently special forces) deployed in the same theater of operations for common purposes (e.g., French, Italian, British, German, and Japanese contingents in Djibouti, Kenya, and elsewhere), but no

⁶ At least one partner nation had to meet these basic size thresholds individually for the case to be considered a coalition; that is, in a few borderline situations, the total number of non-U.S. troops deployed exceeded the 100 person-year threshold, even though no countries individually deployed more than 100 troops. This was particularly common among humanitarian and disaster relief situations. In such instances, the U.S. intervention would not be considered as part of a coalition; rather, the U.S. deployment would be coded as a unilateral intervention.

⁷ Another idiosyncratic case that was excluded was the deployment of a small number of U.S. advisers to assist the French during the First Indochina War post–World War II; this case was not deemed a U.S. coalition because the number of U.S. advisers was well below 1 percent of total foreign forces in the theater.

clear (unclassified) evidence of coordination beyond perhaps intelligence-sharing and regular regional training exercises. At the same time, although U.S. forces were conducting multiple bilateral train-and-assist missions with regional militaries as part of these larger counterterrorism-oriented deployments, the host African nations were not typically operating as a foreign-deployed international coalition involving U.S. military assistance. Thus, in a handful of instances, we have excluded from the U.S. coalition case universe borderline interventions in which American troops were deployed to a country at the same time as one or more other foreign militaries, but during which time these foreign forces did not cooperate operationally and/or strategically.⁸

Finally, we note that, unlike many U.S. air-only interventions, the majority of U.S. naval-only interventions are coded as unilateral operations (the Tanker War in the mid-1980s being one exception).⁹ This is true even in situations in which U.S. carrier groups were repositioned offshore during crises or conflicts in tacit support of partners or allies (e.g., to deter aggression against Israel or Turkey during flashpoints in the Middle East)—assuming no coalition coordination or cooperation beyond bilateral operations. Similarly, the majority of U.S. deterrence instances (especially during the Cold War) are coded as bilateral operations, not multilateral ones.

Defining Major and Minor Coalition Contributors

The most-difficult methodological challenge in constructing the RUCID case universe was how to build a manageable set of coalition partners. Consider, for instance, very large coalitions—such as the U.S.-led occupation of Afghanistan, in which some 50 countries contributed military troops to ISAF and OEF and dozens more provided support in other forms (i.e., civilian and police training, military equipment and sales, economic and humanitarian aid, diplomatic and political support). On a practical level, it would have been infeasible for our team to code every single partner in all 39 coalitions in full detail within the scope of our project resources. At the same time, the often symbolic contributions of token partners—for instance, the OEF contributions of such countries as Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Malaysia, Slovenia, Singapore, Tonga, Ukraine,

⁸ This coding rule was also occasionally invoked to exclude certain would-be partners from coalitions when adversarial countries were deployed to the same theater but operated without jointness. For instance, an early Cold War application was our decision to exclude the Soviet Union as a major coalition partner during the Allied administration of the occupied zones of Germany and Austria after World War II. For the same reason, we excluded Iran (and Russia) from the more recent anti-ISIS U.S.-led coalition in Iraq and Syria.

Relatedly, we excluded U.S. involvement in the Greek Civil War from the coalition case universe because U.S. forces replaced British advisers; we did not find historical evidence of coordination between the two powers *per se*.

⁹ By contrast, several operations that were primarily air interventions were coded as coalitions, including the Berlin Airlift, monitoring of northern and southern no-fly zones over Iraq after the Gulf War, and NATO air campaigns in the 1990s and 2000s against Bosnia, Kosovo, and Libya.

and the UAE, none of which ever committed more than 100 military personnel to Afghanistan—are of secondary interest to military planners. The primary research design challenge, therefore, was to establish a methodologically defensible approach for defining and coding major contributors relative to minor ones.

To these ends, the RAND research team tested multiple coding schemes across different case studies to determine appropriately inclusive criteria for defining major contributors (who would be coded in full in the partner dataset) versus minor contributors (whose participation would be recorded in aggregate coalition-level data but would not be coded in full in the partner dataset). Ultimately, to merit inclusion as a major contributor, non-U.S. partners had to satisfy several conditions. These parameters were designed to be consistent with our definition of *military intervention* as already described while also scoping the list of all contributors in each coalition to those assuming the lion's share of the military, economic, and political burdens.

First, the partner nation had to provide support in the form of military personnel; countries that provided only military equipment, civilian advisers and trainers, economic assistance or humanitarian aid, or similar limited measures did not qualify as major contributors. Second, the partner nation forces had to be foreign-deployed.¹⁰ Third, the partner nation forces had to be engaged in one of the qualifying activity types we have already identified. Fourth, nonstate actors could not qualify as coalition members (e.g., Northern Alliance fighters during the ouster of the Taliban, or Laotian guerrillas during the Vietnam War). Fifth and finally, consistent with previous coding standards, the partner nation could qualify as a major contributor based on its deployments in the land, sea, or air domains. Given the baseline disparities between U.S. and partner naval and air inventories, however, our minimum size thresholds designed for U.S. interventions needed to be adapted in these two domains.¹¹ In short, for the purposes of the study of coalition warfare, naval and air thresholds were relaxed because few partner nations possess aircraft carriers—and perhaps fewer have ever deployed a wing-year equivalent of aircraft even in major coalition combat. Here, we define these

¹⁰ In a handful of instances, this parameter complicated the data-collection process. For instance, during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, many analyses consider all of the forces of Gulf State partners as part of the coalition, even though many of these troops never deployed beyond their borders. Taking Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm as an example, our approach endeavored to count the tens of thousands of Saudi troops who crossed into Kuwait in January 1991, but not (at least in theory) the thousands more amassed on the Iraqi border, who remained on Saudi soil. Similarly, during Desert Shield, many sources count the combined GCC armed forces as part of the coalition (some 65,000–75,000 total), of which perhaps only 3,000–5,000 appear to have deployed beyond Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, or the UAE; our approach counts these foreign-deployed forces as part of the coalition but excludes the domestically garrisoned forces, even though they might have served a deterrent function in coordination with coalition objectives.

¹¹ As an initial potential solution to this problem, we first attempted to use a standard that consistently compared approximately equivalent proportions of each state's individual naval and air inventories. Unfortunately, in the coalition context of dozens and dozens of potential partners, this approach proved to be methodologically infeasible.

major-contributor parameters, or minimum thresholds, for each domain. To be coded as a major contributor, a country had to satisfy the inclusion parameters for only one of the following components:

- **ground forces domain.** We defined a *major ground force contributor* as any country with a deployment of soldiers to another sovereign country that met or exceeded 100 person-years—plus two additional parameters: The troops must have deployed for at least *25 percent of the duration* of the coalition and must have constituted at least *5 percent of the total non-U.S. troops*.¹²
- **naval forces domain.** We defined a major *naval force contributor* as any country involved in the use of kinetic naval activities—or one additional parameter: the deployment of naval vessels exceeding approximately *5 percent of the total non-U.S. coalition ships, regardless of class*.
- **air forces domain.** We defined a *major air force contributor* as any country involved in the use of kinetic air activities—or one additional parameter: the deployment of fixed- or rotary-wing aircraft exceeding approximately *5 percent of the total non-U.S. coalition planes and helicopters*.

Thus, to qualify as an intervention on the basis of the non-U.S. naval or air forces involved, the deployment had to involve either the use of kinetic naval or air power (as in the U.S. criteria) or the presence of a substantial portion of the partner's naval or air forces, albeit far less than a carrier strike group or wing-year equivalent—specifically, about 5 percent of the non-U.S. coalition total. Although this size threshold proved to be relatively low in the context of most coalitions (i.e., usually fewer than 2–3 ships or 7–12 aircraft), it yielded very few instances of partner naval or air interventions exclusive of qualifying ground interventions. Stated another way, we found that if a partner nation was providing in excess of 5 percent of non-U.S. aircraft and/or ships, that country was, in most instances, providing in excess of 5 percent of non-U.S. ground forces as well. Likewise, our research found only a few instances of coalition partners conducting kinetic air or naval activities but not independently qualifying based on the size criteria for ground, air, or naval contributions.¹³

Finally, for transparency's sake, we add a few notes clarifying the iterative process by which we selected these perhaps seemingly arbitrary size thresholds. First, from the

¹² As an additional subcriterion, major partners were required to exceed 5 percent of total non-U.S. (and non-host) forces for at least 10 percent of the duration of the coalition. The concern motivating this condition was to exclude borderline instances in which a country might cross the threshold exceeding 5 percent of total non-U.S. troops for a very short period, such as during the waning months of a coalition after other major contributors have withdrawn. In practice, this subcriterion was rarely invoked during the coding process.

¹³ One notable exception includes the deployment of South African fighter pilots during the Korean War. The deployment of the so-called Flying Cheetahs qualified as a South African air intervention based on the merits of the unit's kinetic air activities, even though the deployment size was less than 5 percent of total coalition aircraft and despite the fact that South Africa deployed no naval or ground forces to the theater of operations.

beginning of the research design process, we realized that although it would be necessary to establish criteria distinguishing major partners from minor partners; a simple, absolute size threshold (i.e., 100 person-years) would not suffice. For instance, use of a 100-person-year threshold alone in OIF would eliminate nine countries (Estonia, Moldova, Tonga, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Armenia, New Zealand, Philippines, and Kazakhstan) but still leave us a list of more than 30 countries as would-be major contributors that contributed more than 100 troops for more than a year—a still unmanageable number. On the other hand, for consistency across datasets and between U.S. and non-U.S. participation, we could not impose a higher absolute threshold for non-U.S. partners (i.e., 1,000 person-years).

Consequently, we explored using a percentage threshold rather than an absolute threshold for distinguishing between partner participation levels. We began by testing 5-percent, 10-percent, and 25-percent size thresholds on two large coalition situations: OIF and OEF. It quickly became apparent that thresholds of 10 percent or higher would be too restrictive for the purposes of our analyses; using the Iraq example again, total non-U.S. (and nonhost) forces peaked at about 25,000, implying a peak 10-percent threshold of about 2,500 troops, which only five countries exceeded during the war (Italy, Poland, South Korea, Romania, and the United Kingdom). On the other hand, lowering the bar marginally to 4 percent or 3 percent added only one or two borderline countries as major contributors. Finally, we tested these size parameters on several smaller coalitions (e.g., Haiti, Somalia, and Grenada), and we found that they were also properly scoped for what we observed to be relatively similar deployment-distribution patterns between major and minor partners in most coalitions.

Additionally, we explored imposing a percentage threshold for the duration of the deployment to isolate aberrations in which relatively unimportant partners technically exceeded the size threshold but were quickly drawn down. Using the same process already described, we tested 10-percent, 25-percent, and 50-percent duration thresholds on OIF and OEF and quickly realized that 50 percent was too stringent of a requirement but that 25 percent appropriately scoped the borderline instances. Next, as the final refinement for qualifying as a major contributor based on ground force criteria, we needed to decide whether countries should be required to exceed the 5-percent size threshold *and* the 25-percent duration threshold—or whether they should be required to exceed the 5-percent size threshold *for* 25 percent of the duration of the coalition (or some other duration between 0 and 25 percent). As already noted, the reason for this subcriterion was that we found that some borderline instances in which countries might exceed the 5-percent size threshold for only a month or two in a multiyear coalition. We therefore considered three possible permutations:

1. **weakest permutation** (“5 AND 25”): To be considered a major contributor, the nation’s deployment of troops must have exceeded 5 percent of total non-U.S. forces at any given point (i.e., if even for just one month or one year) and

exceeded 25 percent of the duration of the coalition. This option would yield the largest number of major contributors.

2. **strongest permutation** (“5 FOR 25”): To be considered a major contributor, the nation’s deployment of troops must have exceeded 5 percent of total non-U.S. forces for at least 25 percent of the duration of the coalition. This option would yield the fewest number of major contributors.
3. **middling permutation** (“5 FOR 10 [AND 25]”): To be considered a major contributor, the nation’s deployment of troops must have exceeded 5 percent of total non-U.S. forces for at least some shorter percentage of the duration of the coalition—say 10 percent—and the nation’s deployment must have exceeded 25 percent of the duration of the coalition in total (though not necessarily above 5 percent). This option would yield a midlevel number of major contributors.

We tested these three coding options against multiple cases—three of which are summarized in Table A.1—and ultimately decided that the third coding option (i.e., “5 for 10 [and 25]”) allowed the appropriate level of inclusiveness while scoping the potential universe of partners to a manageable list of major contributors. Of course, as recognized elsewhere in the analysis, the key trade-off with this methodological approach is that it did not permit our research team to fully code minor “opportunistic” or “symbolic” partners whose objectives, contributions, and force restrictions might differ qualitatively from those of major contributors (i.e., not just in scope). On the other hand, taken together, this methodological approach ensured the exclusion of aberrational major contributors (i.e., false positives) while also guaranteeing coding consistency and transparency across U.S. coalition interventions.

Table A.1
Examples of Different Size and Duration Criteria Permutations Applied to Different Interventions

	Iraq (2003–2011)	Afghanistan (2001–ongoing)	Haiti (1994–1997)
Option 1: “5 and 25”	United Kingdom, South Korea, Italy, Poland, Ukraine, Australia, Georgia, Romania, Netherlands, Spain [N = 10]	United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Australia, Georgia, Romania, Turkey [N = 11]	Bangladesh, Canada, Nepal, Pakistan, Djibouti, Netherlands, Guatemala [N = 7]
Option 2: “5 for 25”	United Kingdom, South Korea, Italy, Poland, Ukraine, Australia, Georgia, Romania [N = 8]	United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland [N = 7]	Bangladesh, Canada, Nepal, Pakistan [N = 4]
Option 3: “5 for 10 [and 25]”	United Kingdom, South Korea, Italy, Poland, Ukraine, Australia, Georgia, Romania, Netherlands [N = 9]	United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Georgia, Turkey [N = 9]	Bangladesh, Canada, Nepal, Pakistan, Djibouti [N = 5]

Finally, we repeated the process to test major-contributor size thresholds in the air and naval domains (i.e., to identify countries that might qualify as major contributors based on their naval or air force deployments rather than ground force deployments). In particular, we tested similar size thresholds (i.e., 5 percent, 10 percent, or 25 percent) for the number of non-U.S. aircraft and ships deployed in numerous situations—specifically, instances in which there were large coalition air and naval operations (e.g., air wars in Bosnia, Kosovo, Libya; naval embargoes and no-fly zones around the Balkans and Iraq). Although it is more difficult to quantify aircraft and ships deployed to coalitions than it is to quantify ground troops, we found that relatively higher thresholds were too restrictive; rarely did more than a few partners account for more than 10 percent of non-U.S. ships or aircraft. For instance, during the NATO air wars over Libya and Kosovo, total non-U.S. contributions ranged from about 200 to 350 aircraft, implying a 10-percent threshold of some 20–40 aircraft—a bar that only France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom clearly exceeded. We therefore decided on 5 percent as a relatively inclusive parameter; in the Libya and Kosovo instances, this less-restrictive criteria yielded approximately ten non-U.S. partners. Accurately (and comprehensively) tracking aircraft and naval vessel deployment dates for partner countries proved nearly impossible because of data availability issues, so we did not add additional parameters for deployment durations in the air and naval domains.

Important Coding Decisions and Caveats

During this dataset construction process, we encountered several additional methodological and case-specific challenges, which we note here.¹⁴ First, as a general caveat, collecting granular data on historical force deployment data across more than 100 countries over nearly 80 years is a difficult proposition for several reasons. Chief among these are data availability issues, particularly from official foreign military sources. Relatedly, we note that it was generally more challenging to collect quantitative data on partner naval and air contributions than on ground force deployments. Official statistics are generally widely available from IGOs, such as the UN and NATO, but official data on ad hoc coalitions and coalitions conducted under the auspices of other international organizations are often more elusive. This is particularly true of older coalitions, such as those in the immediate post–World War II era. At the same time, we were surprised to discover a dearth of reputable comprehensive statistical reference resources on coalition sizes and compositions (generally). As one notable exception, we

¹⁴ For a similar discussion of important coding decisions made in the construction of the original U.S. military interventions dataset, see Kavanagh et al., 2019, Appendix A.

acknowledge the earlier RAND work of Larson, et al., which was highly relevant in quantifying air and naval contributions to post–Cold War coalitions.¹⁵

In this respect, building the preliminary U.S. coalition case universe proved more challenging than earlier RAND efforts to build a broader U.S. intervention case universe.¹⁶ For these reasons, the legwork of building the dataset depended largely on identifying reputable primary or secondary sources specific to each coalition. These were official military histories, factsheets, and press releases published by the U.S. government and other partnered armed services and IGOs, as well as declassified CIA, DIA, NSC, DoD, and State Department intelligence estimates and analyses. When official government or declassified primary source materials could not be found, we drew on secondary data sources, such as IISS’s *The Military Balance*; peer-reviewed academic journal articles; objective, nonpartisan think tank analyses; and contemporaneous reports from reputable NGOs and news outlets. The notes fields of the dataset document these case-by-case data availability issues in detail; the dataset bibliography contains complete citations on more than 500 separate sources consulted in coding RUCID.

Second, aside from general data *availability* issues, estimating and aggregating ground force troop numbers can be challenging for two broad methodological reasons. Different sources might offer different estimates for the same year; this might be a data *reliability* issue. Alternatively, and more commonly, deployment sizes of national contingents vary widely throughout a given month, year, and coalition life cycle. For these reasons, at every level of analysis (i.e., in aggregate and annually), our dataset provides high, low, and best estimates of coalition and major contributor ground forces. In most situations, aggregate “best” estimates represent the average of annual “best” estimates, while “high” and “low” estimates represent the peak and trough of a coalition or major contributor’s manpower deployments.

Third, treatment of host nation forces created several conceptual difficulties. Through one lens, for instance, we reasoned that host nation troops battling in combat or COIN alongside foreign interveners should be counted in the quantitative analyses of coalition force sizes. During the Korean War, for example, the host nation forces were virtually wiped out at the start of the UN-authorized coalition intervention. But between 1950 and 1953, the South Korean armed forces grew from some 80,000 to 600,000, nearly doubling the more than 300,000 U.S. forces on the peninsula at war’s end. In this instance, excluding the host nation forces could significantly bias some statistical results. On the other hand, including these forces as coalition members would be to violate a key definitional component of a *military intervention*—specifically, that

¹⁵ Larson et al., 2003.

¹⁶ The publications used to construct the original dataset of U.S. interventions since 1898 are too numerous to cite here, but we found many to be particularly relevant as general references. See, for instance, Cobble, Gaffney, and Gorenburg, 2003; Fredriksen, 2010a; Fredriksen, 2010b; Fredriksen, 2010c; Salazar Torreon, 2016; Siegel, 1991; U.S. Air Force, 2015; and Warnock, 2000.

the forces be foreign-deployed.¹⁷ Moreover, including cooperative host nation forces in the coalition force size totals would create second-order problems in determining major contributors. Again using the Korean War as an example, if we were to count South Korea's hundreds of thousands of troops in the coalition total, only one other country would exceed the 5-percent threshold of total non-U.S. forces during the Korean War. To resolve these issues, therefore, host nation forces are not included in the quantitative findings presented in this report unless otherwise specified in the statistical analysis. However, for the benefit of future academics and defense planners, host nation contributions (e.g., force sizes, activity types) are coded separately in the dataset. The dataset structure (as we will describe in more detail) is thus designed to allow future dataset users to include or exclude host nation troops in their analyses, depending on the relevance to their line of research.

Fourth, linkage of contiguous and/or overlapping missions under different authorities sometimes proved pragmatically challenging to code. The start and end dates of U.S. military interventions occasionally align neatly with those of an associated coalition intervention—for instance, U.S. boots were the first ones into Iraq in March 2003 and the last ones out in December 2011. More commonly, however, this is not the case. U.S. forces often withdraw before a coalition intervention is complete (e.g., Vietnam, Bosnia)—or deploy before or after a coalition is assembled (e.g., Haiti and Croatia, respectively). More to the point, many (perhaps even most) coalitions evolve under the leadership of distinct, rehatted authorities over many years.

The essential methodological problem was thus: Should distinctly different phases of overlapping missions be coded as a single, contiguous coalition intervention or as several discrete coalitions sometimes with different core members? The case of Haiti (1994) is illustrative of the problem. The United States entered unilaterally with more than 20,000 troops, then briefly took control of an ad hoc multinational coalition (MNF-Haiti), and then turned over control to a series of three UN military missions.¹⁸ We also questioned: Should these be coded as a single, contiguous coalition intervention? Or should they be coded as several successive ones of shorter duration? For both practical and conceptual reasons, we resolved this challenge with the following coding rule: If a successor mission takes over coalition authority (e.g., if the United States hands over control to the UN,

¹⁷ In the U.S. case universe of military interventions, for instance, we excluded rare instances of uses of military force on U.S. soil. Examples of domestic applications of U.S. force are the Philippine-American War from 1898 to 1902 (the Philippines were then a U.S. territory), border reinforcements during the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920), and deployments of the National Guard during civil rights unrest in the 1950s–1970s.

¹⁸ U.S. forces intervened unilaterally in Haiti on September 19, 1994; by October 2, they peaked at some 21,000. Days later, multinational troops began to deploy. Subsequently, on March 31, 1995, the U.S.-led multinational force handed over control to the UN Mission in Haiti. A reduced U.S. footprint remained until March 1996, when the Canadian armed forces took the lead of the next follow-on force, referred to as the UN Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH). UNSMIH ended in August 1997 and was succeeded by the Canadian-led UN Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMH), which ended in November 1997, at which point Canadian (and Pakistani) troops withdrew. Finally, UNTMIH was replaced by the UN Civilian Police Mission in Haiti, a civilian-only mission.

which then hands over control to the EU), the case should be coded as a single ongoing coalition (regardless of U.S. participation) until it is subsequently rehattd to include only civilians, police, or military observers (i.e., all military troops are withdrawn). The Haiti case, for example, is coded as a single intervention from September 1994 to November 1997, with the United States as a major contributor until March 1996. Additionally, we note that the dataset is coded with variables to indicate different mission authorities (i.e., NATO-led, UN-led, EU-led, U.S.-led).

Fifth, we offer a few additional coding notes and observations regarding activity types. We coded activity types for both coalitions in aggregate and major contributors individually; typically, these activity types align, but they do not always do so. In some instances, a major contributor might have national caveats or restrictions placed on the use of its forces, and it might be conducting humanitarian activities or stabilization activities while the broader coalition is engaged primarily in combat or COIN operations. Similarly, the dataset is designed to feature separate activity type codings for each coalition (and major contributor) in the land, sea, and air domains. In a given case, a coalition's (or major contributor's) ground forces might primarily be conducting combat operations while its naval and air forces are primarily engaged in enforcing maritime embargoes or no-fly zones (i.e., interdiction activities) or providing transport-and-lift or ISR support. To these ends, every domain (land, sea, air) at both the aggregate-coalition and individual contributor levels is coded with up to three activity types, allowing for analysis of primary, secondary, and tertiary activity types. Finally, we note that the country-year level configuration of the dataset permits variance in activity over time within given interventions. For instance, a country might start a coalition in a strictly advisory or assistance role and then become more deeply involved in combat, COIN, or stabilization activities; similarly, coalition partners might use only kinetic air or naval power in one or two years of a conflict but deploy their maritime or naval forces to other ends throughout said coalition. The dataset, therefore, permits a high degree of granularity in statistical analysis of activity types by contributor and service branch over time and across coalitions and noncoalitions alike.

Sixth, regarding case dates and durations, we note that all post–World War II cases are coded as beginning on January 1, 1946 rather than on Victory in Europe or Victory in Japan Days. The primary reason for this decision was because most of the immediate U.S. demobilization from the occupation zones was completed by the end of 1945; therefore, by beginning our case universe in 1946, we can in part avoid fallaciously exaggerating peak postwar troop numbers devoted to stabilization operations. Relatedly, for ongoing coalitions, duration lengths are calculated through December 31, 2018. When precise start or end dates are unknown for a coalition or a major contributor's entry and exit from the coalition, yearly data are used instead. For instance, if Georgian troops were first known to have deployed to OEF in 2010 but the precise day or month was unknown, then the duration of their deployment would be calculated beginning January 1, 2010; likewise, if precise withdrawal dates within a given year are unknown, the end

date of the deployment would be calculated as December 31 of that year. Because of this coding convention, the data might slightly overestimate or underestimate the monthly durations of some operations and national deployments.

Summary: Four Coalition-Level and Major Contributor-Level Datasets

The final configuration of RUCID contains iterations of the data organized along four distinct levels, or lenses of observation, covering the period from 1946 to 2018:¹⁹

1. **coalition situations.** In this top-level iteration of the dataset, the unit of analysis is one observation per coalition (i.e., $N = 37$ U.S. coalitions out of 115 total U.S. interventions between 1946 and 2018). (See Boxes A.2–A.5.)
2. **coalition country-years.** In this second-level iteration of the dataset, coalition-level observations are disaggregated by year and—in instances in which national contingents deployed to multiple countries under the umbrella of the same coalition in the same year—by country location (i.e., $N = 472$, or about 12 country-years per coalition on average). (See Box A.3.)
3. **major contributor situations.** In this third-level iteration of the dataset, the unit of analysis is one observation per major contributor to every U.S. coalition between 1946 and 2018 (i.e., $N = 319$, or about eight major contributors per coalition on average, including observations for U.S. and force-contributing host nations where applicable). (See Box A.4.)
4. **major contributor country-years.** In the fourth-level iteration of the dataset, major contributor-level observations are similarly disaggregated by year and, as applicable, by country location. The unit of analysis is one observation per year per major contributor to every U.S. coalition between 1946 and 2018 (i.e., $N = 2,357$). (See Box A.5.)

In each of these configurations, the universe of U.S. coalitions between 1946 and 2018 is coded along several dimensions, including region, primary activities, force sizes and types, and environment, along with detailed information on the location and a description of the intervention. Boxes A.2–A.5 define each of the variables in the four iterations of the dataset: the aggregate coalition situations level, the annual coalition country-years level, the aggregate major contributor situations level, and the annual major contributor country-years level.

¹⁹ Note that the four versions of the dataset are linked by a “coalition_id” field that is consistent across these permutations of the data presentation; likewise, an “intervention_id” field permits compatibility with existing RAND research in this series of efforts.

Box A.2**Definitions of Variables in the Coalition Situations Dataset**

Variable Name	Description
intervention_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each U.S. military intervention since 1898 ($N = 145$); it links the coalition and noncoalition situations and country-years tabs of the database; this intervention ID number is also compatible with previous RAND datasets on U.S. interventions
coalition_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each coalition ($N = 39$); it links the coalition situations, coalition country-years, major contributor situations, and major contributor country year tabs of the database
intervention_name	Common name for the coalition intervention, which often incorporates country location
intervention_location	Text field with detailed information on the location of the intervention
location_ccode	COW country code corresponding to the intervention location
intervention_region	Integer field indicating the coalition intervention region: 0: North America (United States and Canada) 1: Central America and Caribbean (including Mexico) 2: South America 3: Europe 4: Eurasia 5: West Africa 6: East and Southern Africa 7: Middle East and North Africa 8: South and Central Asia 9: East and Southeast Asia and Oceania
coalition_organizations	Text field identifying names of overlapping and contiguous IGO and ad hoc coalition lines of authority, by date
us_allied_operation_names	Text field identifying operational mission names of overlapping and contiguous stakeholders
nato_coalition	Integer denoting NATO C2 over coalition military forces during some period of the coalition intervention: 0: no NATO authority over coalition 1: at least some NATO authority over coalition
un_coalition	Integer denoting UN C2 over coalition military forces during some period of the coalition intervention: 0: no UN authority over coalition 1: at least some UN authority over coalition

Box A.2—Continued

Variable Name	Description
eu_coalition	Integer denoting EU C2 over coalition military forces during some period of the coalition intervention: 0: no EU authority over coalition 1: at least some EU authority over coalition
au_ecowas_coalition	Integer denoting AU and/or ECOWAS C2 over coalition military forces during some period of the coalition intervention: 0: no AU and/or ECOWAS authority over coalition 1: at least some AU and/or ECOWAS authority over coalition
oas_oecs_coalition	Integer denoting OAS and/or OECS C2 over coalition military forces during some period of the coalition intervention: 0: no OAS and/or OECS authority over coalition 1: at least some OAS and/or OECS authority over coalition
us-led_ad-hoc_coalition	Integer denoting institutional U.S. ad hoc C2 over coalition military forces during some period of the coalition intervention: 0: no U.S. ad hoc authority over coalition 1: at least some U.S. ad hoc authority over coalition
euro-led_ad-hoc_coalition	Integer denoting institutional European (non-EU) ad hoc C2 over coalition military forces during some period of the coalition intervention (i.e., United Kingdom–led or French–led): 0: no European ad hoc authority over coalition 1: at least some European ad hoc authority over coalition
partner_nations_all	Text field describing all nations that contributed military troops to the coalition; field lists notes on minor contributors that deployed fewer than 100 military personnel annually and other borderline case notes; field excludes countries that provided only civilian or indirect military support to the coalition (such as nations that provided only civilian advisers, police trainers, or military observers; military equipment and materiel—absent accompanying foreign deployments; economic assistance or humanitarian aid)
partner_number_all	Integer denoting number of troop-contributing partners to the coalition (minimum value 2, maximum value 50); excludes countries that provided only civilian or indirect military support to the coalition
major_contributor_nations_all	Text field describing all nations that qualified as major contributors to the coalition (i.e., countries that provided at least 5 percent of ground forces for 25 percent of the duration of the campaign, and/or countries that provided at least 5 percent of air or naval forces or conducted air or naval kinetic activity and strikes)

Box A.2—Continued

Variable Name	Description
major_contributor_number_non-US	Integer denoting number of major contributors in the coalition, excluding the United States and host nation (minimum value 1, maximum value 16)
major_contributor_number_non-US_host	Integer denoting number of major contributors in the coalition including the host nation when applicable (i.e., when the host nation contributed forces to the coalition, such as in the Korean and Vietnam Wars) but excluding the United States (minimum value 2, maximum value 17)
major_contributor_number_host	Integer denoting number of troop-contributing host nations; in some situations, these host nations count as major contributors because their forces are partly foreign-deployed (e.g., NATO's EFP), but in many situations the host nation troops are not deployed to foreign territory (e.g., Afghanistan and Iraq) and so do not technically qualify as major contributors; excludes the United States and other foreign nations (minimum value 0, maximum value 13)
coalition_start_date	Text field detailing when coalition intervention began
colition_start_year	Integer denoting year in which coalition intervention began (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018)
coalition_end_date	Text field detailing when coalition intervention ended
coalition_end_year	Integer denoting year in which coalition intervention ended (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018; -9 indicates ongoing or uncompleted intervention as of 2018)
coalition_duration_months	Integer indicating duration (in months) of coalition intervention; if only the start or end years are known (as opposed to precise days or month), the duration estimates deployment for all 12 months of the start or end year
us_start_date	Text field detailing when U.S. deployment to coalition intervention began; this date might correspond with the start date of the coalition but does not necessarily do so
us_start_year	Integer denoting year in which U.S. deployment to coalition intervention began (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018); this date might correspond with the start date of the coalition but does not necessarily do so
us_end_date	Text field detailing when U.S. deployment to coalition intervention ended; this date might correspond with the termination date of the coalition but does not necessarily do so

Box A.2—Continued

Variable Name	Description
us_end_year	Integer denoting year in which U.S. deployment to coalition intervention ended (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018; –9 indicates ongoing or uncompleted intervention as of 2018); this date might correspond with the termination date of the coalition but does not necessarily do so
us_duration_months	Integer indicating duration (in months) of U.S. deployment to coalition intervention; if only the start or end years are known (as opposed to precise days or month), the duration estimates deployment for all 12 months of the start or end year; the duration of the U.S. deployment might correspond with the duration of the overall coalition but does not necessarily do so
us_early_ground_withdrawal	Integer indicating whether final U.S. ground forces withdrew before the end of the overall coalition
us_late_ground_entry	Integer indicating whether first U.S. ground forces deployed after the beginning of the overall coalition
intervention_description_short	Text field that features a description of the coalition intervention and the U.S. role in that coalition
coalition_ground_component	Integer indicating whether there were ground forces present and, if so, whether that ground force qualifies independently for inclusion as a coalition intervention or only as a supporting component: 0: no ground forces present 1: supporting ground force, does not meet size threshold for independent ground intervention 2: ground force meeting independent size threshold
coalition_naval_component	Integer indicating whether there were naval forces present and, if so, whether that naval force qualifies independently for inclusion as a coalition intervention or only as a supporting component: 0: no naval forces present 1: supporting naval force, does not meet size threshold for independent naval intervention 2: naval force meeting independent size threshold
coalition_air_component	Integer indicating whether there were air forces present and, if so, whether that air force qualifies independently for inclusion as a coalition intervention or only as a supporting component: 0: no air forces present 1: supporting air forces, does not meet size threshold for independent air intervention 2: air forces meeting independent size threshold

Box A.2—Continued

Variable Name	Description
coalition_ground_activity_type1, coalition_ground_activity_type2, coalition_ground_activity_type3	These three integers denote the activities conducted by coalition ground forces during the intervention; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary. Ten possible activity types: Advisory or FID: Interventions involving coalition military advisers or trainers; can include operational training and institutional assistance and advice; can also include accompanied missions or other types of support. COIN: Interventions involving COIN activities, which, according to Field Manual 3-24 (p. iii), include “comprehensive civilian and military efforts,” often in nontraditional environments and against guerrilla or other nonstate actors Combat and conventional warfare: Interventions involving traditional military operations and fighting, characterized by large formations of organized military forces on both sides Deterrence: Interventions involving activities intended to dissuade an adversary from taking an action not desired by the coalition members, both immediate and longer term; might also include intimidation interventions that have the same purpose. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief: Interventions involving humanitarian and relief operations, such as responses to natural disasters and conflict Security: Interventions involving protection of U.S. and allied assets or personnel during periods of threat or unrest Stability operations: Interventions involving operations to stabilize or maintain peace in postconflict situations; might include operations following coups or other situations causing unrest among the civilian population. Interdiction: Interventions that use blockades or no-fly zones; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces) Lift and transport: Interventions involved primarily with moving equipment or personnel from one location to another, usually in support of an ongoing intervention; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces) ISR: Interventions where collection of information from adversary or other forces is a key part of the operation; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces)

Box A.2—Continued

Variable Name	Description
coalition_naval_activity_type1, coalition_naval_activity_type2, coalition_naval_activity_type3	Integer describing activity in which coalition naval forces were engaged during the intervention; each intervention has three fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as previous cell)
coalition_air_activity_type1, coalition_air_activity_type2, coalition_air_activity_type3	Integer describing activity in which coalition air forces were engaged during the intervention; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as above)
us_ground_activity_type1, us_ground_activity_type2, us_ground_activity_type3	These three integers denote the activities conducted by U.S. ground forces during the coalition intervention; U.S.-specific codings might or might not match the activity types of the overall coalition; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as above)
us_naval_activity_type1, us_naval_activity_type2, us_naval_activity_type3	Integer describing activity in which U.S. naval forces were engaged during the coalition intervention; U.S.-specific codings might match activity types of the overall coalition but do not necessarily do so; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as above)
us_air_activity_type1, us_air_activity_type2, us_air_activity_type3	Integer describing activity in which U.S. air forces were engaged during the coalition intervention; U.S.-specific codings might match the activity types of the overall coalition but do not necessarily do so; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as above)
foreign_troop_min	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the number of foreign partner forces (exclusive of U.S. or host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)

Box A.2—Continued

Variable Name	Description
foreign_troop_max	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the number of foreign partner forces (exclusive of U.S. or host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_troop_best	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the number of foreign partner forces (exclusive of U.S. or host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
us_troop_min	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the number of U.S. ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
us_troop_max	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the number of U.S. ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
us_troop_best	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the number of U.S. ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
host_troop_min	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the number of host nation ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
host_troop_max	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the number of host nation ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
host_troop_best	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the number of host nation ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_us_troop_min	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the TOTAL number of U.S. and foreign partner forces (exclusive of host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_us_troop_max	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the TOTAL number of U.S. and foreign partner forces (exclusive of host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_us_troop_best	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the TOTAL number of U.S. and foreign partner forces (exclusive of host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_troop_min	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the TOTAL number of foreign partner and host nation forces (exclusive of U.S. troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)

Box A.2—Continued

Variable Name	Description
foreign_host_troop_max	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the TOTAL number of foreign partner and host nation forces (exclusive of U.S. troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_troop_best	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the TOTAL number foreign partner and host nation forces (exclusive of U.S. troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_us_troop_min	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the TOTAL number of U.S., host, and foreign partner forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_us_troop_max	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the TOTAL number of U.S., host, and foreign partner forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_us_troop_best	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the TOTAL number of U.S., host, and foreign partner forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
non-us_naval_size	Text field describing the size of the non-U.S. naval contributions to the coalition as small, medium, or large (–9 indicates that there was no non-U.S. naval contribution)
non-us_naval_size_description	Text field with qualitative and quantitative details about the size, scope, and activities of the non-U.S. naval contributions to the coalition; as available, these naval details feature numbers and classes of ships deployed; dates of naval deployments; quantitative metrics on kinetic activities, vessels interdicted, cargo and personnel lifted; and key naval force activities during the coalition; these notes in part undergird the coding decisions of the coalition naval activity type variables
non-us_air_size	Text field describing the size of the non-U.S. air contributions to the coalition as small, medium, or large (–9 indicates that there was no non-U.S. air contribution)
non-us_air_size_description	Text field with qualitative and quantitative details about the size, scope, and activities of the non-U.S. air contributions to the coalition; as available, these air details feature numbers and types of fixed- and rotary-winged platforms deployed; dates of air deployments; quantitative metrics on sorties flown, munitions expended, and cargo and personnel lifted; and key air force activities; these notes in part undergird the coding decisions of the coalition air activity type variables

Box A.2—Continued

Variable Name	Description
us_naval_size	Text field describing the size of the U.S. naval contributions to the coalition as small, medium, or large (–9 indicates that there was no U.S. naval contribution)
us_naval_size_description	Text field with qualitative and quantitative details about the size, scope, and activities of the U.S. naval contributions to the coalition; as available, these naval details feature numbers and classes of ships deployed; dates of naval deployments; quantitative metrics on kinetic activities, vessels interdicted, cargo and personnel lifted; and key naval force activities; these notes in part undergird the coding decisions of the coalition naval activity type variables
us_air_size	Text field describing the size of the U.S. air contributions to the coalition as small, medium, or large (–9 indicates that there was no U.S. air contribution)
us_air_size_description	Text field with qualitative and quantitative details about the size, scope, and activities of the U.S. air contributions to the coalition; as available, these air details feature numbers and types of fixed- and rotary-winged platforms deployed; dates of air deployments; quantitative metrics on sorties flown, munitions expended, and cargo and personnel lifted; and key air force activities; these notes in part undergird the coding decisions of the coalition air activity type variables
intervention_narrative_long	Text field with longer description of the intervention
troop_size_sources	Text field listing sources used for troop size data
other_sources	Text field listing other sources
coding_notes	Text field indicating case-specific coding questions, challenges, unknown and missing variables, or other caveats

Box A.3**Definitions of Variables in the Coalition Country-Years Dataset**

Variable Name	Description
intervention_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each U.S. military intervention since 1898 ($N = 145$); it links the coalition and noncoalition situations and country-years tabs of the database; this intervention ID number is also compatible with previous RAND datasets on U.S. interventions
coalition_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each coalition ($N = 39$); it links the coalition situations, coalition country-years, major contributor situations, and major contributor country year tabs of the database
coalition_country_year_row_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each country-year of every coalition; if coalitions occur in multiple countries in the same year (e.g., UN Protection Force) then there are multiple annual rows for that year ($N = 472$)
intervention_name	Common name for the coalition intervention, which often incorporates country location
intervention_location	Text field with detailed information on the location of the intervention
logistics_support_location	Integer denoting whether the country-year row was the location of logistics and support personnel rather than the target intervention location (e.g., U.S. troops at rear bases in Thailand during Vietnam or at forward operating bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan early in OEF): 0: not a logistics and support location 1: is a logistics and support location
location_ccode	COW country code corresponding to the intervention location
coalition_start_year	Integer denoting year in which coalition intervention began (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018)
coalition_end_year	Integer denoting year in which coalition intervention ended (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018; -9 indicates ongoing or uncompleted intervention as of 2018)
coalition_country_year	Integer denoting the country-year of the coalition; if the coalition occurs in only one country, then there is one row in the database for every year of the coalition (i.e., 10 rows for a 10-year intervention); if coalitions occur in multiple countries in the same year (e.g., UN Protection Force), then there are multiple annual rows for that year (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018)

Box A.3—Continued

Variable Name	Description
foreign_troop_min_annual	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the <i>annual</i> number of foreign partner forces (exclusive of U.S. or host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_troop_max_annual	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the <i>annual</i> number of foreign partner forces (exclusive of U.S. or host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_troop_best_annual	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the <i>annual</i> number foreign partner forces (exclusive of U.S. or host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_troop_notes	Text field indicating case-specific sources and coding notes related to force size data in “foreign_troop” field
us_troop_min_annual	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the <i>annual</i> number of U.S. ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
us_troop_max_annual	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the <i>annual</i> number of U.S. ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
us_troop_best_annual	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the <i>annual</i> number of U.S. ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
us_troop_notes	Text field indicating case-specific sources and coding notes related to force size data in “us_troop” field
host_troop_min_annual	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the <i>annual</i> number of host nation ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
host_troop_max_annual	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the <i>annual</i> number of host nation ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
host_troop_best_annual	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the <i>annual</i> number of host nation ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)

Box A.3—Continued

Variable Name	Description
host_troop_notes	Text field indicating case-specific sources and coding notes related to force size data in “host_troop” field
foreign_us_troop_min_annual	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number of U.S. and foreign partner forces (exclusive of host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_us_troop_max_annual	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number of U.S. and foreign partner forces (exclusive of host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_us_troop_best_annual	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number of U.S. and foreign partner forces (exclusive of host nation troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_us_troop_notes	Text field indicating case-specific sources and coding notes related to force size data in “foreign_us_troop” field
foreign_host_troop_min_annual	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number of foreign partner and host nation forces (exclusive of U.S. troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_troop_max_annual	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number of foreign partner and host nation forces (exclusive of U.S. troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_troop_best_annual	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number foreign partner and host nation forces (exclusive of U.S. troops) involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_troop_notes	Text field indicating case-specific sources and coding notes related to force size data in “foreign_host_troop” field
foreign_host_us_troop_min_annual	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number of U.S., host, and foreign partner forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)

Box A.3—Continued

Variable Name	Description
foreign_host_us_troop_max_annual	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number of U.S., host, and foreign partner forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_host_us_troop_best_annual	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the TOTAL <i>annual</i> number of U.S., host, and foreign partner forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
foreign_us_host_troop_notes	Text field indicating case-specific sources and coding notes related to force size data in “foreign_us_troop” field

Box A.3—Continued

Variable Name	Description
coalition_ground_activity_type1_annual, coalition_ground_activity_type2_annual, coalition_ground_activity_type3_annual	These three integers denote the activities conducted by coalition ground forces during the intervention; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary. Ten possible activity types: Advisory or FID: Interventions involving coalition military advisers or trainers; can include operational training and institutional assistance and advice; can also include accompanied missions or other types of support. COIN: Interventions involving COIN activities, which, according to Field Manual 3-24 (p. iii), include “comprehensive civilian and military efforts,” often in nontraditional environments and against guerrilla or other nonstate actors Combat and conventional warfare: Interventions involving traditional military operations and fighting, characterized by large formations of organized military forces on both sides Deterrence: Interventions involving activities intended to dissuade an adversary from taking an action not desired by the coalition members, both immediate and longer term; might also include intimidation interventions that have the same purpose. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief: Interventions involving humanitarian and relief operations, such as responses to natural disasters and conflict Security: Interventions involving protection of U.S. and allied assets or personnel during periods of threat or unrest Stability operations: Interventions involving operations to stabilize or maintain peace in postconflict situations; might include operations following coups or other situations causing unrest among the civilian population. Interdiction: Interventions that use blockades or no-fly zones; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces) Lift and transport: Interventions involved primarily with moving equipment or personnel from one location to another, usually in support of an ongoing intervention; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces) ISR: Interventions where collection of information from adversary or other forces is a key part of the operation; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces)

Box A.3—Continued

Variable Name	Description
coalition_naval_activity_type1_annual, coalition_naval_activity_type2_annual, coalition_naval_activity_type3_annual	Integer describing activity in which coalition naval forces were engaged during the intervention; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as previous cell)
coalition_air_activity_type1_annual, coalition_air_activity_type2_annual, coalition_air_activity_type3_annual	Integer describing activity in which coalition air forces were engaged during the intervention; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as above).
coding_notes	Text field indicating case-specific coding questions, challenges, unknown and missing variables, or other caveats
other_sources	Text field listing other coding and troop size sources

Box A.4**Definitions of Variables in the “Major Contributor Situations” Dataset**

Variable Name	Description
intervention_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each U.S. military intervention since 1898 ($N = 145$); it links the coalition and noncoalition situations and country-years tabs of the database; this intervention ID number is also compatible with previous RAND datasets on U.S. interventions
coalition_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each coalition ($N = 39$); it links the coalition situations, coalition country-years, major contributor situations, and major contributor country year tabs of the database
major_contributor_row_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each major contributor of every coalition, including the United States ($N = 319$); rows are also included for troop contributing host nations

Box A.4—Continued

Variable Name	Description
intervention_name	Common name for the coalition intervention, which often incorporates country location
intervention_location	Text field with detailed information on the location of the intervention
location_ccode	COW country code corresponding to the intervention location
major_contributor_name	Text field indicating the major contributor country name; each major contributor (and troop contributing host nation) has a unique row in the dataset
partner_ccode	COW country code corresponding to the major contributor country
host_country_partner	Integer denoting whether the unit of observation in this row (i.e., the major contributor) is the host nation; by definition, host nations that do not deploy their forces abroad during the coalition intervention are not considered major contributors 0: not a host nation 1: is a host nation
coalition_start_year	Integer denoting year in which coalition intervention began (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018)
coalition_end_year	Integer denoting year in which coalition intervention ended (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018; -9 indicates ongoing or uncompleted intervention as of 2018)
partner_start_date	Text field detailing when the major contributor's deployment to coalition intervention began; this date might or correspond with the start date of the coalition but does not necessarily do so
partner_start_year	Integer denoting year in which the major contributor's deployment to coalition intervention began (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018); this date might correspond with the start date of the coalition but does not necessarily do so
partner_end_date	Text field detailing when the major contributor's deployment to coalition intervention ended; this date might correspond with the termination date of the coalition but does not necessarily do so
partner_end_year	Integer denoting year in which the major contributor's deployment to coalition intervention ended (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018; -9 indicates ongoing or uncompleted intervention as of 2018); this date might correspond with the termination date of the coalition but does not necessarily do so

Box A.4—Continued

Variable Name	Description
partner_duration_months	Integer indicating duration (in months) of major contributor's deployment to coalition intervention; if only the start or end years are known (as opposed to precise days or month), the duration estimates deployment for all 12 months of the start or end year; the duration of the U.S. deployment might correspond with the duration of the overall coalition but does not necessarily do so
major_ground_partner	Integer denoting whether the unit of observation in this row (i.e., the major contributor) qualified as a major contributor in the ground domain (i.e., whether troop sizes exceeded 5 percent of non-U.S. total for 25 percent of duration of coalition <i>and</i> exceeded a minimum 100 person-year threshold) 0: no ground forces during coalition by this partner 1: some ground forces during coalition by this partner, but not exceeding major contributor threshold 2: ground forces deployed by this partner during the coalition exceeded the major contributor threshold in the ground domain
major_naval_partner	Integer denoting whether the unit of observation in this row (i.e., the major contributor) qualified as a major contributor in the naval domain (i.e., whether ships deployed exceeded approximately 5 percent of non-U.S. total or whether partner conducted kinetic naval activities and strikes) 0: no naval forces during coalition by this partner 1: some naval forces during coalition by this partner, but not exceeding major contributor threshold 2: naval forces deployed by this partner during the coalition exceeded the major contributor threshold in the naval domain
major_air_partner	Integer denoting whether the unit of observation in this row (i.e., the major contributor) qualified as a major contributor in the air domain (i.e., whether aircraft deployed exceeded approximately 5 percent of non-U.S. total or whether partner conducted kinetic air activities and strikes) 0: no air forces during coalition by this partner 1: some air forces during coalition by this partner, but not exceeding major contributor threshold 2: air forces deployed by this partner during the coalition exceeded the major contributor threshold in the air domain

Box A.4—Continued

Variable Name	Description
partner_ground_activity_type1, partner_ground_activity_type2, partner_ground_activity_type3	These three integers denote the activities conducted by this major contributor during the intervention; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary. Ten possible activity types: Advisory or FID: Interventions involving coalition military advisers or trainers; can include operational training and institutional assistance and advice; can also include accompanied missions or other types of support. COIN: Interventions involving COIN activities, which, according to Field Manual 3-24 (p. iii), include “comprehensive civilian and military efforts,” often in nontraditional environments and against guerrilla or other nonstate actors Combat and conventional warfare: Interventions involving traditional military operations and fighting, characterized by large formations of organized military forces on both sides Deterrence: Interventions involving activities intended to dissuade an adversary from taking an action not desired by the coalition members, both immediate and longer term; might also include intimidation interventions that have the same purpose. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief: Interventions involving humanitarian and relief operations, such as responses to natural disasters and conflict Security: Interventions involving protection of U.S. and allied assets or personnel during periods of threat or unrest Stability operations: Interventions involving operations to stabilize or maintain peace in postconflict situations; might include operations following coups or other situations causing unrest among the civilian population. Interdiction: Interventions that use blockades or no-fly zones; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces) Lift and transport: Interventions involved primarily with moving equipment or personnel from one location to another, usually in support of an ongoing intervention; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces) ISR: Interventions where collection of information from adversary or other forces is a key part of the operation; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces)

Box A.4—Continued

Variable Name	Description
partner_naval_activity_type1, partner_naval_activity_type2, partner_naval_activity_type3	Integer describing activity in which this major contributor's naval forces were engaged during the intervention; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as previous cell)
partner_air_activity_type1, partner_air_activity_type2, partner_air_activity_type3	Integer describing activity in which this major contributor's air forces were engaged during the intervention; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as above)
partner_troop_min	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the number of ground forces provided by this major contributor during the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
partner_troop_max	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the number of ground forces provided by this major contributor during the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
partner_troop_best	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the number of ground forces provided by this major contributor during the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
partner_troop_size_description	Text field indicating coding notes related to this major contributor's ground force size data
partner_troop_size_sources	Text field indicating coding sources related to this major contributor's ground force size data
partner_naval_size	Text field describing the size of this major partner's naval contributions to the coalition as small, medium, or large (–9 indicates that there was no naval contribution)
partner_naval_size_description	Text field with qualitative and quantitative details about the size, scope, and activities of this major partner's naval contributions to the coalition; as available, these naval details feature numbers and classes of ships deployed; dates of naval deployments; quantitative metrics on kinetic activities, vessels interdicted, cargo and personnel lifted; and key naval force activities during the coalition; these notes in part undergird the coding decisions of the coalition naval activity type variables

Box A.4—Continued

Variable Name	Description
partner_air_size	Text field describing the size of this major partner's air contributions to the coalition as small, medium, or large (-9 indicates that there was no air contribution)
partner_air_size_description	Text field with qualitative and quantitative details about the size, scope, and activities of this major partner's air contributions to the coalition; as available, these air details feature numbers and types of fixed- and rotary-wing platforms deployed; dates of air deployments; quantitative metrics on sorties flown, munitions expended, and cargo and personnel lifted; and key air force activities during the coalition; these notes in part undergird the coding decisions of the coalition air activity type variables
coding_notes	Text field indicating case-specific coding questions, challenges, unknown and missing variables, or other caveats
other_sources	Text field listing other coding and troop size sources

Box A.5**Definitions of Variables in the "Major Contributor Country-Years" Dataset**

Variable Name	Description
intervention_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each U.S. military intervention since 1898 ($N = 145$); it links the coalition and noncoalition situations and country-years tabs of the database; this intervention ID number is also compatible with previous RAND datasets on U.S. interventions
coalition_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each coalition ($N = 39$); it links the coalition situations, coalition country-years, major contributor situations, and major contributor country-year tabs of the database
major_contributor_country_year_row_id	Integer, starting at 1, used as unique identifier for each country-year of each major contributor's deployments to the coalition ($N = 2,357$); if a major contributor deployed troops to multiple countries in the same year of the coalition (e.g., U.S. forces deployed simultaneously to Thailand and South Vietnam during the Vietnam War), then there are multiple annual rows for that major contributor in that year
intervention_name	Common name for the coalition intervention, which often incorporates country location

Box A.5—Continued

Variable Name	Description
intervention_location	Text field with detailed information on the location of the intervention
location_ccode	COW country code corresponding to the intervention location
major_contributor_name	Text field indicating the major contributor country name; each major contributor (and troop contributing host nation) has a unique row in the dataset
partner_ccode	COW country code corresponding to the major contributor country
host_country_partner	Integer denoting whether the unit of observation in this row (i.e., the major contributor) is the host nation; by definition, host nations that do not deploy their forces abroad during the coalition intervention are not considered major contributors 0: not a host nation 1: is a host nation
coalition_start_year	Integer denoting year in which coalition intervention began (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018)
coalition_end_year	Integer denoting year in which coalition intervention ended (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018; –9 indicates ongoing or uncompleted intervention as of 2018)
partner_start_year	Integer denoting year in which the major contributor's deployment to coalition intervention began (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018); this date might or might not correspond with the start date of the coalition
partner_end_year	Integer denoting year in which the major contributor's deployment to coalition intervention ended (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018; –9 indicates ongoing or uncompleted intervention as of 2018); this date might or might not correspond with the termination date of the coalition
partner_country_year	Integer denoting the country-year of the major contributor's deployment; if the major contributor deploys troops to multiple countries in the same year during the same coalition, then multiple country-year rows will likewise appear in the dataset for that major contributor (minimum value 1946, maximum value 2018)

Box A.5—Continued

Variable Name	Description
partner_ground_activity_type1_annual, coalition_ground_activity_type2_annual, coalition_ground_activity_type3_annual	These three integers denote the activities conducted by the major contributor's ground forces during the intervention; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary. We defined ten possible activity types: (Advisory or FID): Interventions involving coalition military advisers or trainers; can include operational training and institutional assistance and advice; can also include accompanied missions or other types of support. (COIN): Interventions involving COIN activities, which, according to Field Manual 3-24 (p. iii), include "comprehensive civilian and military efforts," often in nontraditional environments and against guerrilla or other nonstate actors (Combat and conventional warfare): Interventions involving traditional military operations and fighting, characterized by large formations of organized military forces on both sides (Deterrence): Interventions involving activities intended to dissuade an adversary from taking an action not desired by the coalition members, both immediate and longer term; might also include intimidation interventions that have the same purpose. (Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief): Interventions involving humanitarian and relief operations, such as responses to natural disasters and conflict (Security): Interventions involving protection of U.S. and allied assets or personnel during periods of threat or unrest (Stability operations): Interventions involving operations to stabilize or maintain peace in postconflict situations; might include operations following coups or other situations causing unrest among the civilian population. (Interdiction): Interventions that use blockades or no-fly zones; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces) (Lift and transport): Interventions involved primarily with moving equipment or personnel from one location to another, usually in support of an ongoing intervention; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces) (ISR): Interventions where collection of information from adversary or other forces is a key part of the operation; only applicable for air and naval activity types (not ground forces)

Box A.5—Continued

Variable Name	Description
partner_naval_activity_type1_annual, coalition_naval_activity_type2_annual, coalition_naval_activity_type3_annual	Integer describing activity in which this major contributor's naval forces were engaged during the intervention; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities. This determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts where necessary (categories are same as previous cell)
partner_air_activity_type1_annual, coalition_air_activity_type2_annual, coalition_air_activity_type3_annual	Integer describing activity in which this major contributor's air forces were engaged during the intervention; each intervention has three of these fields; primary activity is considered to be dominant or most common activity, followed by secondary and tertiary activities; determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject-matter experts as necessary (categories are same as above)
partner_troop_min_annual	Integer that denotes the lower-bound estimate for the annual number of the major contributor's ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
partner_troop_max_annual	Integer that denotes the upper-bound estimate for the annual number of the major contributor's ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
partner_troop_best_annual	Integer that denotes the best estimate for the annual number of the major contributor's ground forces involved in the coalition intervention (–9 indicates that the number is unknown)
partner_troop_notes	Text field indicating case-specific sources and coding notes related to the major contributor's force size data in this country-year row
coding_notes	Text field indicating other case-specific coding questions, challenges, unknown and missing variables, or other caveats related to this country-year row
other_sources	Text field listing other case coding sources

Lists of U.S. Coalition and Noncoalition Military Interventions (1946–2018)

This appendix presents more-detailed case lists of all U.S. coalition and noncoalition interventions from 1946 to 2018. Table B.1 provides a complete list of U.S. coalitions between 1946 and 2018 with case-by-case data on major contributors versus minor ones and total non-U.S. ground forces compared with U.S. ground forces. By contrast, Table B.2 identifies and compares sizes of U.S. coalition situations with noncoalition ones.

Table B.1
U.S. Coalition Interventions Since World War II

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Western Allied Occupation of Germany (Post-WWII)	West Germany	1946–1955	Belgium, France, United Kingdom, United States	Canada, Denmark, Norway	3	7	186,000	222,000	142,000	200,000	1,622,000	200,000
Western Allied Occupation of Austria (Post-WWII)	Austria	1946–1955	France, United Kingdom, United States	None	2	3	9,200	43,000	1,200	19,400	40,000	2,300
U.S.-Led Occupation of Japan (Post-WWII)	Japan	1946–1952	Australia, India, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States	None	4	5	13,300	37,000	2,000	147,000	250,000	123,000
Allied Berlin Airlift	West Germany	1948–1949	United Kingdom, United States	France, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa	1	6	4,200	4,200	2,000	9,100	11,500	4,900
Korean War	South Korea	1950–1953	Australia, Canada, Colombia, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, South Africa, South Korea, ^a United Kingdom, United States	Belgium, Denmark, Ethiopia, Greece, India, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden	11	22	30,100	39,100	13,200	240,000	327,000	75,000

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Post-Armistice Peacekeeping and Stability Operations in South Korea	South Korea	1953–1957	Australia, Canada, Greece, India, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, South Korea, ^a United Kingdom, United States	Belgium, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Sweden	9	20	20,000	40,000	6,000	131,000	280,000	60,000
UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Congo	Congo-Leopoldville	1960–1964	India, Malaysia, Sweden, Ireland, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Tunisia, Indonesia, United States	Argentina, Austria, Burma, Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, Congo-Leopoldville, Denmark, Ecuador, Greece, Guinea, Iran, Italy, Liberia, Mali, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sudan, United Arab Republic, Yugoslavia	9	34	14,000	20,000	2,000	—	—	—

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Vietnam War	Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia	1962–1975	Australia, Philippines, Thailand, South Korea, South Vietnam, ^a United States	New Zealand	4	7	48,000	67,000	400	180,000	450,000	11,000
U.S.-Led Occupation of Dominican Republic	Dominican Republic	1965–1966	Brazil, Paraguay, Nicaragua, Honduras, United States	El Salvador, Costa Rica	4	7	1,760	1,800	1,540	15,000	23,900	6,000
MFO in Sinai	Egypt	1982–ongoing	Colombia, Fiji, United States	Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, United Kingdom, Uruguay	2	12	1,100	1,600	700	900	1,200	400
Lebanese Civil War	Lebanon	1982–1984	France, Italy, United States	United Kingdom	2	4	3,900	4,200	2,200	1,900	2,000	1,800
U.S.-Led Invasion of Grenada	Grenada	1983–1985	Jamaica, United States	Barbados, Antigua, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent	1	7	400	400	300	7,300	8,000	300

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Tanker War and Kuwaiti Oil Tanker Protection	Kuwait	1987–1988	Belgium, France, Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States	Saudi Arabia	5	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
U.S.-Led Deterrence Force in the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations, Pre-Invasion Phase	Saudi Arabia	1990–1991	Bahrain, ^a Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, France, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, ^a Pakistan, Qatar, ^a Saudi Arabia, ^a Syria, United States	Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Honduras, Netherlands, Niger, Norway, New Zealand, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, South Korea, Romania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, ^a UAE, ^a United Kingdom	10	40	106,000	142,000	35,600	240,000	450,000	40,000

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Gulf War	Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, UAE	1991	Bahrain, Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, France, Italy, Kuwait, ^a Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE, United Kingdom, United States	Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Honduras, Netherlands, Niger, Norway, New Zealand, Oman, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, South Korea, Romania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Turkey	13	40	147,000	172,600	131,700	441,000	540,000	342,500
U.S.-Led Peacekeeping and Deterrence Force in Northern Iraq and Turkey	Turkey, Iraq	1991–2003	France, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, ^a United Kingdom, United States	Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Luxembourg, Portugal	5	13	1,100	11,300	160	3,800	16,400	1,400

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
UN Peacekeeping and NATO No-Fly Zone and Embargo Enforcement During Bosnian War	Croatia, Bosnia	1992–1995	Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States	Argentina, Bangladesh, Belgium, Czech Republic, Egypt, Finland, Indonesia, Kenya, Lithuania, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden, Estonia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Greece	14	35	28,200	37,400	20,300	700	900	300
U.S. and UN Deterrence Force in Macedonia	Macedonia	1993–1999	Finland, United States	Denmark, Indonesia, Norway, Sweden	1	6	500	700	300	500	600	300
NATO Bosnian Air Campaign	Bosnia	1995	France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States	Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Luxembourg, Norway	7	15	—	—	—	—	—	—

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
NATO and EU Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Bosnia	Bosnia, Croatia, Hungary	1995–ongoing	Austria, Canada, France, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Germany, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States	Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Morocco, Lithuania, Norway, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, Portugal, Argentina, Chile, Albania, Estonia, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Ireland, New Zealand, Latvia, Slovakia	11	39	10,600	36,900	800	5,200	20,300	200
UN Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Croatia	Croatia	1995–1998	Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Indonesia, Jordan, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine, United States	Argentina, Kenya, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Bangladesh, Egypt, Finland, Lithuania, Malaysia, Pakistan, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom	11	27	5,500	14,300	700	400	400	300

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Somalia	Somalia	1992–1995	Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Italy, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Zimbabwe, United States	Botswana, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Kuwait, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, South Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, UAE	13	30	13,500	25,100	500	9,200	30,000	1,000
U.S.-Led Deterrence Force in Southern Iraq and the Persian Gulf	Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq	1992–2003	France, United Kingdom, United States	None	2	3	600	1,300	500	12,300	38,400	2,900
Rwandan Genocide Relief and UN-Led Peacekeeping Mission	Rwanda, Uganda, Zaire	1993–1996	Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, India, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Tunisia, Zambia, United States	Brazil, Chad, Congo, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Poland, Romania, Spain, Senegal, United Kingdom	13	25	3,100	7,000	400	2,100	2,100	2,100

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Haiti (I)	Haiti	1994–1997	Bangladesh, Canada, Djibouti, Nepal, Pakistan, United States	Guatemala, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Netherlands, New Zealand, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Benin, Costa Rica, France, Guyana, Ireland, United Kingdom	5	23	2,000	3,800	800	5,100	21,000	500
NATO Kosovo Air Campaign	Kosovo	1999	Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States	Greece, Hungary, Norway, Portugal	10	15	—	—	—	—	—	—

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
NATO Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Kosovo	Kosovo, Macedonia, Greece, Albania	1999–present	Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Russia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States	Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Ireland, Georgia, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, Slovenia, Slovakia	11	28	15,300	39,000	3,000	2,200	7,000	600
U.S.-Led Invasion of Afghanistan	Afghanistan	2001	Australia, France, Italy, United Kingdom, United States	Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Spain	4	13	1,000	1,500	300	1,900	2,500	300

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
U.S.-Led Occupation of Afghanistan (Post-Combat Phase)	Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan	2001–present	Canada, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Iraq, ^a Netherlands, Poland, Turkey, Romania, United Kingdom, United States	Australia, Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Jordan, Norway, Spain, Turkey, Lithuania, Latvia, New Zealand, Portugal, Sweden, Macedonia, Slovakia, Armenia, South Korea, Mongolia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Singapore, Ukraine, UAE, Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, Montenegro, Malaysia, Tonga	9	50	17,700	42,500	2,100	33,000	99,000	1,900

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
U.S.-Led Invasion of Iraq	Iraq	2003	Australia, United Kingdom, United States	Poland	2	4	48,200	48,200	47,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
U.S.-Led Occupation of Iraq (Post-Combat Phase)	Iraq, Kuwait, Turkey, Saudi Arabia	2003–2011	Australia, Italy, Iraq, ^a Georgia, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, South Korea, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States	El Salvador, Bulgaria, Albania, Ukraine, Denmark, Czech Republic, Azerbaijan, Singapore, Latvia, Mongolia, Slovakia, Lithuania, Norway, Japan, Hungary, Portugal, Thailand, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Spain, Nicaragua, Estonia, Moldova, Tonga, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Armenia, New Zealand, Philippines, Kazakhstan	9	39	17,000	48,000	500	123,000	171,000	13,000

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
ECOWAS and UN-Led Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Liberia	Liberia	2003–2018	Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, Ghana, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, United States	Benin, Gambia, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Ireland, Jordan, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Togo, Ukraine	7	22	7,800	15,000	3,000	4,400	5,000	200
Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Haiti (II)	Haiti	2004–2017	Argentina, Chile, Canada, France, Brazil, Jordan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Uruguay, United States	Bangladesh, Bolivia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Japan, Morocco, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, South Korea, Spain, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras	9	24	5,800	8,900	2,200	1,900	2,000	1,900

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
U.S.-Led Multinational Tsunami Relief in the Indian Ocean	Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Malaysia	2004–2005	Australia, India, Indonesia, ^a Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Sri Lanka, ^a Thailand, ^a United States	Austria, Bangladesh, Brunei, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Mexico, Malaysia, Pakistan, Russia, South Korea Switzerland, United Kingdom	8	25	6,500	6,500	1,200	2,500	2,500	700
NATO-Led Libya Air Campaign	Libya	2011	Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Qatar, UAE, United Kingdom, United States	Greece, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Jordan, Bulgaria, Romania	8	18	—	—	—	—	—	—

Table B.1—Continued

Intervention Name	Location	Coalition Dates	Major Contributors	Minor Contributors	Partners Major (excluding U.S. and host)	Partners All (including U.S. and host)	Coalition Ground Troops (excluding U.S. and host)			U.S. Ground Troops		
							Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate	Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
NATO and EU Deterrence of Russian Aggression in Europe and Black Sea and Baltics Air Policing	Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, United Kingdom, Norway	2014–present	Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom, United States	Albania, Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	11	22	3,400	4,000	3,000	34,000	76,000	2,500
U.S.-Led Multinational Coalition Against ISIS in Iraq and Syria	Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Kuwait	2014–present	Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Iraq, ^a Jordan, Morocco, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Turkey, UAE, United Kingdom, United States	Morocco, Lithuania, Norway, Czech Republic, Portugal, Romania, Finland, Slovenia, Sweden, Japan, New Zealand, Hungary	16	29	4,900	6,700	2,700	6,600	10,000	1,400

NOTE: — = not applicable; no ground troops.

^a Troop-contributing host nation.

Table B.2
U.S. Coalition and Noncoalition Interventions, 1946–2018

U.S. Coalition?	Intervention Name	Location	Start Year	End Year	Duration (months)	U.S. Ground Forces		
						Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
No	U.S. Cold War Deterrent Posture in Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	1946	1989	180	200	300	130
Yes	Western Allied Occupation of Germany (post-WWII)	West Germany	1946	1955	120	200,000	1,622,000	200,000
Yes	Western Allied Occupation of Austria (post-WWII)	Austria	1946	1955	125	19,400	40,000	2,400
Yes	U.S.-Led Occupation of Japan (post-WWII)	Japan	1946	1952	76	147,000	250,000	123,000
No	U.S. Occupation of South Korea (post-WWII)	South Korea	1946	1949	46	42,000	50,000	7,500
No	Marines in Northern China post-WWII	China	1946	1949	44	14,000	36,000	500
No	U.S. Cold War Deterrent Posture in Europe	Belgium, Denmark (Greenland), France, West Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom	1946	1989	414	194,000	284,000	48,000
No	Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group-Philippines	Philippines	1946	Ongoing	869	100	1,200	100
No	Turkish Straits Crisis	Turkey	1946	1946	2	—	—	—
No	U.S. Military Advisory Assistance Group Greece; Naval Contingency Force During Greek Martial Law and Greek Civil War	Greece	1947	1950	35	370	500	200
No	U.S. Cold War Deterrent Posture in Libya	Libya	1948	1970	120	300	400	150
No	First Arab-Israeli War	Israel	1948	1948	7	—	—	—
Yes	Allied Berlin Airlift	West Germany	1948	1949	15	9,000	11,500	4,900
No	Naval Deterrence Against Soviet Aggression Toward Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	1949	1953	52	—	—	—
No	Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea	South Korea	1949	1950	12	400	500	100

Table B.2—Continued

U.S. Coalition?	Intervention Name	Location	Start Year	End Year	Duration (months)	U.S. Ground Forces		
						Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
No	U.S. Cold War Deterrent Posture in Ethiopia and Eritrea	Ethiopia and Eritrea	1950	1973	276	1,060	1,500	230
No	Taiwan Assistance and Deterrence Mission; First, Second, Third Taiwan Straits Crises	China (Taiwan)	1950	Ongoing	823	1,020	4,200	300
Yes	Korean War	South Korea	1950	1953	38	240,000	327,000	75,000
No	Military Assistance Advisory Group, Indochina and Vietnam; First Indochina War	Vietnam	1950	1962	148	400	1,000	150
No	Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group Thailand	Thailand	1950	1962	140	400	1,900	100
No	U.S. Cold War Deterrent Posture in Morocco	Morocco	1951	1977	288	300	500	150
No	U.S. Cold War Deterrent Posture in Asia and Pacific	Japan, Philippines	1946	1989	451	44,000	163,000	59,000
No	U.S. Cold War Deterrent Posture in Iran and Military Advisory and Assistance Group–Iran	Iran	1953	1978	300	400	800	150
Yes	Post-Armistice Peacekeeping and Stability Operations in South Korea	South Korea	1953	1957	49	131,000	280,000	60,000
No	Blockade of Guatemala	Guatemala	1954	1954	1	—	—	—
No	Suez Crisis	Israel	1956	1956	5	—	—	—
No	U.S. Deterrent Posture in South Korea	South Korea	1953	Ongoing	744	34,500	70,000	38,000
No	Naval Deterrence Against Syrian Invasion of Turkey	Syria	1957	1957	4	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force During Indonesia Coup	Indonesia	1958	1958	7	—	—	—
No	Lebanon Crisis of 1958; Pre-Crisis Naval Contingency Force	Lebanon	1958	1958	3	14,000	14,300	13,000

Table B.2—Continued

U.S. Coalition?	Intervention Name	Location	Start Year	End Year	Duration (months)	U.S. Ground Forces		
						Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Yes	UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Congo	Congo-Leopoldville	1960	1964	54	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force During Cuban Threat in Central America	Nicaragua, Guatemala	1960	1960	1	—	—	—
No	Advisory Assistance During Pathet Leo Insurgency	Thailand	1961	1961	7	300	300	300
No	Bay of Pigs Invasion	Cuba	1961	1961	1	—	—	—
Yes	Vietnam War	Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia	1962	1975	160	180,000	450,000	11,000
No	Laos Crisis, U.S. Show of Force	Thailand	1962	1962	3	4,250	5,000	3,500
No	Cuban Missile Crisis	Cuba	1962	1962	2	2,000	5,000	2,000
No	Naval Contingency Force During Turkish Threat to Cyprus	Cyprus	1964	1964	7	—	—	—
Yes	U.S.-Led Occupation of Dominican Republic	Dominican Republic	1965	1966	18	15,000	23,850	6,000
No	Advisory Assistance in Guatemalan Civil War	Guatemala	1966	1968	36	100	300	100
No	Six-Day War	Israel	1967	1967	1	—	—	—
No	DD Eilat Sinking	Egypt	1967	1967	1	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force During Syrian Invasion of Jordan	Jordan	1970	1970	1	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force During Indo-Pakistani War of 1971	Pakistan	1971	1971	1	—	—	—
No	Nicaraguan Earthquake Relief	Nicaragua	1972	1973	2	975	1,200	750
No	Yom Kippur War	Israel	1973	1973	2	—	—	—

Table B.2—Continued

U.S. Coalition?	Intervention Name	Location	Start Year	End Year	Duration (months)	U.S. Ground Forces		
						Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
No	Mayaguez Affair	Cambodia	1975	1975	1	—	—	—
No	Philippine Typhoon Relief	Philippines	1976	1976	2	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force During Ugandan Threat to Kenya	Kenya	1976	1976	1	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force During Yemen Civil War	Yemen	1979	1979	3	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force Post-Iranian Revolution	Iran	1979	1981	14	—	—	—
No	Advisory Assistance in Salvadoran Civil War	El Salvador	1981	1992	121	150	800	100
No	Naval Contingency Force During Al Biqa Missile Crisis	Syria	1981	1981	4	—	—	—
No	Gulf of Sidra Incident I	Libya	1981	1981	1	—	—	—
Yes	MFO in Sinai	Egypt	1982	Ongoing	444	860	1,200	454
Yes	Lebanese Civil War	Lebanon	1982	1984	19	1,900	2,000	1,800
No	U.S. Training Missions and Demonstrations of Force in Honduras	Honduras	1983	Ongoing	431	1,200	8,000	250
No	Naval Contingency Force During Libyan Threat Toward Sudan	Libya	1983	1983	1	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force During Libyan Threat Toward Chad	Libya	1983	1983	1	—	—	—
No	Naval Deterrence Against Iranian Threat in Gulf	Iran	1983	1984	3	—	—	—
Yes	U.S.-Led Invasion of Grenada	Grenada	1983	1985	21	7,300	8,000	250
No	Naval Contingency Force During TWA Flight 847 Hijacking	Lebanon	1985	1985	1	—	—	—

Table B.2—Continued

U.S. Coalition?	Intervention Name	Location	Start Year	End Year	Duration (months)	U.S. Ground Forces		
						Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
No	Gulf of Sidra Incidents II, III	Libya	1986	1986	1	—	—	—
Yes	Tanker War and Kuwaiti Oil Tanker Protection	Kuwait	1987	1988	23	—	—	—
No	Naval Contingency Force During Seoul Olympic Games	South Korea	1988	1988	1	—	—	—
No	Gulf of Sidra Incident IV	Libya	1988	1989	1	—	—	—
No	U.S. Show of Force in Panama	Panama	1989	1989	7	11,200	13,000	9,330
No	U.S. Invasion of Panama	Panama	1989	1990	2	27,000	27,000	11,200
No	U.S. Peacekeeping Force in Panama	Panama	1990	1994	56	7,600	8,300	6,500
No	Mamba Station Liberia	Liberia	1990	1991	9	—	—	—
Yes	U.S.-Led Deterrence Force in the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations, Pre-Invasion Phase	Saudi Arabia	1990	1991	6	240,000	450,000	40,000
Yes	Gulf War	Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, UAE	1991	1991	2	441,000	540,000	342,500
No	U.S. Peacekeeping Force in Kuwait	Kuwait	1991	1991	10	5,000	5,000	3,600
Yes	U.S.-Led Peacekeeping and Deterrence Force in Northern Iraq and Turkey	Turkey, Iraq	1991	2003	144	3,750	16,400	1,440
No	Cyclone Relief in Bangladesh	Bangladesh	1991	1991	1	4,000	7,500	500
No	Haitian Refugee Relief in Cuba	Cuba, Haiti	1991	1993	21	1,500	2,400	1,500
Yes	UN Peacekeeping and NATO No-Fly Zone and Embargo Enforcement During Bosnian War	Croatia, Bosnia	1992	1995	42	644	891	339
Yes	U.S. and UN Deterrence Force in Macedonia	Macedonia	1993	1999	68	440	570	320

Table B.2—Continued

U.S. Coalition?	Intervention Name	Location	Start Year	End Year	Duration (months)	U.S. Ground Forces		
						Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
Yes	NATO Bosnian Air Campaign	Bosnia	1995	1995	1	—	—	—
Yes	NATO and EU Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Bosnia	Bosnia, Croatia, Hungary	1995	2008	157	5,200	20,300	210
Yes	UN Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Croatia	Croatia	1995	1998	35	360	370	350
Yes	Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Somalia	Somalia	1992	1995	32	9,200	30,000	1,000
Yes	U.S.-Led Deterrence Force in Southern Iraq and the Persian Gulf	Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq	1992	2003	127	12,300	38,400	2,900
No	Haitian and Cuban Refugee Relief	Cuba, Panama, Haiti	1994	1996	22	8,000	8,000	8,000
Yes	Rwandan Genocide Relief and UN-Led Peacekeeping Mission	Rwanda, Uganda, Zaire	1994	1994	2	2,100	2,100	2,100
Yes	Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Haiti (I)	Haiti	1994	1996	18	5,100	21,000	470
No	U.S. Security Force in Liberia	Liberia, Sierra Leone, Senegal	1996	1996	4	200	1,525	100
No	Cruise Missile Attacks on al-Qaeda	Afghanistan, Sudan	1998	1998	1	—	—	—
No	Hurricane Relief in Central America	Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador	1998	1999	4	3,000	5,700	450
No	U.S. COIN and Counternarcotics Advisory and Assistance in Colombia	Colombia	1999	Ongoing	240	300	900	200
Yes	NATO Kosovo Air Campaign	Kosovo	1999	1999	3	—	—	—
Yes	NATO Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Kosovo	Kosovo, Macedonia, Greece, Albania	1999	Ongoing	235	2,160	7,000	640
No	Earthquake Relief in Turkey	Turkey	1999	1999	2	2,100	2,100	2,100

Table B.2—Continued

U.S. Coalition?	Intervention Name	Location	Start Year	End Year	Duration (months)	U.S. Ground Forces		
						Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
No	Flood Relief in Mozambique	Mozambique, South Africa	2000	2000	2	700	700	650
Yes	U.S.-Led Invasion of Afghanistan	Afghanistan	2001	2001	3	1,900	2,500	300
Yes	U.S.-Led Occupation of Afghanistan (Post-Combat Phase)	Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan	2001	Ongoing	205	33,000	98,500	1,900
No	CJTF-HOA	Djibouti	2002	Ongoing	193	2,000	4,000	1,000
Yes	U.S.-Led Invasion of Iraq	Iraq	2003	2003	2	150,000	150,000	150,000
Yes	U.S.-Led Occupation of Iraq (Post-Combat Phase)	Iraq, Kuwait, Turkey, Saudi Arabia	2003	2011	103	123,000	171,000	13,000
Yes	ECOWAS and UN-Led Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Liberia	Liberia	2003	2003	3	4,350	5,000	200
Yes	Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Haiti (II)	Haiti	2004	2004	4	1,900	2,000	1,900
Yes	U.S.-Led Multinational Tsunami Relief in the Indian Ocean	Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Malaysia	2004	2005	3	2,464	2,464	682
No	Earthquake Relief in Pakistan	Pakistan	2005	2006	6	1,100	1,200	1,000
No	Earthquake Relief in Haiti	Haiti	2010	2010	5	4,000	7,000	2,000
No	Flood Relief in Pakistan	Pakistan	2010	2010	3	600	600	600
No	Deterrence of China in Japan	Japan	2010	Ongoing	100	46,000	52,100	34,300
Yes	NATO-Led Libya Air Campaign	Libya	2011	2011	8	—	—	—
No	Earthquake and Tsunami Relief in Japan	Japan	2011	2011	2	14,000	24,000	14,000
No	U.S. Military Support to African-Led Counter-Lord's Resistance Army Operations	Uganda, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan	2011	2017	50	100	400	100

Table B.2—Continued

U.S. Coalition?	Intervention Name	Location	Start Year	End Year	Duration (months)	U.S. Ground Forces		
						Best Estimate	Maximum Estimate	Minimum Estimate
No	Typhoon Humanitarian Relief in the Philippines	Philippines	2013	2013	1	—	—	—
Yes	NATO and EU Deterrence of Russian Aggression in Europe and Black Sea and Baltics Air Policing	Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, United Kingdom, Norway	2014	Ongoing	57	34,000	76,000	2,500
No	U.S. Military Support to African-Led Counter-Boko Haram Operations	Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon	2014	Ongoing	56	180	400	180
Yes	U.S.-Led Multinational Coalition Against ISIS in Iraq and Syria	Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Kuwait	2014	Ongoing	55	6,600	10,000	1,400
No	Ebola Relief in West Africa	Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Senegal	2014	2015	8	3,500	4,000	3,000
No	Anti-ISIS Airstrikes in Libya	Libya	2016	Ongoing	35	—	—	—

NOTES: Duration for ongoing interventions calculated through December 2018. Troop numbers not provided for naval-only and air-only interventions. — = not applicable.

Technical Appendix

In this appendix, we provide some additional details on the statistical models used in this report and some additional summary statistics, diagnostics, and robustness tests.

Summary Statistics and Pairwise Correlations

Tables C.1–C.6 contain summary statistics and tables of pairwise correlations for both the intervention-level and the potential partner-level data, both for the “all country pool” and “criteria-selected country pool.”

Additional Regression Analyses

In Tables C.7–C.10, we show raw coefficients from several empirical models. Some show the original analysis described in the main report; others test the robustness of the findings by varying the model or estimator. In addition to the logit models used in Chapters Four and Five, we also test those hypotheses in linear probability models. Linear probability models are simply standard linear models in which the outcome is binary and the parameters are estimated through least squares regressions. Although logit is the more “appropriate” model of probability, and therefore presented in the body of this report, linear probability models also have useful characteristics. OLS regression is a computationally simple routine and opens a wider array of post-estimation commands in the Stata suite.

For instance, OLS regression permits easy estimation of parameters in fixed-effects regressions. We use state-level fixed effects in our analysis of the determinants of coalition support—primary analysis is described in Chapter Five. State fixed effects mitigate omitted variable bias by removing each potential partner’s time-invariant characteristics. Individual states (e.g., Canada or Iran) might have a higher (in Iran’s case, lower) propensity to join U.S.-led coalitions. The propensity is specific to Canada’s or Iran’s unique relationship with the United States and not the myriad determinants we test (e.g., shared interest, economic or military ties). We are uncon-

cerned with the “Canada (or Iran) effect”—only the hypothesized determinants. With state fixed effects, we include a parameter for each state and remove its time-invariant propensity to contribute.

To elaborate further, state fixed effects allow us to observe how within-state variation affects the likelihood of coalition participation. The fixed effects control for *all* state-specific characteristics, both observed and unobserved. Continuing with the Canadian example, we can use an explanatory variable that researchers might hypothesize influences coalition participation: trade between the United States and the potential contributor (which is Canada in this case). Let’s assume, perhaps unrealistically, that trade does not influence a state’s decision to join a U.S. coalition. Canada is a perennial ally of the United States and often joins U.S.-led coalitions. Additionally, Canada and the United States also have high levels of trade. A naïve parsimonious regression model might infer that trade induces participation where no such relationship exists. Recall our earlier assumption. The fixed-effects model controls for the fact that Canada and the United States have strong economic ties and those ties have existed for the entirety of the sample (1946–2018). Instead the fixed-effects approach tests whether increases (or decreases) from the average level of trade between the United States and Canada in turn increase (or decrease) the likelihood of coalition support. Although this technique has distinct advantages, it has one noteworthy shortcoming: Because all of the observed and unobserved time-invariant characteristics of the state are effectively removed through the fixed effects, we cannot estimate the impact of variables that are fixed over time.

For example, the fixed-effects model cannot estimate the effect of cultural ties; the proxy (percentage of the population that speaks English) does not vary over time. We cannot observe deviations from the time-invariant mean because it does not deviate over time. This failure represents a limitation; it would be interesting to observe how cultural ties influence the likelihood of coalition participation in the fixed-effects model, which is a crucial tool in the empiricist’s toolkit and often used to identify causal effects of explanatory variables. The fixed-effects estimates are found in column 2 in Table C.8b and C.9b. Linear regression also permits us to calculate the variance inflation factor (VIF), which is a litmus test for multicollinearity issues in empirical models. VIF is calculated for the i th predictor by regressing x_i on the other predictors in the model. The R^2 from the auxiliary regression describes the amount of variation of x_i that is explained by the other predictors. The equation for VIF is

$$VIF_i = \frac{1}{1 - R_i^2}.$$

If too much variance is explained by the other predictors, it might signal that x_i is collinear, which in turn jeopardizes estimation of model coefficients and standard errors. A more detailed explanation of derivation can be found in several statistics and econo-

metrics texts, such as *Practical Regression and Anova Using R*.¹ A good rule of thumb is that the VIF not exceed 10. We observe no VIF above 5.

Table C.11 lists all of the potential controls in Chapter Six's double-selection lasso regression and identifies the selected controls. Boxes C.1 and C.2 list all potential control variables and highlight those selected for our analysis of the effect of coalitions on objective success, where success is measured in two ways: (1) by the coalitions' ability to accomplish U.S. political objectives and (2) by their effect on the target countries' income.

¹ Faraway, 2002.

Table C.1
Summary Statistics for Intervention-Level Dataset

Variable Name	All U.S. Interventions			U.S.-Led Coalitions			U.S. Unilateral Interventions		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation
Average objective success	2.502	0.482	111	2.550	0.481	33	2.481	0.484	78
Number of objectives	3.126	1.854	111	3.848	2.279	33	2.821	1.560	78
Coalition experience	18.184	21.403	37	18.184	21.403	37	—	—	—
Avg. annual U.S. troops deployed	18,086	59,657	115	48,620	98,488	37	3,602	8,578	78
Intervention duration (in months)	77.739	156.209	115	66.946	89.151	37	82.859	179.800	78
Polity score in target state(s)	-0.772	6.210	102	-1.736	5.663	28	-0.408	6.403	74
Per capita income in target state(s)	6,601	8,443	105	6,921	8,388	33	6,454	8,522	72
Count of territorial claims of target state(s)	0.821	1.163	115	0.365	0.751	37	1.038	1.261	78
Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) score of target state(s)	0.006	0.014	99	0.003	0.003	29	0.007	0.017	70
US executive approval	50	7	115	49.691	6.277	37	49.466	6.758	78
Refugees outflows of target state(s)	440,593	819,498	32	1,019,610	1,103,892	12	93,182	226,826	20
Activity type									
Kinetic	0.235	0.426	115	0.541	0.505	37	0.090	0.288	78
No ground component	0.296	0.458	115	0.135	0.347	37	0.372	0.486	78
Advisory	0.122	0.328	115	0.027	0.164	37	0.167	0.375	78
COIN	0.017	0.131	115	0.054	0.229	37	0.000	0.000	78
Combat	0.070	0.256	115	0.162	0.374	37	0.026	0.159	78
Deterrence	0.157	0.365	115	0.189	0.397	37	0.141	0.350	78
Region									
Central America	0.165	0.373	115	0.108	0.315	37	0.192	0.397	78
South America	0.009	0.093	115	0.000	0.000	37	0.013	0.113	78
Europe	0.130	0.338	115	0.297	0.463	37	0.051	0.222	78
West Africa	0.043	0.205	115	0.027	0.164	37	0.051	0.222	78
East Africa	0.078	0.270	115	0.081	0.277	37	0.077	0.268	78
Middle East	0.313	0.466	115	0.297	0.463	37	0.321	0.470	78
South Asia	0.070	0.256	115	0.108	0.315	37	0.051	0.222	78
East Asia	0.191	0.395	115	0.081	0.277	37	0.244	0.432	78

NOTE: — = not applicable.

Table C.2a
Pairwise Correlations for Intervention-Level Data—Part 1

	U.S.-Led Coalition	Objective Success	Objective Count	Kinetic Activity	Distance	Post-9/11	Post- Cold War
U.S.-led coalition	1						
Average objective success	0.0652	1					
Objective count	0.2545	-0.1539	1				
Kinetic activity	0.4968	-0.0051	0.3935	1			
Target distance	0.0247	0.0483	-0.026	-0.0713	1		
Post-9/11	0.0946	-0.1521	-0.1218	-0.0255	0.0749	1	
Post-Cold War	0.3323	-0.1162	-0.0464	0.0366	0.0029	0.621	1
Territorial claims	-0.2714	0.1243	-0.0814	-0.1536	0.0858	-0.3155	-0.3534
Years to election	-0.1062	-0.1223	0.0704	0.0832	-0.0735	-0.0376	-0.1257
U.S. executive approval	0.016	0.0272	0.0303	0.1889	-0.1161	-0.2063	-0.1476
Central America	-0.1059	-0.0452	-0.0181	0.085	-0.8702	-0.0718	-0.0714
South America	-0.0645	-0.0997	0.0451	-0.0519	-0.1445	-0.0417	0.1307
Europe	0.3412	0.1791	0.059	0.0291	-0.1048	-0.1028	0.1589
West Africa	-0.0556	0.0369	-0.0148	-0.0175	-0.0176	0.2496	0.2076
East Africa	0.0072	-0.0642	-0.0024	-0.085	0.2973	0.0447	0.2016
Middle East	-0.0234	-0.1475	-0.0995	-0.1085	0.2189	-0.0479	-0.2063
South Asia	0.1043	-0.1583	-0.019	0.0905	0.2324	0.1545	0.1651
Southeast Asia	-0.193	0.2327	0.1007	0.0435	0.3432	-0.0378	-0.2083
No ground component	-0.2423	-0.1545	-0.3434	-0.3589	0.1074	-0.1856	-0.2629
Advisory	-0.1995	-0.1379	0.1063	-0.2062	-0.0095	0.1208	0.0142
COIN	0.1932	-0.1769	0.1742	0.2402	0.0725	0.1199	0.1857
Combat	0.2507	0.0183	0.0187	0.4936	0.0313	-0.0296	-0.0515
Deterrence	0.0619	0.2573	0.1471	-0.2386	0.0447	-0.0628	-0.1064
Humanitarian	-0.0771	0.1037	-0.2982	-0.2307	-0.075	0.2765	0.4262
Security	-0.1307	-0.0343	0.013	-0.1051	-0.0759	-0.0845	-0.0357
Stability	0.3425	0.0462	0.391	0.7519	-0.1343	-0.0533	0.0122
Interdiction	-0.0645	-0.0335	-0.0065	-0.0519	0.0925	-0.0417	-0.0671

Table C.2b
Pairwise Correlations for Intervention-Level Data—Part 2

	Territorial Claims	Years to Election	US Executive Approval	Central America	South America	Europe	West Africa
US-led coalition							
Average objective success							
Objective count							
Kinetic							
Target distance							
Post-9/11							
Post–Cold War							
Territorial claims	1						
Years to election	0.1179	1					
U.S. executive approval	0.1124	0.1608	1				
Central America	–0.0172	0.1058	0.176	1			
South America	0.0145	–0.0532	0.0689	–0.0417	1		
Europe	–0.1368	–0.0882	–0.0549	–0.1723	–0.0363	1	
West Africa	–0.1512	–0.0341	–0.0217	–0.0948	–0.02	–0.0826	1
East Africa	–0.1228	–0.1655	–0.017	–0.1296	–0.0273	–0.1129	–0.0621
Middle East	0.1286	–0.1346	–0.0817	–0.3003	–0.0632	–0.2614	–0.1439
South Asia	0.1013	0.1587	0.0843	–0.1216	–0.0256	–0.1059	–0.0583
Southeast Asia	0.0751	0.175	–0.0707	–0.2164	–0.0456	–0.1884	–0.1037
No ground component	0.1824	–0.1735	–0.0065	–0.1343	–0.0607	–0.0246	–0.1381
Advisory	0.0345	0.1414	–0.0622	0.0492	0.2516	–0.0652	0.051
COIN	–0.0369	0.0602	0.142	–0.0592	–0.0125	–0.0515	–0.0284
Combat	–0.002	0.054	0.0979	0.0624	–0.0256	–0.1059	–0.0583
Deterrence	0.1323	0.0729	–0.0553	–0.1272	–0.0403	0.1174	–0.0918
Humanitarian	–0.1526	–0.0865	–0.0762	0.1446	–0.039	–0.0158	0.0313
Security	–0.1346	–0.011	0.006	0.0433	–0.0178	–0.0735	0.425
Stability	–0.1684	0.0385	0.1031	0.0786	–0.039	0.1297	0.0313
Interdiction	0.0145	0.0424	–0.1157	–0.0417	–0.0088	–0.0363	–0.02

Table C.2c
Pairwise Correlations for Intervention-Level Data—Part 3

	East Africa	Middle East	South Asia	Southeast Asia	No Ground Component	Advisory	COIN
US-led coalition							
Average objective success							
Objective count							
Kinetic							
Target distance							
Post-9/11							
Post–Cold War							
Territorial claims							
Years to election							
U.S. executive approval							
Central America							
South America							
Europe							
West Africa							
East Africa	1						
Middle East	–0.1967	1					
South Asia	–0.0797	–0.1846	1				
Southeast Asia	–0.1417	–0.3283	–0.133	1			
No ground component	0.0241	0.3845	–0.1023	–0.1698	1		
Advisory	0.0895	–0.194	–0.1018	0.157	–0.2412	1	
COIN	–0.0388	0.0536	0.2251	–0.0647	–0.0862	–0.0495	1
Combat	–0.0797	–0.0372	0.1939	0.0408	–0.1772	–0.1018	–0.0364
Deterrence	–0.1255	0.0705	–0.0237	0.0947	–0.2791	–0.1604	–0.0573
Humanitarian	0.0611	–0.2283	0.175	–0.0157	–0.2698	–0.1551	–0.0554
Security	–0.0553	–0.0258	–0.0519	–0.0923	–0.123	–0.0707	–0.0253
Stability	–0.0301	–0.1227	–0.1139	0.0466	–0.2698	–0.1551	–0.0554
Interdiction	0.3214	–0.0632	–0.0256	–0.0456	–0.0607	–0.0349	–0.0125

Table C.2d
Pairwise Correlations for Intervention-Level Data—Part 4

	Combat	Deterrence	Humanitarian	Security	Stability	Interdiction
US-led coalition						
Average objective success						
Objective count						
Kinetic						
Target distance						
Post-9/11						
Post–Cold War						
Territorial claims						
Years to election						
U.S. executive approval						
Central America						
South America						
Europe						
West Africa						
East Africa						
Middle East						
South Asia						
Southeast Asia						
No ground component						
Advisory						
COIN						
Combat	1					
Deterrence	–0.1178	1				
Humanitarian	–0.1139	–0.1794	1			
Security	–0.0519	–0.0818	–0.0791	1		
Stability	–0.1139	–0.1794	–0.1735	–0.0791	1	
Interdiction	–0.0256	–0.0403	–0.039	–0.0178	–0.039	1

Table C.3
Potential Partner-Level Summary Statistics—All States Included

Variable Name	All Potential Partners			Coalition Partners			Coalition Abstainers		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation
Home region	0.146	0.353	7,696	0.329	0.470	684	0.128	0.334	7,012
Percentage of population that speaks English	0.078	0.248	6,919	0.134	0.313	669	0.072	0.239	6,250
Log lagged trade with United States	−0.933	2.700	5,222	1.044	2.380	653	−1.215	2.623	4,569
Alliance with United States	0.233	0.423	7,696	0.544	0.498	684	0.203	0.402	7,012
IGO support	0.514	0.500	7,696	0.576	0.495	684	0.507	0.500	7,012
UN agreement with United States	0.402	0.178	5,559	0.510	0.172	665	0.387	0.174	4,894
Log lagged trade with target country	1.153	3.498	1,626	3.184	3.407	305	0.683	3.349	1,321
Polity score	1.719	7.119	5,155	6.316	5.938	662	1.042	7.028	4,493
Log lagged per capita GDP	8.569	1.164	5,318	9.333	1.101	665	8.460	1.131	4,653
Recession indicator	0.440	0.496	5,592	0.354	0.478	673	0.452	0.498	4,919
Central America	0.108	0.311	7,696	0.080	0.272	684	0.111	0.314	7,012
Europe	0.297	0.457	7,696	0.275	0.447	684	0.299	0.458	7,012
West Africa	0.027	0.162	7,696	0.031	0.173	684	0.027	0.161	7,012
East Africa	0.081	0.273	7,696	0.127	0.333	684	0.077	0.266	7,012
Middle East	0.297	0.457	7,696	0.291	0.455	684	0.298	0.457	7,012
South Asia	0.108	0.311	7,696	0.133	0.340	684	0.106	0.307	7,012
East Asia	0.081	0.273	7,696	0.063	0.243	684	0.083	0.276	7,012
No ground component	0.135	0.342	7,696	0.120	0.325	684	0.137	0.343	7,012
Advisory	0.027	0.162	7,696	0.041	0.198	684	0.026	0.158	7,012
COIN	0.054	0.226	7,696	0.129	0.335	684	0.047	0.211	7,012
Combat	0.162	0.369	7,696	0.127	0.333	684	0.166	0.372	7,012
Deterrence	0.189	0.392	7,696	0.137	0.345	684	0.194	0.396	7,012
Post-9/11	0.216	0.412	7,696	0.256	0.437	684	0.212	0.409	7,012
Post–Cold War	0.568	0.495	7,696	0.687	0.464	684	0.556	0.497	7,012
Observations		7,696			684			7,012	

Table C.4a
Pairwise Correlation for Partner-Level Data, All Partner Pool—Part 1

	Number of Partners	Home Region	Percentage of Population That Speaks English	Log Lagged Trade with United States	U.S. Alliance	IGO	UN Vote
Number of partners	1						
Home region	0.1623	1					
Percentage of population that speaks English	0.0737	-0.0172	1				
Log lagged trade with United States	0.2768	0.0752	0.0741	1			
U.S. alliance	0.2293	-0.0545	0.2709	0.3989	1		
IGO sponsor	0.0391	0.0916	0	-0.0109	0.0275	1	
UN voting with United States	0.2247	0.1112	0.0682	0.1815	0.249	0.1315	1
Log lagged trade	0.2792	0.237	-0.028	0.4562	0.0562	0.0157	0.2284
Polity	0.2478	0.0233	0.2336	0.4284	0.404	0.0486	0.3685
Log per capita GDP	0.2482	0.1452	0.1968	0.6229	0.2691	-0.0194	0.2935
Recession	-0.0647	-0.0114	-0.0359	-0.191	-0.0636	-0.0534	-0.1245
Central America	-0.0279	-0.0441	0	-0.0411	0.0087	0.3389	-0.0041
Europe	-0.0153	0.1924	0	0.0178	-0.0289	0.2782	0.1055
West Africa	0.0071	-0.0279	0	0.0245	0.0141	0.1622	-0.0836
East Africa	0.0528	0.0069	0	-0.0413	0.0049	0.2891	0.0997
Middle East	-0.0043	-0.0913	0	0.053	0.0363	-0.55	-0.2102
South Asia	0.0251	-0.1058	0	0.0036	0.0256	-0.3577	-0.0151
East Asia	-0.0208	0.0109	0	-0.0875	-0.0648	0.091	0.2673
No ground component	-0.0139	0.0264	0	0.0109	0.0155	0.2266	0.1038
Advisory	0.0268	-0.0234	0	0.0772	0.0141	-0.1712	-0.0407
COIN	0.103	-0.0531	0	0.0346	0.0203	-0.2456	-0.0689
Combat	-0.0296	-0.0717	0	-0.0377	0.0065	-0.1586	0.0088
Deterrence	-0.0413	0.0225	0	0.0116	-0.0014	-0.2202	-0.0861
Post-9/11	0.0301	-0.0567	0	0.1468	0.0445	-0.0142	-0.1921
Post-Cold War	0.0754	0.0206	0	0.1464	0.0804	0.351	-0.1588
Year	0.0874	-0.0474	0	0.2273	0.1168	0.1535	-0.4046

Table C.4b
Pairwise Correlation for Partner-Level Data, All Partner Pool—Part 2

	Trade	Polity	GDP	Recession	Central America	Europe	West Africa
Number of partners							
Home region							
Percentage of population that speaks English							
Log lagged trade with United States							
U.S. alliance							
IGO sponsor							
UN voting with United States							
Log lagged trade	1						
Polity	0.1887	1					
Log per capita GDP	0.4163	0.3808	1				
Recession	-0.0879	-0.1551	-0.1072	1			
Central America	-0.0155	-0.038	-0.0223	-0.023	1		
Europe	0.1438	0.0457	0.0109	0.0136	-0.2265	1	
West Africa	-0.0811	0.0382	0.0274	-0.0201	-0.058	-0.1084	1
East Africa	-0.1285	-0.0103	-0.0562	0.014	-0.1034	-0.1932	-0.0495
Middle East	0.0661	-0.0278	0.0907	0.1099	-0.2265	-0.4231	-0.1084
South Asia	-0.0639	0.0354	-0.0061	-0.0455	-0.1212	-0.2265	-0.058
East Asia	-0.055	-0.0525	-0.1333	-0.1417	-0.1034	-0.1932	-0.0495
No ground component	0.0484	-0.0047	-0.001	-0.0161	-0.1376	0.0888	-0.0659
Advisory	0.0154	0.0585	0.0936	-0.0287	-0.058	-0.1084	-0.0278
COIN	-0.0778	0.0524	0.0347	0.002	-0.0832	-0.1555	-0.0398
Combat	-0.1158	-0.0378	-0.0244	-0.0315	0.083	-0.2862	-0.0733
Deterrence	0.0882	-0.027	0.0344	0.1077	-0.1682	0.1387	-0.0805
Post-9/11	0.2058	0.1489	0.1649	-0.1074	0.0286	-0.198	0.3173
Post–Cold War	-0.0064	0.2201	0.1653	0.0145	-0.0475	0.2097	0.1455
Year	0.1335	0.1914	0.258	0.1065	0.0094	-0.0677	0.1391

Table C.4c
Pairwise Correlation for Partner-Level Data, All Partner Pool—Part 3

	East Africa	Middle East	South Asia	East Asia	No Ground Component	Advisory	COIN
Number of partners							
Home region							
Percentage of population that speaks English							
Log lagged trade with United States							
U.S. alliance							
IGO sponsor							
UN voting with United States							
Log lagged trade							
Polity							
Log per capita GDP							
Recession							
Central America							
Europe							
West Africa							
East Africa	1						
Middle East	−0.1932	1					
South Asia	−0.1034	−0.2265	1				
East Asia	−0.0882	−0.1932	−0.1034	1			
No ground component	0.1722	0.0888	−0.1376	−0.1174	1		
Advisory	−0.0495	0.2562	−0.058	−0.0495	−0.0659	1	
COIN	−0.071	0.106	0.3017	−0.071	−0.0945	−0.0398	1
Combat	−0.1307	0.0347	0.3191	0.1379	−0.1739	−0.0733	−0.1052
Deterrence	−0.1435	0.2897	−0.1682	−0.1435	−0.1909	−0.0805	−0.1155
Post-9/11	−0.156	0.2329	0.0286	−0.156	−0.0156	0.3173	0.1648
Post–Cold War	0.0594	−0.1484	0.1282	−0.3403	0.0259	0.1455	0.2087
Year	−0.0574	0.2911	0.1031	−0.5273	0.0861	0.2288	0.1878

Table C.4d
Pairwise Correlation for Partner-Level Data, All Partner Pool—Part 4

	Combat	Deterrence	Post-9/11	Post–Cold War	Year
Number of partners					
Home region					
Percentage of population that speaks English					
Log lagged trade with United States					
U.S. alliance					
IGO sponsor					
UN voting with United States					
Log lagged trade					
Polity					
Log per capita GDP					
Recession					
Central America					
Europe					
West Africa					
East Africa					
Middle East					
South Asia					
East Asia					
No ground component					
Advisory					
COIN					
Combat	1				
Deterrence	–0.2125	1			
Post-9/11	–0.053	–0.0861	1		
Post–Cold War	–0.208	–0.1355	0.4585	1	
Year	–0.0921	0.0283	0.7825	0.5411	1

Table C.5
Potential Partner-Level Summary Statistics—Restricted Partner Pool

Variable Name	All Potential Partners			Coalition Partners			Coalition Abstainers		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Observation
Lagged per capita income	11,248.710	12,662.970	3,220	17,891.790	14,838.350	665	9,519.688	11,418.340	2,555
Recession	0.446	0.497	3,277	0.354	0.478	673	0.470	0.499	2,604
Lagged trade with United States	10.576	42.015	3,332	23.068	62.499	657	7.508	34.539	2,675
Alliance with United States	0.438	0.496	3,925	0.544	0.498	684	0.415	0.493	3,241
Percentage of population that speaks English	0.111	0.292	3,707	0.134	0.313	669	0.106	0.287	3,038
Polity score	3.102	6.951	3,215	6.316	5.938	662	2.268	6.953	2,553
Central America	0.124	0.329	3,925	0.080	0.272	684	0.133	0.340	3,241
Europe	0.317	0.466	3,925	0.275	0.447	684	0.326	0.469	3,241
West Africa	0.048	0.215	3,925	0.031	0.173	684	0.052	0.222	3,241
East Africa	0.120	0.325	3,925	0.127	0.333	684	0.118	0.323	3,241
Middle East	0.260	0.439	3,925	0.291	0.455	684	0.254	0.435	3,241
South Asia	0.088	0.283	3,925	0.133	0.340	684	0.078	0.269	3,241
East Asia	0.042	0.201	3,925	0.063	0.243	684	0.038	0.190	3,241
Observations		3,925			684			3,241	

Table C.6a
Pairwise Correlation for Partner-Level Data, Restricted Partner Pool—Part 1

	Number of Partners	Per Capita GDP	Recession	Trade with United States	U.S. Alliance	Percentage of Population That Speaks English	Polity
Number of partners	1						
Per capita GDP	0.2677	1					
Recession	−0.0943	−0.0758	1				
Trade with United States	0.1474	0.2725	−0.0859	1			
U.S. alliance	0.0983	0.1769	−0.1019	0.1534	1		
Percentage of population that speaks English	0.0366	0.2254	−0.0344	0.0848	0.2467	1	
Polity	0.2355	0.3367	−0.1471	0.1351	0.3942	0.2566	1
CINC	0.0173	0.1567	−0.075	0.347	−0.0813	0.132	0.0326
Military experience	0.0172	0.2987	−0.0423	0.3309	−0.0553	0.1895	0.1058
North America	0.1306	0.1522	−0.0013	0.5422	0.0998	0.17	0.1044
Central America	−0.1546	−0.1563	−0.0041	−0.0333	0.4567	0.4122	0.0441
South America	−0.0964	−0.1321	−0.0213	−0.0496	0.3784	−0.0648	0.0976
Europe	0.2409	0.4468	−0.1065	−0.0009	−0.0159	−0.1032	0.4422
Eurasia	−0.018	−0.0515	0.0737	−0.0329	−0.1671	−0.0714	−0.1098
West Africa	−0.0085	−0.1746	0.1174	−0.0534	−0.125	−0.0818	−0.1273
East Africa	−0.1624	−0.2756	0.176	−0.1079	−0.3851	−0.1501	−0.2711
Middle East	0.0047	0.1269	−0.0228	−0.0539	−0.2456	−0.1042	−0.3653
South Asia	0.0548	−0.1229	−0.0283	−0.0378	−0.0688	−0.0577	−0.0503
East Asia	0.0609	0.0539	−0.1397	0.1776	−0.04	0.0661	0.026

Table C.6b
Pairwise Correlation for Partner-Level Data, Restricted Partner Pool—Part 2

	CINC	Military Experience	North America	Central America	South America	Europe	Eurasia
Number of partners							
Per capita GDP							
Recession							
Trade with United States							
U.S. alliance							
Percentage of population that speaks English							
Polity							
CINC	1						
Military experience	0.6078	1					
North America	0.0256	0.0326	1				
Central America	−0.1341	−0.1207	−0.0412	1			
South America	−0.0472	−0.0648	−0.0318	−0.1479	1		
Europe	0.0054	0.0866	−0.0604	−0.2805	−0.2169	1	
Eurasia	0.2366	0.2831	−0.0179	−0.0831	−0.0643	−0.122	1
West Africa	−0.0703	−0.0613	−0.0207	−0.0963	−0.0745	−0.1413	−0.0419
East Africa	−0.1223	−0.1096	−0.0406	−0.1884	−0.1457	−0.2765	−0.0819
Middle East	−0.0456	−0.0138	−0.0265	−0.1231	−0.0952	−0.1806	−0.0535
South Asia	0.0503	−0.0239	−0.0168	−0.0779	−0.0602	−0.1143	−0.0339
East Asia	0.2647	0.1108	−0.0304	−0.1413	−0.1093	−0.2074	−0.0615

Table C.6c
Pairwise Correlation for Partner-Level Data, Restricted Partner Pool—Part 3

	West Africa	East Africa	Middle East	South Asia	East Asia
Number of partners					
Per capita GDP					
Recession					
Trade with United States					
U.S. alliance					
Percentage of population that speaks English					
Polity					
CINC					
Military experience					
North America					
Central America					
South America					
Europe					
Eurasia					
West Africa					
East Africa	1				
Middle East	−0.0949	1			
South Asia	−0.062	−0.1213	1		
East Asia	−0.0392	−0.0768	−0.0501	1	
Number of partners	−0.0712	−0.1393	−0.091	−0.0576	1

Table C.7
Signposts of Coalition Interventions

Independent Variables (dependent variable is coalition indicator)	Logit		Linear Probability		Collinearity	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error	VIF	1/VIF
Kinetic	3.085***	(0.651)	0.526***	(0.0914)	1.73	0.577557
Target distance	0.0906	(0.0699)	0.00966	(0.00845)	1.72	0.579974
Post-9/11	-1.390*	(0.794)	-0.213	(0.133)	1.23	0.815108
Post-Cold War	2.226***	(0.654)	0.360***	(0.106)	1.12	0.892532
Territorial claims	-0.627	(0.535)	-0.0470	(0.0340)	1.08	0.924045
Years to U.S. election	-0.314	(0.257)	-0.0401	(0.0333)	1.06	0.940886
U.S. executive approval	-0.0233	(0.0463)	-0.00144	(0.00556)	1.04	0.962349
Observations	115		115		115	
R-squared	0.348		0.384		—	

NOTES: VIF = variance inflation factor; — = not applicable. * $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

Table C.8a
Determinants of Coalition Participation, All Countries Included—Part 1

Independent Variable (dependent variable is partner indicator)	Multinomial Logit				Ordered Logit		Logit	
	Minor	Standard Error	Major	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
Home region	1.212***	(0.158)	2.285***	(0.178)	1.727***	(0.128)	1.643***	(0.127)
Percentage of population that speaks English	0.377	(0.244)	1.036***	(0.248)	0.689***	(0.182)	0.634***	(0.196)
Alliance with United States	0.292**	(0.139)	0.819***	(0.173)	0.495***	(0.109)	0.463***	(0.115)
Log lagged trade with United States	0.0438	(0.0349)	0.420***	(0.0448)	0.219***	(0.0297)	0.181***	(0.0299)
IGO support	0.749**	(0.380)	0.684	(0.466)	0.666**	(0.318)	0.737**	(0.305)
Polity score	0.0968***	(0.0127)	0.0238	(0.0151)	0.0615***	(0.0104)	0.0675***	(0.0102)
Log lagged per capita income	0.418***	(0.0697)	0.0644	(0.0954)	0.236***	(0.0608)	0.288***	(0.0604)
Recession	-0.198	(0.128)	-0.255	(0.164)	-0.198*	(0.105)	-0.217**	(0.108)
Central America	-1.747***	(0.416)	-2.501***	(0.564)	-2.158***	(0.357)	-2.040***	(0.359)
South America	-0.824*	(0.473)	-1.546**	(0.603)	-1.287***	(0.391)	-1.161***	(0.397)
West Africa	-0.785	(0.539)	-1.660**	(0.713)	-1.290***	(0.459)	-1.155**	(0.465)
East Africa	-0.0410	(0.472)	-0.286	(0.536)	-0.274	(0.364)	-0.191	(0.380)
Middle East	-0.803	(0.580)	-1.566**	(0.775)	-1.307**	(0.507)	-1.122**	(0.496)
South Asia	-0.373	(0.599)	-0.920	(0.840)	-0.787	(0.534)	-0.589	(0.521)
East Asia	0	(.)	0	(.)	0	(.)	0	(.)
No ground component	-1.040***	(0.215)	-0.611***	(0.235)	-0.742***	(0.165)	-0.855***	(0.168)
Advisory	0.0510	(0.395)	0.877**	(0.400)	0.574*	(0.296)	0.456	(0.288)
COIN	1.590***	(0.255)	0.851**	(0.353)	1.314***	(0.205)	1.389***	(0.218)
Combat	-0.533***	(0.204)	-0.404*	(0.239)	-0.427***	(0.161)	-0.484***	(0.162)
Deterrence	-0.845***	(0.201)	-0.932***	(0.260)	-0.841***	(0.165)	-0.873***	(0.170)
Post-9/11 indicator	-0.148	(0.214)	0.130	(0.268)	0.00943	(0.168)	-0.0454	(0.270)r
Post-Cold War indicator	-1.648***	(0.312)	-1.746***	(0.447)	-1.680***	(0.270)	-1.679***	(0.175)
Year	0.0241**	(0.0105)	0.0163	(0.0147)	0.0215**	(0.00919)	0.0215**	(0.00914)
Constant cut 1					45.50**	(17.89)		
Constant cut 2					46.71***	(17.90)		
Observations		4,235				4,235		4,235
R-squared		0.2218				0.201		0.2403

NOTES: (.) = no coefficient or standard error. * $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

Table C.8b
Determinants of Coalition Participation, All Countries Included—Part 2

Independent Variable (dependent variable is partner indicator)	Linear Probability		Fixed Effect		Collinearity Check	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error	VIF	1/VIF
Home region	0.197***	(0.0188)	0.180***	(0.0188)	1.1	0.913078
Percentage of population that speaks English	0.167***	(0.0397)	0	(.)	1.11	0.900383
Alliance with United States	0.0656***	(0.0141)	0.190***	(0.0488)	1.51	0.661232
Log lagged trade with United States	0.0119***	(0.00255)	0.00567	(0.00389)	2.22	0.449471
IGO support	0.0607**	(0.0284)	0.0772***	(0.0273)	10.58	0.094505
Polity score	0.00557***	(0.000793)	0.00207	(0.00132)	1.49	0.672551
Log lagged per capita income	0.0284***	(0.00528)	0.0185	(0.0154)	1.89	0.530298
Recession	−0.0189*	(0.0104)	−0.0243**	(0.0103)	1.1	0.905264
Central America	−0.109***	(0.0356)	−0.229***	(0.0424)	6.77	0.147722
South America	−0.0338	(0.0317)	−0.155***	(0.0448)	6.77	0.147722
West Africa	−0.0497	(0.0433)	−0.169***	(0.0524)	2.63	0.379916
East Africa	0.0396	(0.0398)	−0.0767	(0.0469)	5	0.20018
Middle East	−0.0380**	(0.0194)	−0.144***	(0.0516)	3.68	0.271494
South Asia	0	(.)	−0.110**	(0.0532)	—	—
East Asia	0.104*	(0.0548)	0	(.)	3.42	0.292427
No ground component	−0.0778***	(0.0168)	−0.0819***	(0.0152)	1.7	0.586658
Advisory	0.0389	(0.0343)	0.0404	(0.0307)	1.49	0.671261
COIN	0.153***	(0.0283)	0.154***	(0.0267)	1.53	0.654916
Combat	−0.0452***	(0.0151)	−0.0449***	(0.0146)	1.61	0.621064
Deterrence	−0.0710***	(0.0148)	−0.0693***	(0.0139)	1.76	0.566821
Post-Cold War indicator	−0.122***	(0.0189)	−0.126***	(0.0186)	4.82	0.207541
Post-9/11 indicator	−0.0303*	(0.0172)	−0.0396**	(0.0163)	2.31	0.4321
Year	0.00226***	(0.000837)	0.00369***	(0.000839)	6.23	0.16042
Constant cut 1						
Constant cut 2						
Observations		4,235		4,235		
R-squared		0.1872		0.3274		

NOTES: (.) = no coefficient or standard error; — = not applicable. * $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

Table C.9a
Determinants of Coalition Participation, Restricted Partner Pool—Part 1

Independent Variable (dependent variable is partner indicator)	Multinomial Logit				Ordered Logit		Logit	
	Minor	Standard Error	Major	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
Home region	1.206***	(0.192)	2.470***	(0.214)	1.913***	(0.155)	1.726***	(0.151)
Percentage of population that speaks English	0.427	(0.267)	1.041***	(0.275)	0.704***	(0.205)	0.680**	(0.226)
Alliance with United States	−0.617***	(0.159)	−0.0286	(0.192)	−0.287*	(0.123)	−0.425**	(0.136)
Log lagged trade with United States	0.0954*	(0.0375)	0.451***	(0.0470)	0.272***	(0.0322)	0.229***	(0.0325)
IGO support	0.683*	(0.309)	0.456	(0.388)	0.491	(0.260)	0.587*	(0.260)
Polity score	0.0852***	(0.0129)	0.0110	(0.0161)	0.0419***	(0.0106)	0.0550***	(0.0106)
Log lagged per capita income	0.435***	(0.0770)	0.123	(0.104)	0.258***	(0.0673)	0.318***	(0.0663)
Recession	−0.275*	(0.132)	−0.316	(0.169)	−0.265*	(0.109)	−0.292*	(0.113)
Central America	−1.010**	(0.355)	−0.991*	(0.431)	−0.906**	(0.283)	−0.944**	(0.290)
South America	0	(.)	0	(.)	0	(.)	0	(.)
West Africa	−0.490	(0.405)	−0.494	(0.519)	−0.415	(0.341)	−0.470	(0.347)
East Africa	0.580*	(0.244)	1.152***	(0.303)	0.909***	(0.211)	0.810***	(0.210)
South Asia	0.593*	(0.240)	0.578	(0.332)	0.517**	(0.197)	0.597**	(0.210)
East Asia	0.996*	(0.502)	1.801**	(0.623)	1.525***	(0.417)	1.367**	(0.425)
No ground component	−0.942***	(0.232)	−0.488*	(0.247)	−0.584**	(0.184)	−0.739***	(0.187)
Advisory	0.876*	(0.406)	1.750***	(0.430)	1.358***	(0.293)	1.271***	(0.310)
COIN	1.771***	(0.269)	1.174**	(0.372)	1.468***	(0.213)	1.638***	(0.234)
Combat	−0.419*	(0.212)	−0.362	(0.253)	−0.334	(0.171)	−0.388*	(0.173)
Deterrence	−0.790***	(0.212)	−0.890***	(0.268)	−0.781***	(0.175)	−0.821***	(0.184)
Post-9/11 indicator	0	(.)	0	(.)	0	(.)	0	(.)
Post-Cold War indicator	0	(.)	0	(.)	0	(.)	0	(.)
Year	−2.246***	(0.334)	−2.293***	(0.458)	−2.199***	(0.289)	−2.269***	(0.293)
Constant cut 1	0.0450	(0.224)	0.323	(0.269)	0.213	(0.177)	0.149	(0.187)
Constant cut 2	0.0347***	(0.00992)	0.0275*	(0.0125)	0.0315***	(0.00822)	0.0329***	(0.00840)
Observations		2,750				2,750		2,750
R-squared		0.2142				0.1911		0.2343

NOTES: (.) = no coefficient or standard error. * $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

Table C.9b
Determinants of Coalition Participation, Restricted Partner Pool—Part 2

Independent Variable (dependent variable is partner indicator)	Linear Probability		Fixed Effect		Collinearity Check	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error	VIF	1/VIF
Home region	0.266***	(0.0249)	0.252***	(0.0247)	1.18	0.846
Percentage of population that speaks English	0.176***	(0.0445)	0	(.)	1.11	0.898
Alliance with United States	−0.0561**	(0.0194)	0.0921	(0.0596)	1.7	0.589
Log lagged trade with United States	0.0250***	(0.00407)	0.0104	(0.00707)	2.33	0.428
IGO support	0.0637*	(0.0254)	0.0309	(0.0254)	4.44	0.225
Polity score	0.00612***	(0.00124)	0.00235	(0.00199)	1.61	0.622
Log lagged per capita income	0.0429***	(0.00806)	0.0279	(0.0276)	1.99	0.503
Recession	−0.0324*	(0.0150)	−0.0348*	(0.0146)	1.11	0.898
Central America	−0.105***	(0.0261)	−0.106***	(0.0247)	1.87	0.536
South America	0	(.)	0	(.)	—	—
West Africa	−0.0784	(0.0403)	−0.0840*	(0.0367)	1.66	0.602
East Africa	0.0690*	(0.0279)	0.0537*	(0.0249)	1.52	0.658
South Asia	0.0641*	(0.0313)	0.0298	(0.0309)	1.75	0.573
East Asia	0.197***	(0.0583)	0.233***	(0.0552)	2.1	0.475
No ground component	−0.0953***	(0.0259)	−0.0682**	(0.0234)	1.5	0.665
Advisory	0.234***	(0.0588)	0.186***	(0.0489)	1.31	0.765
COIN	0.256***	(0.0417)	0.248***	(0.0389)	1.6	0.624
Combat	−0.0501*	(0.0249)	−0.0500*	(0.0238)	1.63	0.612
Deterrence	−0.0710**	(0.0220)	−0.0756***	(0.0208)	1.7	0.587
Post-9/11 indicator	0	(.)	0	(.)	2.31	0.434
Post-Cold War indicator	0	(.)	0	(.)	4.95	0.202
Year	−0.231***	(0.0300)	−0.231***	(0.0289)	5.27	0.190
Constant cut 1	−0.00427	(0.0256)	−0.0211	(0.0237)		
Constant cut 2	0.00382***	(0.00115)	0.00623***	(0.00127)		
Observations		2,750		2,750		
R-squared		0.225		0.394		

NOTES: (.) = no coefficient or standard error; — = not applicable. * $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

Table C.10
Political Objective Success

	Univariate Linear Model		Multivariate Linear Model		Lasso	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
Coalition indicator	−0.0685	(0.0997)	0.0981	(0.122)	0.0676	(0.107)
Post–Cold War	—	—	−0.0790	(0.107)	—	—
Combat, COIN	—	—	−0.0431	(0.207)	—	—
Stability	—	—	0.150	(0.126)	—	—
Deterrence	—	—	0.326***	(0.0982)	—	—
U.S. troops deployed	—	—	−0. 000000308	(0. 000000623)	—	—
Europe	—	—	0.269**	(0.132)	—	—
East Asia	—	—	0.323***	(0.0751)	—	—
Advisory	—	—	−0.0901	(0.134)	—	—
Objective count	—	—	−0.0760	(0.0234)	—	—
Constant	2.481***	(0.0550)	2.581***	(0.0962)		
Observations	111		111		111	

NOTES: (.) = no coefficient or standard error; — = not applicable. * $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

Table C.11
Change in Income After Five Years

	Univariate Linear Model		Multivariate Linear Model		Lasso	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
Coalition indicator	-0.387***	(0.116)	0.114	(0.176)	-0.0483	(0.169)
Post-Cold War	—	—	-0.189**	(0.0934)	—	—
Combat, COIN	—	—	-0.581***	(0.208)	—	—
Stability	—	—	-0.643*	(0.345)	—	—
Deterrence	—	—	-0.119	(0.123)	—	—
U.S. troops deployed	—	—	-0.000000652	(0.000000921)	—	—
Europe	—	—	-0.364**	(0.150)	—	—
East Asia	—	—	-0.0157	(0.108)	—	—
Advisory	—	—	-0.0792	(0.103)	—	—
Objective count	—	—	-0.00250	(0.0309)	—	—
Constant	-0.173***	(0.0491)	-0.0262	(0.0878)		
Observations	99		95		95	

NOTES: (.) = no coefficient or standard error; — = not applicable. * $p < 0.01$; ** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; *** $0.01 < p < 0.10$; **** $p < 0.01$.

Box C.1**Potential and Selected Controls—Lasso *Success (Political Objectives)* Regression**

Control Variable	Selected
Average annual troops deployed	Yes
Duration (in months)	No
Territorial claims as aggressor	Yes
Territorial claims as defender	No
U.S. alliance	No
Number of objectives	No
Post–Cold War indicator	No
Central America	No
South America	No
Europe	No
West Africa	No
East Africa	No
Middle East	No
South Asia	No
East Asia	No
No ground component	No
Advisory	No
COIN	Yes
Combat	No
Deterrence	Yes
Humanitarian	No
Security	No
Stability	Yes

Box C.2
Potential and Selected Controls—Lasso *Success (Income)* Regression

Control Variable	Selected
Average annual troops deployed	Yes
Duration (in months)	No
Territorial claims as aggressor	Yes
Territorial claims as defender	No
U.S. alliance	No
Number of objectives	No
Post–Cold War indicator	No
Central America	No
South America	Yes
Europe	No
West Africa	No
East Africa	No
Middle East	No
South Asia	No
East Asia	No
No ground component	Yes
Advisory	Yes
COIN	No
Combat	No
Deterrence	No
Humanitarian	No
Security	No
Stability	Yes

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The decision to use a military intervention to achieve a political goal is inherently risky. To offset some of these risks, states sometimes seek to build coalitions made up of partner states that have similar objectives. This report uses quantitative analysis and a series of qualitative case studies to identify and describe factors that seem to be associated with U.S. decisions to use coalitions for military interventions, factors that drive partner states to join such coalitions, and factors that shape the success of military coalitions. The findings indicate that the United States relies on coalitions when operational demands are high and to build international legitimacy for military action. Partner states are most likely to join U.S. coalitions when they have close ties with the United States, when the precipitating crisis is in their home region, when they seek to advance their international standing, and when the coalition has support from an intergovernmental organization. As the United States faces more significant threats from near peer competitors, it may need to rely on partners more heavily and can leverage the insights in this report to construct strong and durable coalitions.

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