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Evan N. Resnick

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Hang Together or Hang Separately? Evaluating Rival Theories of Wartime Alliance Cohesion

EVAN N. RESNICK

Neorealist and liberal theories advance discrepant explanations for variations in wartime alliance cohesion. Neorealism claims that variations in cohesion are attributable to shifting international systemic conditions; liberalism argues that such differences are a function of the regime type(s) of the various alliance partners. I advance a synthetic neoclassical realist theory that proposes a given ally's decision to minimize or maximize cohesion is a function of both international systemic conditions and the regime type of the state in question. I test the three theories in US, British, and Soviet alliance decision making during World War II and find that neoclassical realism alone accounts for the behavior of all three partners over the lifespan of the "Grand Alliance" (January 1942-September 1945). The article concludes by discussing the implications of these findings for the study and practice of alliance politics, as well as for contemporary US foreign policy.

Although scholars of international security have compiled a voluminous literature pertaining to the origins and behavior of military alliances, they have devoted surprisingly little attention to the phenomenon of alliance cohesion. Construed as the extent to which the members of a military alliance resemble a unitary actor during peace or war, alliance cohesion denotes "the very

Evan N. Resnick is assistant professor and Coordinator of the United States Program at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (rsis), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

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essence of how alliances perform.”¹ The few works that address the subject of wartime alliance cohesion can be categorized into contending neorealist and liberal theories. Neorealist theory attributes variations in cohesion to four complementary international systemic variables. Specifically, it predicts that a given alliance will manifest high cohesion if it faces military defeat rather than victory, if the distribution of power among the allies is symmetrical rather than asymmetrical, if the partners agree rather than disagree as to which state constitutes the primary adversary, and if the level of external threat to the alliance exceeds the level of internal or intra-alliance threat rather than vice-versa. Liberal theory attributes variations in cohesion to the domestic regime type of the individual allies, hypothesizing that democratic states will be more likely than autocratic states to build cohesive wartime relations with allies.

In this article, I advance a neoclassical realist theory of wartime cohesion that synthesizes the neorealist and liberal theories. Similar to other neoclassical realist works, this theory proposes that international systemic variables influence the foreign policy behavior of states indirectly via intervening domestic political variables. It proposes that if international systemic conditions favor alliance fragmentation rather than cohesion, both democratic and autocratic alliance partners will minimize cohesion with one another. Conversely, if international systemic conditions favor alliance cohesion, democratic allies will maximize cohesion with their partners and autocratic allies will minimize cohesion. I test the three theories against the record of alliance decision making by the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union during World War II. Of the three theories, neoclassical realism alone accounts for all three allies’ cohesion-related behavior over the course of the “Grand Alliance,” which spanned the period from January 1942 to September 1945.

The rest of this article proceeds in four steps. First, I briefly define and operationalize the term “alliance cohesion.” Second, I lay out the rudiments of the neorealist, liberal, and neoclassical realist theories of wartime alliance cohesion. Third, I evaluate each of the theories in light of US, British, and Soviet behavior over the lifespan of the Grand Alliance, which I split into two temporal phases. Fourth, I address the implications of my findings for both the general practice of alliance politics and current US foreign policy.

CONCEPTUALIZING ALLIANCE COHESION

Although scholarly investigations of alliance formation and alliance politics are common, studies of alliance cohesion are surprisingly rare. To a considerable extent, this is because the dominant theoretical approaches to the study

¹ Patricia Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances: Proponents of Peace, Weapons of War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 24.

of international security issues subscribe to the assumption that alliances aggregate perfectly the capabilities of their members.² I define alliance cohesion as the extent to which the members of a military alliance resemble a unitary actor in their wartime or peacetime activities. I propose three operational indicators of wartime cohesion: (1) the extent to which the partners' war aims overlap; (2) the extent to which the partners coordinate their military activities; and (3) the extent to which the partners share vital national resources (e.g., strategic natural resources, war materiel, intelligence, and money) within the constraints set by such exogenous factors as geography, technology, weather, logistics, and enemy behavior.³

Since all alliances fall short of perfect unity to one degree or another, a relatively high level of wartime cohesion will constitute a force multiplier for the allies that manifest it.⁴ Highly cohesive allies will aggregate more efficiently their resources and synchronize their efforts than those that are less cohesive. They will also fight more effectively as they will be less susceptible to the alliance pathologies of abandonment and buck-passing and less vulnerable to the deliberate efforts by adversaries to separate them via the pursuit of "wedge strategies."⁵

THREE RIVAL THEORIES OF WARTIME ALLIANCE COHESION

The few scholarly works that have addressed the subject of wartime alliance cohesion can be categorized into contending neorealist and liberal theories.

Neorealism

Neorealist theory attributes variations in the degree of allied unity to variations in international systemic distributions of power and levels of threat. In a 2003 article and follow-on 2004 book, Patricia Weitsman advances a

² Nora Bensehel, "International Alliances and Military Effectiveness: Fighting Alongside Allies and Partners," in *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness*, ed. Risa A. Brooks and Elizabeth A. Stanley (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 187.

³ Weitsman similarly establishes three operational indicators of cohesion: (1) the capacity of the alliance partners to coordinate their war-fighting strategy, (2) the capacity of the partners to agree on war aims, and (3) the ability of the partners to prevent defection prior to the end of hostilities. Patricia Weitsman, "Alliance Cohesion and Coalition Warfare: The Central Powers and the Triple Entente," *Security Studies* 12, no. 3 (Spring 2003): 85. Although my first two indicators are similar to Weitsman's, I drop her third indicator on account that it is redundant with the second.

⁴ Ole R. Holsti, Terrance Hopmann, and John D. Sullivan, *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies* (New York: Wiley, 1973), 22; Ajin Choi, "Democratic Synergy and Victory in War, 1816–1992," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (September 2004): 665.

⁵ Glenn Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (July 1984): 461–95; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 157–62; Timothy W. Crawford, "Preventing Enemy Coalitions: How Wedge Strategies Shape Power Politics," *International Security* 35, no. 4 (Spring 2011): 155–89.

cluster of four complementary neorealist hypotheses. First, if an alliance is experiencing military defeat (i.e., the external threat to the alliance is high), then cohesion will rise, but if it is experiencing victory (i.e., the external threat to the alliance is low), then cohesion will diminish.⁶ Second, a symmetrical power distribution within an alliance will increase cohesion, but an asymmetrical distribution will reduce cohesion. Asymmetrical alliances will be less cohesive because either the disproportionately weak members will free ride on the efforts of the strong members or the strong members will resent bearing the brunt of the war effort on behalf of the weak members, or both.⁷ Third, if the partners agree on which adversary state constitutes the most pressing source of external threat, then cohesion will rise, but if they disagree, then cohesion will diminish.⁸ Fourth, if the level of external threat to the alliance eclipses the level of internal threat posed by the allies to one another, then cohesion will rise, but if the level of internal threat eclipses the level of external threat, then cohesion will diminish.⁹

Liberalism

Liberal theory attributes variations in cohesion to the domestic regime type of individual alliance members. The most prolific exponent of this theory, Ajin Choi, has presented both statistical and case study evidence on behalf of the claim that democracies are significantly more likely to win their wars than autocracies because of their exclusive proclivity toward establishing highly cohesive wartime relations with allies.¹⁰ Specifically, Choi identifies two causal mechanisms that explain the differing alliance behavior of democracies and autocracies. First, democracies will have more stable policy preferences than dictatorships because democracies exhibit multiple “veto players” (i.e., domestic actors whose support is necessary to effect major policy shifts). This means that democracies will be less capable than autocracies of easily abrogating previously ratified alliance commitments. Second, democracies alone are characterized by domestic political transparency; this permits allies to ascertain their preferences and intentions.¹¹

⁶ Weitsman, “Alliance Cohesion,” 84. Weitsman’s proposition that a growing likelihood of military defeat leads to elevated cohesion implicitly presumes that defeat entails grave national security implications for the members of a given alliance.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 84–85.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁹ Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*, 26–27.

¹⁰ Choi, “Democratic Synergy and Victory in War,” 666; Ajin Choi, “The Power of Democratic Cooperation,” in *Do Democracies Win Their Wars?* ed. Michael E. Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 139–40; Ajin Choi, “To Fear the Enemy or Allies? Military Operations Among the Grand Allies and Their Lessons for the ROK-US Alliance,” *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 20, no. 3 (September 2008): 247–61.

¹¹ Choi, “The Power of Democratic Cooperation,” 140. In a subsequent article, Choi presents statistical evidence in support of the thesis that democracies will be less likely than autocracies to abandon their

Alternatively, Ulrich Pilster presents statistical data in support of the claim that democracies tend to be more valuable wartime allies than autocracies due to the distinct patterns of civil-military relations in democracies and autocracies.¹² According to Pilster, democracies are far less susceptible than autocracies to military coups because democracies alone exhibit “a publicly accepted formula for power transfers and political change and . . . strong civil societies.”¹³ Consequently, democratic regimes during war will typically adopt delegative command and control systems in which military officers are granted considerable decision-making autonomy to optimally exploit shifting battlefield conditions. By contrast, autocratic regimes will favor assertive command systems that tightly restrict the discretion of officers, thereby hindering their capacity to respond optimally to the uncertainties of combat.¹⁴ Such systems, as catalogued by Stephen Biddle, typically exhibit one or more of the following tactics: frequent rotation of commanders and purges of the officer corps, suppression of horizontal communications within the military, divided lines of command, isolation from foreign sources of expertise or training, exploitation of ethnic divisions in officer selection or unit organization, surveillance of military personnel, promotion based on political loyalty rather than military ability, or execution of suspected dissident officers.¹⁵

Pilster notes that the uncertainties and unanticipated developments associated with combat will be compounded in coalition warfare, as national military organizations “vary in terms of their doctrine, technology, and their operational readiness and training.”¹⁶ The delegative command systems associated with democracies enable militaries to cope better with these uncertainties and promote elevated alliance cohesion, whereas the assertive command systems associated with autocracies will undermine the ability of militaries to cope with the uncertainties, thereby detracting from cohesion.¹⁷

Neither Choi nor Pilster consider an additional explanation for the differing proclivities of autocracies and democracies to pursue wartime cohesion, namely, the discrete risks posed to autocratic and democratic regimes of

alliance partners during war. Ajin Choi, “Fighting to the Finish: Democracy and Commitment in Coalition War,” *Security Studies* 21, no. 4 (2012): 624–53. The neoclassical realist theory of cohesion advanced below contends that although democracies will be less likely than autocracies to defect from their alliances when international systemic conditions do not favor cohesion, they will nevertheless constrain cohesion with their partners as much as possible.

¹² Ulrich Pilster, “Are Democracies the Better Allies? The Impact of Regime Type on Military Coalition Operations,” *International Interactions* 37, no. 1 (January-March, 2011): 55–85.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 58–60; Ulrich Pilster and Tobias Bohmelt, “Do Democracies Engage Less in Coup-Proofing? On the Relationship between Regime Type and Civil-Military Relations,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 4 (October 2012): 335–71.

¹⁵ Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 50.

¹⁶ Pilster, “Are Democracies the Better Allies?” 60.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 61.

open information flows in their polities. Democratic governments are constitutionally obliged to provide extensive civil rights to their citizens and to secure and retain political power by successfully contesting competitive national elections. As a result, they lack the capacity and motivation to tightly constrain the flow of domestic information and will generally permit the cultivation of extensive contacts and communications among their citizens, as well as between their citizens and those of allied countries. By contrast, autocrats are not meaningfully subject to constitutionally mandated limits on their behavior vis-à-vis their citizens and retain their grip on power primarily by repressing their populations. Consequently, autocrats possess both the capacity and motivation to tightly restrict domestic information flows and will oppose the cultivation of extensive contacts and communications on their soil among their own citizens, as well as between their citizens and those of allied countries.¹⁸

Neoclassical Realism

I advance a rival theory of wartime alliance cohesion that is derived from the neoclassical realist research program. Neoclassical realists are united by the belief that “[international] systemic pressures are filtered through intervening domestic variables to produce foreign policy behaviors.”¹⁹ Although neoclassical realists claim that the international system sets the broad parameters within which states pursue their foreign policy interests, domestic political variables frequently render the impact of systemic variables on foreign policy behavior “indirect and problematic.”²⁰

The neoclassical realist theory of cohesion addresses a lacuna in neorealist theory’s causal logic. As discussed above, Weitsman’s neorealist theory posits that aggregate alliance cohesion will rise if an alliance is losing a war. In advancing this proposition, however, the theory neglects the equally conceivable possibility that if an alliance is losing a war, its members could also seek to ensure their survival by bandwagoning with the winning state

¹⁸ Gordon Tullock, *Autocracy* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1987), 24; Charles Lipson, *Reliable Partners: How Democracies Made a Separate Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 87. Choi notes that “a closed political system with concentrated political power usually feels vulnerable to new information penetrating its society from the outside,” but she does not systematically incorporate this insight into her liberal theory’s casual logic. This is curious since the case study evidence she introduces in each of her articles on alliance cohesion is of the 1943 decision by the Soviet government to reject Operation Velvet, a US-British proposal to deploy bombers to the Caucasus region of the USSR. In this instance, as I discuss at greater length below, the autocratic regime spurned the initiative out of the fear that stationing of US and British military personnel on Soviet territory had the potential to be politically destabilizing. See Choi, “The Power of Democratic Cooperation,” 146–47; Choi, “Democratic Synergy and Victory in War,” 667; Choi, “To Fear the Enemy or Allies?” 249–50.

¹⁹ Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 6.

²⁰ Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics*, 51, no. 1 (October 1998), 157.

or coalition. To wit, Stephen Walt claims that although states will usually balance against rising threats, they may be more inclined to bandwagon if the outcome of a war appears certain, as states will be tempted “to defect from the losing side at an opportune moment.”²¹ To expand on this logic, when an alliance’s likelihood of defeat overshadows its likelihood of victory, members may engage in behavior that ranges along a continuum between the polar extremes of strenuously pursuing cohesion on the one hand and bandwagoning with the adversary on the other. Neoclassical realist theory explains why extreme wartime dangers will lead some states, but not others, to aggressively pursue cohesion with allies.

To begin with, neoclassical realist theory echoes neorealism in hypothesizing that if the four international systemic variables identified by neorealism favor alliance fragmentation, then all partners will proceed to minimize cohesion. This coding encompasses a wide array of actions. At best, it refers to behavior in which each of the allies remains in the alliance but adopts deviant war aims and engages in virtually no military coordination and resource sharing with the other members. At worst, it refers to outright bandwagoning with the adversary. The proposition reflects the belief shared by all realists that deep and sustained cooperation among relative gains-seeking states in the anarchic international system will be extremely rare, especially on matters related to national security.²² In such circumstances, both democracies and autocracies will be suspicious of the intentions of their allies and strive to prevent these partners from deriving asymmetrically favorable benefits from the alliance relationship.

When international systemic variables promote alliance fragmentation, the regime type(s) of the various partners to the alliance will be salient in one key respect. Although both democracies and autocracies will respond to these conditions by minimizing cohesion, autocracies will be more likely to cross the threshold of completely defecting from the alliance. In contrast to autocratic states, which lack multiple veto players and possess policymaking opacity, the multiplicity of veto players and policymaking transparency that are characteristic of democratic polities will present formidable obstacles to any attempt by a democratic regime to abrogate formal alliance commitments prior to the conclusion of the war. Those domestic attributes will not be as problematic, however, if a democratic regime pursues the less extreme course of retaining its fundamental commitment to the alliance even as it nevertheless constrains the scope and depth of its cooperation with allies. Thus, whereas autocracies will be inclined to defect even if international

²¹ Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 31. According to Walt, threat is a compound variable consisting of aggregate capabilities, geographic proximity, offensive capabilities, and aggressive intentions (*ibid.*, 22–26).

²² David A. Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

systemic conditions only slightly favor alliance fragmentation, democracies will generally be deterred from defecting unless or until those conditions adopt extreme values.

The theory departs from neorealism, however, in additionally proposing that if international systemic variables favor alliance cohesion, democratic partners will respond by maximizing cohesion with their allies, but autocratic partners will nevertheless minimize cohesion. Democracies will maximize cohesion with allied states by adopting war aims that converge with those of their partner(s), engaging in extensive military coordination with their partner(s), and imposing few, if any, restrictions on the sharing of vital national resources with their partner(s). Democracies will be both pushed and pulled toward this behavior on account of the domestic political attributes highlighted by liberal theory. They will be pushed by the twin domestic attributes of multiple veto players and policymaking transparency, which are likely to frustrate any prospective attempt to betray their allies. They will also be pulled toward cohesion by their employment of delegative command and control systems and their permissive attitude toward the cultivation of domestic contacts and communications between their own citizens and those of allied states.

In contrast, autocratic regimes will be pushed and pulled toward minimizing cohesion with allied states. They will be pushed by their adoption of assertive command systems and their proclivity to tightly control the flow of domestic information, thus rendering the prospective enhancement of cohesion with allies prohibitively dangerous to their domestic political survival. Meanwhile, autocrats will be pulled away from cohesion by their dearth of domestic veto players and opaque policymaking processes that enable them to suddenly betray their allies when the tides of war take an inauspicious turn.²³

The theory also implies that international systemic pressures favoring cohesion will initially compel democracies to maximize cohesion with all allies, but the steady refusal of autocratic partners to reciprocate those efforts will lead them to constrict increasingly the breadth and depth of their cooperation with autocratic partners over time. They will do this for two reasons. First, certain elements of cohesion, particularly military coordination, can only be realized through the joint efforts of at least two partners. If a democracy repeatedly puts forth efforts to engage in such coordination, and the autocratic ally spurns them, the former will eventually cease attempting

²³ In rare circumstances, however, autocracies can be expected to emulate democracies in maximizing cohesion when international systemic conditions strongly favor such behavior. If the character of the war being waged forecloses the capacity of a given autocratic ally to defect from an alliance or bandwagon with the adversary, then that autocracy will maximize cohesion with its partners. Examples of such exceptional situations include those in which an autocratic regime is waging a counterinsurgency war on its own soil in league with allied states or in which an interstate war is being waged exclusively on the autocracy's soil while the territories of the autocracy's allies are not even remotely endangered.

to coordinate with the latter. Second, the anarchic character of the international system should lead all states to become increasingly reluctant to share strategically vital private information and resources indefinitely with other states in the absence of roughly symmetrical reciprocation by the recipients. Consequently, the level of aggregate cohesion in purely democratic dyads should exceed that achieved in mixed dyads (comprised of a democracy and an autocracy), and this disparity will grow over time, assuming that international systemic conditions continue promoting cohesion.

Is This Really a “Realist” Theory?

At first glance, the neoclassical realist proposition that democracies but not autocracies will maximize intra-alliance cooperation in response to international systemic imperatives appears discordant with much realist thinking about foreign policy. Both classical and neoclassical realists have shared in the conviction that democracies are fundamentally disadvantaged in their conduct of foreign policy relative to autocracies because democratic regimes possess less concentrated foreign policymaking power than autocratic regimes and are therefore less capable of optimally responding to foreign threats.²⁴ Contrary to appearances, however, the theory firmly belongs in the realist camp for at least three reasons. First, it conforms to the structure of all other neoclassical realist theories that classify international systemic variables as independent variables and domestic political variables as intervening variables. Second, it is consistent with a cornerstone of realist thought, namely, that democracies will fail to form balances of power expeditiously against emergent aggressors because they lack policy flexibility and responsiveness.²⁵ Although this lack of agility will hinder an ability to commit to alliances in the first place, it will enhance democracies' willingness to double down on previously ratified alliance commitments by increasing cohesion under adverse wartime conditions. Meanwhile, the same agility that enables autocracies to make and break alliances on a whim also renders them loath to enhance cohesion when the specter of military defeat looms.²⁶ Third, the theory comports with the belief shared universally by

²⁴ See, for example, Hans J. Morgenthau, *Dilemmas of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958); Walter Lippmann, *Essays in the Public Philosophy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1955); Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Structure of Nations and Empires* (New York: Scribner, 1959); George F. Kennan, *The Cloud of Danger* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977); Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); Norrin M. Ripsman, *Peacemaking by Democracies: The Effect of State Autonomy on the Post-World War Settlements* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002); Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, "State Building for Future Wars: Neoclassical Realism and the Resource-Extractive State," *Security Studies* 15, no. 3 (July-September 2006): 464–95.

²⁵ See n. 24.

²⁶ Choi, "The Power of Democratic Cooperation," 139; Kurt Gaubatz, "Democratic States and Commitment in International Relations," *International Organization* 50, no. 1 (Winter 1996): 109–39.

realists that “[i]n contrast to liberals, realists are pessimists when it comes to international politics,” as it advances an even more pessimistic prediction than neorealism regarding the prospects for wartime cooperation.²⁷ Whereas neorealism predicts that only alliances subjected to four restrictive international systemic conditions will become highly cohesive, neoclassical realism even more dourly hypothesizes that of all the allies subjected to those conditions, only the subset of those states that are democratic will actually proceed to maximize cohesion.²⁸

BRITISH, SOVIET, AND US DECISION MAKING DURING THE GRAND ALLIANCE, 1942–1945

In this section, I test the rival theories against the record of wartime alliance decision making by the three charter members—the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union—of the “Grand Alliance” during World War II.²⁹ The Grand Alliance was formally inaugurated in Washington on 1 January 1942, with the signing of the Declaration By [the] United Nations by the United States, Britain, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and twenty-three small powers.³⁰ It persevered through the conclusion of the war when Japan formally surrendered to the Allies on 2 September 1945.³¹

Neorealist Predictions

In order to test neorealism directly against the two competing theories of wartime cohesion, neorealism’s dependent variable must be adjusted so that it is commensurate with that shared by the liberal and neoclassical realist theories.³² Whereas neorealism’s dependent variable is the aggregate level of

²⁷ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 17.

²⁸ A fourth potential objection to the claim that the neoclassical realist theory proposed here lies outside the ambit of realism is that high cohesion is not always beneficial or advantageous. Weitsman’s research on World War I provides support for her proposition that as a given alliance’s level of cohesion rises, the demands allies issue to their adversary will become more extreme and uncompromising. Weitsman, “Alliance Cohesion,” 81.

²⁹ The term “Grand Alliance” was coined by British prime minister Winston Churchill. Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 3, *The Grand Alliance* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950).

³⁰ The United Nations would eventually grow to include forty-five members. Mark A. Stoler, *Allies in War: Britain and America Against the Axis Powers 1940–1945* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2005), 38.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 128, 201, 210.

³² According to three leading neoclassical realist scholars, neorealist and neoclassical realist theories cannot be tested against one another because neorealism exclusively seeks to explain international political behavior, and neoclassical realism exclusively seeks to explain the foreign policy behavior of individual states. Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, Steven E. Lobell, and Norrin M. Ripsman, “Introduction: Neoclassical Realism, The State, and Foreign Policy,” in *Neoclassical Realism, The State, and Foreign Policy*, ed. Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 19–21. This differentiation hinges on the judgment of Kenneth Waltz that neorealist theories cannot

wartime cohesion achieved by a given alliance (i.e., an international political outcome), the liberal and neoclassical realist theories' dependent variable is a given state's cohesion-related behavior toward alliance partners (i.e., foreign policy behavior).³³ Although neorealism leaves implicit the precise causal links between its posited independent variables at the international system level, the particular foreign policy decisions made by individual alliance members, and the aggregate outcome of their decisions, those links can be straightforwardly inferred. If international systemic conditions favor alliance cohesion, then the individual allies will attempt to maximize cohesion with one another, and aggregate cohesion will subsequently be high. Conversely, if systemic conditions favor alliance fragmentation, then individual members will minimize cohesion, and aggregate cohesion will subsequently be low.³⁴

Neorealist theory predicts that all three allies should have maximized cohesion from January 1942 to June 1944 (the period I will refer to as the first temporal phase of the Grand Alliance), when international systemic conditions broadly favored cohesion, but should have subsequently begun minimizing cohesion between July 1944 and September 1945 (the period I will refer to as the second temporal phase of the Grand Alliance), when those same conditions began favoring fragmentation. First, at the outset of the first temporal phase, the Allies were losing the war badly to the Axis, but by the outset of the second phase, the Allies had begun to win the war. In early 1942 Germany controlled all of continental Europe west of Moscow and Leningrad, as well as Libya and much of Egypt, while the German Navy's U-Boat campaign against British and us merchant shipping in the Atlantic reached its wartime apogee. Meanwhile, in the Pacific theater, Japan had added French Indochina, British Malaya, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Guam, Wake Island, the Philippines, Burma, and the Dutch East Indies to its already expansive prewar empire consisting of Korea, Manchuria, and parts of China.³⁵ Owing to a series of operational victories in both theaters, however, the Grand Alliance had managed not only to halt the Axis advance

make point predictions about the foreign policy behavior of states, which has been contested by several scholars. Kenneth N. Waltz, "International Politics is Not Foreign Policy," *Security Studies* 6, no. 1 (Fall 1996): 54–57; Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*; Colin Elman, "Horses for Courses: Why Not Neorealist Theories of Foreign Policy?" *Security Studies* 6, no. 1 (Fall 1996): 7–53.

³³ Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*, 26–27. The liberal hypotheses advanced by Choi and Pilster are somewhat ambiguous on this score. The dependent variable in their statistical regressions is the outcome of interstate wars (i.e., international political outcomes), but their general argument holds that democratic states are more cooperative allies than autocratic ones during wartime (i.e., foreign policy behavior). Choi, "The Power of Democratic Cooperation," 146–49, 153; Pilster, "Are Democracies the Better Allies?" 72–74.

³⁴ It is conceivable, though, that the partners to an alliance could seek to maximize cohesion but may be precluded from actually achieving higher aggregate alliance cohesion due to exogenous obstacles. Conversely, however, aggregate cohesion cannot possibly rise if the alliance members individually eschew cohesion.

³⁵ Evan Mawdsley, *World War II: A New History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 52–73, 96–171, 199–213, 261, 286–97.

by late 1943, but also to begin rolling it back at the margins.³⁶ The war reached a strategic turning point in June 1944 when the United States and Britain successfully launched Operation Overlord, the massive amphibious invasion of northern France, while the Soviets launched Operation Bagration, a maneuver that by August had brought the Red Army to the doorstep of East Prussia and the east bank of the Vistula River in Poland.³⁷

Following the consolidation of the Anglo-US beachhead in Normandy, by July 1944 the coalition actually began to win the war by liberating strategically vital Axis-held territories. The Allies proceeded to overrun Germany's European empire and then Germany itself, culminating in the Nazi regime's formal surrender on 7 May 1945.³⁸ In Asia, Allied forces liberated the Marshall Islands, Saipan, Guam, Tinian in the Marianas, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and Burma. The militarist regime in Tokyo ultimately surrendered on 2 September 1945, after the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Soviets Union entered the war against Japan.³⁹

Second, during the alliance's initial temporal phase, the distribution of war-winning power was relatively evenly divided among the three allies, whereas during the latter phase, the distribution of power became increasingly lopsided, especially between the United States and Britain. To obtain a rough index of the relative power shares of the three allies, I surveyed each state's percentage of the aggregate material capabilities possessed by all three allies for each year of the war. This data, shown in Table 1, suggests that the power distribution was highly asymmetric for the entirety of the alliance's existence, with the US power share consistently totaling approximately three times those of the Soviet Union and England.

These aggregate figures are partially misleading, though, insofar as they obscure heavy US reliance on the front-line military forces fielded by Britain and the Soviet Union during the initial temporal phase. From January 1942 to January 1944, more British divisions than US ones were in direct contact with enemy forces, and the USSR's front-line contribution dwarfed those of the United States and Britain combined. During the second phase, America's reliance on the fighting forces of the other allies diminished considerably. The number of US divisions in contact with the Axis began to eclipse that

³⁶ The most crucial of these Allied victories took place at Stalingrad in February. Although this Soviet triumph heralded a shift in momentum from the Axis to the Allies, I contend that the Allies did not begin to actually win the war until they began liberating strategically vital enemy territories, and this did not occur until the summer of 1944. Anglo-US forces began liberating Axis-held territory in 1943, owing to a series of operational victories in North Africa, Sicily, and southern Italy, yet these triumphs were of relatively minor strategic significance. They merely resulted in the seizure of the North African colonies held by the pro-German Vichy regime in France and eventually knocked the Axis junior partner, Italy, out of the war. Stoler, *Allies in War*, 72–91, 117–70.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 117–57; Mawdsley, *World War II*, 381–86.

³⁸ Stoler, *Allies in War*, 190–201.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 177–83, 203–12; Mawdsley, *World War II*, 408–37.

TABLE 1 Aggregate Material Power Shares of Great Britain, The Soviet Union, and The United States, 1942–1945

| Alliance Partner | Power Share 1942 | Power Share 1943 | Power Share 1944 | Power Share 1945 |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Great Britain | 19% | 16% | 16% | 15% |
| Soviet Union | 23% | 19% | 18% | 20% |
| United States | 58% | 64% | 66% | 65% |

NOTE: The power share reflects each state's proportion of total power capabilities among the three allies in terms of military expenditure, military personnel, energy consumption, iron and steel production, urban population, and total population. See National Material Capabilities Data, 1816–1985, ICPSR, 9903, J. David Singer and Melvin Small, principal investigators. This index is virtually identical to that used by Weitsman in her study of alliance cohesion during World War I. Weitsman, "Alliance Cohesion," 97, 109.

of Britain, and although the Soviet front-line contribution to the war against Germany continued to exceed that of the combined Anglo-US forces in Europe by a factor of three, the salience of this gap diminished as the United States turned its attention from a nearly dismembered Germany to a still intact Japan.⁴⁰ In the Pacific, the United States was shouldering the heaviest burden of the ongoing air, land, and naval operations against Japan, while the Soviets remained neutral toward Tokyo until 9 August 1945. Thus, during the latter phase of the war, either the United States should have become increasingly concerned about British and, later, Soviet free-riding, or the British and then the Soviets should have become increasingly inclined to free-ride on US efforts, or both.⁴¹

Third, during the initial temporal phase, the partners agreed on the primary source of external threat, but during the second phase, this consensus dissolved. From early 1942 through mid-1944 all three partners believed that Germany, rather than Japan, was the most threatening Axis power. This was most obviously the case for the Soviet Union, as it had been subjected to the "largest invasion in history" at the hands of Germany but remained at peace with Japan until the war's final weeks.⁴² British leaders were consistently preoccupied with the German threat throughout the conflict: Germany was closer in proximity to the British homeland, and it possessed far greater military power than Japan.⁴³ Similarly, although America's entry into the

⁴⁰ Winston S. Churchill, *Memoirs of the Second World War*, abr. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959), 233; William K. Hancock and Margaret M. Gowling, *British War Economy* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1949), 367; Robert Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership: Britain and America, 1944–1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 138.

⁴¹ This pressure in favor of alliance fragmentation should have further intensified after the successful US nuclear test in New Mexico in mid-July 1945 that significantly reduced the anticipated US dependence on the Red Army in the war against Japan. Stoler, *Allies in War*, 207–10.

⁴² On the German invasion of Russia, see *ibid.*, 24. On Russia's relationship with Japan, see *ibid.*, 210; William Hardy McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia: Their Cooperation and Conflict 1941–1946* (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1970), 67–68.

⁴³ Peter Lowe, "The War against Japan and Allied Relations," in *The Rise and Fall of the Grand Alliance, 1941–45*, ed. Ann Lane and Howard Temperley (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), 190.

war was precipitated by Japan's surprise attack at Pearl Harbor, Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration consistently hewed to a "Germany-first" strategy on the premise that Germany was the strongest and most dangerous Axis power.⁴⁴

As the Allies advanced toward Germany, the United States alone became increasingly preoccupied with the need to reorient the war effort toward Japan. During the final two years of the war, the United States "pursued [its] campaigns in the Pacific vigorously against strong Japanese resistance"⁴⁵ and even prepared for an eventual full-scale invasion of the Japanese home islands.⁴⁶ By contrast, England's lack of commitment to the war against Japan was evidenced by its relatively low troop contribution to the Pacific theater and by Winston Churchill's proposal to US president Harry Truman after Germany's defeat that the Allies drop their demand for Japan's unconditional surrender.⁴⁷ The Soviet Union's similar reluctance to fight Japan became clear when in late 1943 Joseph Stalin declared that the USSR would not enter the Pacific war until Germany surrendered and then subsequently demanded that he would only declare war on Japan in return for extensive territorial concessions from China.⁴⁸

Fourth, during the initial temporal phase of the Grand Alliance, the external threat posed by the Axis powers exceeded the internal threats posed by the Allies to one another, but during the second phase this gap was reversed. The relatively low level of threat that generally characterized the US-British alliance dyad was the product of the two states' shared liberal ideology, democratic political system, common language, and, perhaps most importantly, their complementary geopolitical positions as maritime powers committed to maintaining the balance of power in Europe and Asia.⁴⁹ As the end of the war neared, however, significant prewar disputes between the two partners on such issues as colonialism and free trade reemerged.⁵⁰

The pre-alliance relationship between the United States and Britain, on the one hand, and the USSR, on the other, was characterized by a considerably greater degree of reciprocal threat that dramatically escalated once the Allies began to win the war. The mutual perception of hostile intentions prior to the war stemmed from the deep-seated ideological rivalry between the world's two foremost exponents of capitalist democracy and the sole exponent of communist autocracy.⁵¹ During the first temporal phase of the

⁴⁴ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 8.

⁴⁵ Lowe, "The War against Japan and Allied Relations," 197.

⁴⁶ Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millet, *A War to be Won: Fighting the Second World War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 522–23.

⁴⁷ Lowe, "The War against Japan and Allied Relations," 196–97.

⁴⁸ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 352, 546.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵⁰ Stoler, *Allies in War*, 183–84; Gerhard L. Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 725–26.

⁵¹ Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: Norton, 1995), 251.

alliance, however, the external threat to all three partners eclipsed the internal threats, as the Axis powers controlled much of Europe, North Africa, and East Asia. By the second phase, the level of intra-alliance threat increased considerably as the external threat posed to all three allies by the Axis collapsed, and millions of Anglo-US and Soviet troops ominously converged in Germany.⁵²

Liberal Predictions

Liberal theory predicts that the regime types of the three partner states should have determined their cohesion for the duration of the Grand Alliance. Throughout both phases, the democratic United States and Britain should have consistently maximized cohesion, and the autocratic USSR should have minimized it.⁵³

Neoclassical Realist Predictions

Neoclassical realist theory predicts that the behavior of the three allies should have been a function of both international systemic conditions and the regime type of the individual partners. During the first phase of the alliance, when international systemic variables favored cohesion, the two democratic allies, the United States and Britain, should have maximized cohesion. During the second phase, when international systemic variables began favoring alliance fragmentation, they should have begun to minimize cohesion. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union should have consistently minimized cohesion during both temporal phases, as it was an autocracy. For a summary of the

⁵² Mawdsley, *World War II*, 377.

⁵³ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 26–30, 56–61, 79–89; Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, 293–94. A possible objection to my classification of Stalin's USSR as a generic autocracy holds that the Stalin regime was *sui generis* due to the Soviet leader's ideological dispositions and extreme paranoia. I counter this objection with the following two points. First, all autocratic leaders are confronted by what Ronald Wintrobe has referred to as the "dictator's dilemma": the very repressive power that enables the dictator to rule arbitrarily also cows both the masses and elites into concealing their opposition to the dictator, which in turn breeds fear and paranoia on the part of the dictator. Ronald Wintrobe, *The Political Economy of Dictatorship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 20–42. Since all autocrats can be expected to be justifiably paranoid to one degree or another, Stalin merely represents an extreme instance of a general tendency, thereby rendering this a "most likely" case of autocratic preoccupation with domestic survival at the expense of alliance cohesion. Since the neoclassical realist theory of alliance cohesion is a novel one that I am subjecting to its inaugural empirical test, the use of a most likely case is justified. For a discussion of most likely cases, see Harry Eckstein, "Case Studies in Political Science," in *Handbook of Political Science*, vol. 7, ed. Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975), 113–20. Second, scholars have noted that whereas Stalin's behavior during the 1930s can be described as extraordinarily paranoid and highly ideological in content, the Soviet dictator curbed both of these tendencies following Germany's invasion of Russia in June 1941. See, for example, Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939–1953* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 1–29; Robert Service, *Stalin: A Biography* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 439–58.

TABLE 2 Summary of Neorealist, Liberal, and Neoclassical Realist Hypotheses on Wartime Alliance Cohesion and Predictions Regarding the Grand Alliance

| Theory | General hypotheses regarding alliance cohesion behavior | Predictions regarding cohesion behavior of the US, Britain, and USSR during the first phase of the Grand Alliance (January 1942-June 1944) | Predictions regarding cohesion behavior of the US, Britain, and USSR during the second phase of the Grand Alliance (July 1944-September 1945) |
|----------------------|---|--|---|
| Neorealism | (1) If international systemic variables favor cohesion, then all allies will maximize cohesion (2) If international systemic variables favor fragmentation, then all allies will minimize cohesion | US: maximize cohesion Britain: maximize cohesion USSR: maximize cohesion | US: minimize cohesion Britain: minimize cohesion USSR: minimize cohesion |
| Liberalism | (1) If an alliance partner is democratic, then it will always maximize cohesion (2) If an alliance partner is autocratic, then it will always minimize cohesion | US: maximize cohesion Britain: maximize cohesion USSR: minimize cohesion | US: maximize cohesion Britain: maximize cohesion USSR: minimize cohesion |
| Neoclassical realism | (1) If international systemic variables favor cohesion, then democratic alliance partners will maximize cohesion and autocratic partners will minimize cohesion (2) If international systemic variables favor fragmentation, both democratic and autocratic alliance partners will minimize cohesion | US: maximize cohesion Britain: maximize cohesion USSR: minimize cohesion | US: minimize cohesion Britain: minimize cohesion USSR: minimize cohesion |

neoclassical realist hypothesis, along with those of the neorealist and liberal theories, see Table 2.

The Grand Alliance represents a crucial testing ground not merely because it is arguably the most consequential wartime alliance in modern history, but also because each theory of cohesion advances a distinct set of

predictions as to the expected behavior of the three core members during the partnership's two temporal phases. On this basis, I am able to gauge roughly the relative predictive power of all three theories through straightforward congruence testing.⁵⁴ Covariation is also discernible as the six separate cases manifest variation in the causal and dependent variables for all three theories.

The empirical analysis below reveals that neoclassical realist theory successfully predicts the outcome of all six cases. By comparison, neorealism and liberalism predict a less impressive five of six cases and four of six cases, respectively. Specifically, neoclassical realist theory accounts for three significant empirical anomalies left behind by its competitors. It accounts for the neorealist anomaly that the USSR actually spurned cohesion during the first phase of the alliance, when international systemic conditions uniformly favored cohesion. It also resolves the two liberal anomalies that the United States and Britain began to retract cohesion during the alliance's second phase, even though both states were democracies. The section also includes process-tracing evidence in support of the discrete causal arguments advanced by neoclassical realist theory.⁵⁵

THE UNITED STATES' ALLIANCE DECISION MAKING

Phase I: January 1942-June 1944

During the first temporal phase of the alliance, the United States consistently maximized cohesion with both Britain and the USSR. In terms of war aims, the United States sponsored the United Nations Declaration, committing all three allies to the pursuit of "complete victory over their enemies," the pursuit of human rights and justice both at home and abroad, and the broad liberal values enshrined in the August 1941 Atlantic Charter signed by Roosevelt and Churchill.⁵⁶ The Atlantic Charter barred the signatories from pursuing territorial aggrandizement or manipulating the territory of other states without permission; it also committed the states to the pursuit of national self-determination and self-government, equal access to trade and raw materials, future economic collaboration, freedom from want and fear, freedom of the seas, disarmament of the aggressor states, and the establishment of a new League of Nations.⁵⁷

The Roosevelt administration also strove to enhance military coordination with England and the USSR. With respect to Britain, the White House

⁵⁴ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 181–204.

⁵⁵ On process tracing, see *ibid.*, 205–32.

⁵⁶ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 100–101.

⁵⁷ Stoler, *Allies in War*, 26–27.

acquiesced to the creation of the Combined Anglo-American Chiefs of Staff (ccs), a standing committee consisting of the most senior staff officers of both countries.⁵⁸ The ccs was tasked with advising Roosevelt and Churchill on all strategic matters and with supervising the execution of the strategy agreed upon by the two leaders, who were in frequent contact with one another throughout the war.⁵⁹ To conduct the weekly meetings of the ccs, Churchill dispatched to Washington a Joint Staff Mission (JSM) led by the three deputies of the British Chiefs of Staff and chaired by Field Marshal Sir John Dill.⁶⁰ The White House also agreed to the creation of a series of supplementary joint boards and committees to facilitate the bilateral sharing of intelligence and technical information, allocation of munitions production, and coordination of the transfer and shipping of food and raw materials.⁶¹ At the operational level, Roosevelt agreed to institute unity of command in most of the combat theaters in which US and British forces were engaged.⁶² Meanwhile, with regard to the Soviet Union, President Roosevelt personally, though fruitlessly, beseeched Stalin to agree to the establishment of “a more permanent organization to plan our [military] efforts.”⁶³ Further, as will be discussed in great detail below, in early 1944 Roosevelt proposed Operation Frantic, a plan that provided for the establishment of air bases in the USSR that would permit US warplanes based in Britain to engage in shuttle-bombing missions against Germany.

Finally, during this phase, the United States engaged in an enormous amount of resource sharing with both allies. Between 1942 and 1944, under the aegis of the Lend-Lease program inaugurated in March 1941, annual military aid to Britain dramatically increased from US\$4.757 billion to US\$10.706 billion.⁶⁴ The United States also engaged in intense intelligence sharing with Britain, as both countries agreed to share sensitive war-related technologies, intercepted Axis signals, photoreconnaissance intelligence, and nuclear research.⁶⁵ Roosevelt similarly enjoined the provision of Lend-Lease aid to the USSR, even according Soviet aid shipments the highest possible priority and

⁵⁸ Ibid., 43–44.

⁵⁹ J.M.A. Gwyer and J.R.M. Butler, *Grand Strategy, Volume III: June 1941–August 1942* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1964), 382–85.

⁶⁰ Stoler, *Allies in War*, 43.

⁶¹ Ibid., 47.

⁶² Ibid., 72–212.

⁶³ Roosevelt to Stalin, cable, 14 December 1941, in *My Dear Mr. Stalin: The Complete Correspondence Between Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph V. Stalin*, ed. Susan Butler (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 56; Warren F. Kimball, *Forged in War: Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Second World War* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1997), 179, 182.

⁶⁴ Richard Overy, “Co-operation: Trade, Aid, and Technology,” in *Allies At War: The Soviet, American and British Experience 1939–1945*, ed. David Reynolds, Warren F. Kimball, and A.O. Chubarian (New York: Palgrave, 1994), 209–11.

⁶⁵ Stoler, *Allies in War*, 48–49; Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, 219–20; Christopher Andrew, *For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1995), 137.

freeing Moscow from the obligation imposed on all other Lend-Lease beneficiaries to divulge detailed economic data to Washington.⁶⁶ As a result, the White House succeeded in delivering the equivalent of US\$7.88 billion in military supplies to Russia between 1942 and 1944 in the face of enormous logistical and other obstacles.⁶⁷ The administration also engaged in some intelligence-sharing with the Kremlin, and, as discussed in greater detail below, Roosevelt and Churchill offered to deploy us and British bombers to the Caucasus.⁶⁸

Since it was a democracy, the United States did not have serious complications about cultivating extensive contacts and communications between us and allied soldiers and civilians in the face of international systemic conditions favoring cohesion. The task of wartime military coordination was facilitated by the Roosevelt administration's delegative command structure of civil-military relations. Throughout the war, the president consistently granted his commanders a wide berth on military matters, almost never interceding in their deliberations or reversing their decisions.⁶⁹ This latitude enabled the United States and Britain to establish the ccs, a military body built on a precedent established at the inaugural summit meeting between Roosevelt and Churchill at Placentia Bay in August 1941. As recounted by historian Warren Kimball, "The two leaders insisted that their military chiefs 'work it out' and not bring every little dispute to the top, thereby creating an atmosphere of teamwork that lasted throughout the war. British and American staffs could and did argue and disagree, but only broad issues of grand strategy were expected to require decisions by Churchill and/or Roosevelt."⁷⁰

The subsequent advent of the ccs in early 1942 formalized Roosevelt's and Churchill's earlier insistence "that they should not act as umpires between the quarrelling generals and admirals."⁷¹ Roosevelt's attitude toward the establishment of close military contacts with England was also reflected in a cautionary letter he sent in 1942 to the chief of naval operations, Admiral Earnest King, who was the most notoriously Anglophobic of the president's senior military advisors.⁷² In the correspondence, Roosevelt firmly rebuked

⁶⁶ George C. Herring, Jr., *Aid to Russia 1941–1946: Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 39, 279.

⁶⁷ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 232, 444.

⁶⁸ Christopher Andrew, "Anglo-American-Soviet Intelligence Relations," in *The Rise and Fall of the Grand Alliance*, 123.

⁶⁹ According to Robert Sherwood, Roosevelt overruled the Joint Chiefs of Staff only once over the course of the entire war. Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), 446.

⁷⁰ Kimball, *Forged in War*, 99.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁷² Stoler, *Allies in War*, 51, 109, 169–70, 188–89.

King, reminding the recalcitrant admiral, "The British are our partners, hence we must have the fullest and frankest collaboration with them."⁷³

In addition, since the administration's political survival did not hinge on the mitigation of domestic contacts and communications, the White House was willing to cultivate such contacts and communications for the purpose of enhancing military coordination and resource sharing with its alliance partners. The operation of the various joint decision-making agencies inaugurated by the United States and Britain necessitated the dispatch of over nine thousand British officials to Washington, and the success of the Lend-Lease program for the USSR hinged on the administration's granting permission for fifteen thousand Soviet officials and civilian experts to freely access US factories and military facilities.⁷⁴

Phase II: July 1944-September 1945

During the second phase of the alliance, Washington began to disengage from both its allies, and particularly from England, whose relative contribution to the war effort was rapidly deteriorating. In the domain of war aims, the United States increasingly diverged from both allies on account of its dogged pursuit, above all else, of a postwar international economic order based on the principles of non-discrimination and multilateralism, as well as of a new international institution to promote global peace and security. The White House also deviated from British preferences by aggressively promoting postwar European decolonization and supporting the elevation of China to great power status and from Soviet ones by urging the installation of broadly representative governments in the liberated states of Eastern Europe.⁷⁵

Similarly divergent US behavior was also evident in the domain of military coordination. Beginning in mid-1944 America's diminished enthusiasm for joint strategic planning with Britain became evident in the declining efficacy of the CCS: CCS meetings were held less frequently, less information was exchanged at those meetings, and some of the supplemental joint committees established in early 1942 were disbanded.⁷⁶ It was also reflected in Roosevelt's peremptory 1 July order to commence preparations for the Anglo-US invasion of southern France in the face of vociferous opposition

⁷³ President Franklin D. Roosevelt to Admiral Ernest King, letter, 24 August 1942, quoted in Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain, and the War Against Japan, 1941-1945* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978), 134.

⁷⁴ Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, 250, 253.

⁷⁵ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 501-629; Stoler, *Allies in War*, 165-203.

⁷⁶ Alex Danchev, *On Specialness: Essays in Anglo-American Relations* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 27.

on the part of Churchill and his Chiefs of Staff, who had instead been urging an invasion of Yugoslavia.⁷⁷

During the war's final stages, US behavior toward Britain became even more distant and dismissive. At the February 1945 Yalta summit of the "Big Three" Allied leaders, Roosevelt directed his subordinates to keep all exchanges of information with Whitehall "to a minimum" and excluded Churchill from negotiations with Stalin to determine the territorial concessions that would be granted to the USSR in exchange for Soviet entry into the Pacific war.⁷⁸ Following Roosevelt's death in April, his successor, Harry S. Truman, countermanded Churchill's 12 May order to the British commander of Anglo-US forces in Italy to evict forcibly pro-Soviet Yugoslav partisans from the disputed Italian region of Venezia Giulia. At the final Allied summit at Potsdam in July-August 1945, Truman privately settled the intra-alliance dispute with Stalin over the composition of the Polish government and then officially recognized the Polish government without even consulting Churchill. At Potsdam, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff also denied British requests both to broaden CCS jurisdiction to encompass the Pacific theater and perpetuate the CCS into the postwar era. The Joint Chiefs of Staff also barred its British counterpart from participating in the limited information-sharing arrangement that it had established with the Soviets relating to operations against Japan.⁷⁹

The record of US resource sharing during this period also reflects Washington's rising aversion to cohesion. Whereas US Lend-Lease aid had been unconditionally afforded to both allies during the first temporal phase, this ceased to be the case during the second phase. In the fall of 1944 President Roosevelt admonished British leaders that they would not receive Lend-Lease aid following the impending defeat of Germany if they continued negotiating a bilateral trade treaty with the Argentine regime of Edelmiro Farrell (which the Roosevelt administration suspected of pro-Nazi sympathies) and if they refused to accept US proposals for a postwar civil aviation regime.⁸⁰ Then, immediately following Germany's surrender, President Truman directed the US Army to repossess most of the Lend-Lease aid that had already been scheduled to be transferred to British forces in Europe. In response to Truman's subsequent announcement on 5 July 1945 that all future Lend-Lease aid would be restricted to those items that were to be "used in the war against

⁷⁷ Andrew Roberts, *Masters and Commanders: How Four Titans Won the War in the West, 1941–1945* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008), 476–508.

⁷⁸ Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*, 115, 124. After Yalta, Roosevelt simply ignored Churchill's protests in response to US negotiations with Ireland regarding a bilateral civil aviation pact (*ibid.*, 129).

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 139–42, 159–63, 169–73.

⁸⁰ President Roosevelt to the British Prime Minister (Churchill), telegram, 18 November 1944, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944, Vol. 7: The American Republics* (Washington, DC: US GPO, 1967), 365; President Roosevelt to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant), telegram, 24 November 1944, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944, Vol. 2: General: Economic and Social Matters* (Washington, DC: US GPO, 1969), 589.

Japan,” the War Department forbade the provision of any supplies for British occupation troops in Europe.⁸¹ On 21 August, Truman struck a final blow to wartime cohesion with England by abruptly terminating the Lend-Lease program, completely flabbergasting British officials, who expected “an orderly tapering off of aid extended over a relatively lengthy period.”⁸²

Since the United States remained highly dependent on the Red Army’s ongoing operations against Germany on the Eastern Front throughout 1944, Washington did not begin to diverge from its long-standing policy of unconditional aid to Russia until early the next year. In January 1945, US officials adopted a “reserved and extremely cautious position” on Stalin’s request for US\$6 billion in postwar economic assistance.⁸³ More dramatically, merely three days after Germany’s surrender, Truman ordered all Lend-Lease supplies for the USSR that were not necessary for Soviet operations in Asia to be “cut off immediately,”⁸⁴ and stipulated that future supply programs would only be approved if Moscow provided “reasonably adequate information regarding [their] essentiality.”⁸⁵ Two months later, the State Department abandoned its previous passivity in response to the objectionable Soviet practice of retransferring Lend-Lease supplies to third countries and threatened that Moscow would forfeit its access to any items it retransferred in the future.⁸⁶ Finally, on 17 August, Truman announced the immediate cessation of all US aid shipments to Russia, predating by four days the termination of Lend-Lease assistance to all other recipients. In response to furious Soviet protests, the administration only partially moderated its position by allowing Moscow to continue receiving non-munitions and utilizing Lend-Lease funds to repair Soviet freighters until Japan’s formal surrender.⁸⁷

The statements and observations of US policymakers during this period indicate that Washington’s efforts to minimize cohesion were a function of shifting international systemic conditions, prompting a growing wariness about the geopolitical ambitions of both Britain and the Soviet Union. Rising suspicions regarding British intentions were reflected in Secretary of War Henry Stimson’s declaration to President Roosevelt in late 1944 that London’s highest priority was to disperse Anglo-US troops into the Balkans “to protect the British Empire” rather than concentrate Allied forces in Western

⁸¹ Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*, 145–47.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 183–84.

⁸³ Herring, *Aid to Russia*, 144, 173.

⁸⁴ Acting Secretary of State and the Foreign Economic Administrator Leo Crowley to President Truman, memorandum, 11 May 1945, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945, Vol. 5: Europe* (Washington: US GPO, 1967), 999–1000.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* Soon after Truman issued the order, he modified it slightly to permit shipments of supplies not intended for use against the Japanese that had already been loaded on ships or that were already en route to the USSR. Herring, *Aid To Russia*, 205–6.

⁸⁶ Herring, *Aid To Russia*, 229–30.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 230–33.

Europe in order to expeditiously defeat Germany.⁸⁸ Similarly, in March 1945 Roosevelt admonished his cabinet that “the British were perfectly willing for the United States to have a war with Russia at any time and that . . . to follow the British lead would be to proceed toward that end.”⁸⁹ By May 1945 Harry Hopkins—who had served as President Roosevelt’s wartime envoy to both Churchill and Stalin and was arguably that administration’s strongest proponent of the alliance with Britain—expressed that he too had become “skeptical about Churchill” and declared that it was of “vital importance that we not be maneuvered into a position where Great Britain has lined us up with them as a bloc against Russia to implement England’s European policy.”⁹⁰ At about the same time, President Truman revealingly recorded in his diary, “I was having as much difficulty with Prime Minister Churchill as I was having with Stalin.”⁹¹

At the same time, policymakers grew increasingly concerned that the Soviet Union was becoming a grave threat to America’s national security. According to scholar Vincent Davis, by late 1944 Navy Secretary James Forrestal had concluded, “*Russia was the emerging new enemy* toward which . . . the whole of U.S. postwar foreign and security policy should be directed.”⁹² Then, following on the heels of a US Army Intelligence report that speculated Moscow was intent on pursuing “the unlimited expansion of Soviet influence and control,” the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in July 1945, formally adopted the position that the United States should “resist demands and policies which tend to improve [the] Soviet position in Western Europe.”⁹³ Stimson concurred on the grounds that the Soviets were “throwing aside all their previous restraints as to being only a Continental power.”⁹⁴

BRITAIN’S ALLIANCE DECISION MAKING

Phase I: January 1942-June 1944

During the first phase of the alliance, Britain dramatically enhanced cohesion with both of its allies. Churchill’s overarching desire to bind England’s war effort as closely as possible to that of the United States was reflected in his formal concurrence with US-sponsored war aims as established in the United Nations Declaration (and previously in the Atlantic Charter), notwithstanding

⁸⁸ Quoted in Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, The Grand Alliance, and US Strategy in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 223.

⁸⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 225.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 499.

⁹¹ Quoted in Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*, 160. Truman repeated this charge in an off-the-record press conference in June (*ibid.*, 167).

⁹² Vincent Davis, *Postwar Defense Policy and the US Navy, 1943–1946* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 101.

⁹³ Quoted in Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 253, 255.

⁹⁴ Quoted in *ibid.*, 256.

his government's latent opposition to several of those aims, particularly the ones of universal self-determination and equal access to trade. It is also evident in the array of aforementioned Anglo-US agreements concluded and institutions established in the wake of America's formal entry into the war. London supplemented these actions by providing approximately US\$7.567 billion in "Reverse Lend-Lease" assistance to and sharing sensitive war-related technologies with the United States.⁹⁵

Additionally, England aggressively pursued cohesion with the Soviet Union. Between October 1941 and July 1944 Britain supplied the USSR with £281 million worth of military and civilian supplies.⁹⁶ The War Cabinet also approved the transfer to Stalin of decrypted German military communications relevant to Russia's war effort, though the flow of this intelligence began to decline in response to Stalin's reluctance to share Soviet intelligence with Britain (or the United States, for that matter) on a reciprocal basis.⁹⁷ Additionally, in 1942 Churchill strongly supported the ill-fated Operation Velvet.

Since Britain, like the United States, was a democracy, its government was similarly inclined to permit the extensive interstate contacts and communications necessary to elevate cohesion with its allies. In terms of civil-military relations, although Churchill's relationship with his Chiefs of Staff was characterized by the prime minister's constant prodding, interrogating, and meddling, it was nevertheless one in which Churchill refrained from constraining the staff's decision-making autonomy. According to historian John Ehrman, awareness of Churchill's "exceptional powers of interference and obstinacy" must be counterbalanced by awareness of "the fact that he always kept those powers within limits. . . . However exasperating he might be. . . . [t]he Chiefs of Staff knew that he would not intrigue, that he would not abandon them in secret, and that in the last resort he would listen to their opinion."⁹⁸

Churchill's commitment to the delegative system of command was not only exemplified in his aforementioned 1941 agreement with Roosevelt to refrain from interfering in the joint deliberations of their respective military chiefs, but also in his subsequent wartime relationship with Field Marshal Dill, who Churchill appointed in early 1942 as head of the British Joint Staff Mission (JSM) in Washington. Churchill had a relationship with Dill—who he had previously removed as chief of the Imperial General Staff—that was chilly, but he nevertheless accorded Dill "considerable scope" not only as head of the JSM, but also as Churchill's special envoy in Washington. The expansiveness of Dill's mandate was captured in the secret annex of Churchill's

⁹⁵ Overy, "Co-operation: Trade, Aid, and Technology," 210–11, 219–20.

⁹⁶ R.G.D. Allen, "Mutual Aid Between the U.S. and the British Empire, 1941–45," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 109, no. 3 (1946): 255.

⁹⁷ Andrew, "Anglo-American-Soviet Intelligence Relations," 123.

⁹⁸ John Ehrman, "Lloyd George and Churchill as War Ministers," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 11 (1961): 110.

official directive to him: "You will in your contacts with the President of the us . . . and others represent me in my capacity as Minister of Defence. You will from time to time receive from me such guidance as may be necessary to enable you to represent my views; and you are authorized to correspond direct with me as you think fit."⁹⁹

Dill exploited the substantial autonomy Churchill afforded him to establish an exceptionally close rapport with Gen. George C. Marshall, the us Army chief of staff. In an effort to minimize tensions and conflicts within the ccs, Dill showed Marshall virtually all of the correspondence between himself and senior British leaders, "rather as if the us Chief of Staff were on the British distribution list." Marshall reciprocated by showing Dill much of his correspondence with Roosevelt, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other us officials.¹⁰⁰

As a democratic regime, the Churchill government was also willing to brook the large-scale introduction of soldiers and civilians from the United States and Soviet Union into Britain, thereby setting the stage for large-scale military coordination and resource sharing. The massive Anglo-US invasion of northern France in June 1944, which represented the zenith of Allied military coordination during the war, could not have transpired unless the British government initially permitted its home territory to be used as a massive staging area for the combined operation. For this purpose, as well as for that of participating in the joint Anglo-US strategic bombing campaign against Germany, no fewer than 1.5 million US troops were deployed to England.¹⁰¹ Meanwhile, in order to orchestrate effectively its military aid program to Moscow, the British government provided Soviet engineers, military officials, and other experts "almost unlimited access to British factories, depots, and service units, where they were able to inspect new equipment at will."¹⁰²

Phase II: July 1944-September 1945

Whereas Britain reliably maximized cooperation with the United States and USSR during the first phase of the Grand Alliance, its behavior toward both partners became considerably more ambivalent during the second phase. In light of Britain's rapidly growing military and economic dependence on the United States during this phase, the degree to which London could

⁹⁹ Quoted in Danchev, *On Specialness*, 82, 83.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁰¹ Stoler, *Allies in War*, 153; Choi, "To Fear The Enemy or Allies?" 250–51. Between January 1942 and September 1945 a total of three million us Army and Air Force personnel were stationed in Britain, amounting to approximately 7 percent of the combined population of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. David Reynolds, *Rich Relations: The American Occupation of Britain, 1942–1945* (New York: Random House, 1995).

¹⁰² E.H. Beardsley, "Secrets Between Friends: Applied Science Exchange between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union During World War II," *Social Studies of Science* 7, no. 4 (November 1977): 451.

viably disentangle itself from the US war effort was highly circumscribed. This explains why, as mentioned above, Churchill and the Chiefs of Staff actually sought to expand (and extend) the ambit of the CCS and why British reciprocal aid to America actually rose during the last year of the war, from £420.9 million to £550.6 million.¹⁰³

Despite England's growing dependence on the United States, Churchill repeatedly jeopardized the increasingly fragile Anglo-US relationship during the second temporal phase by engaging in unilateral behavior that starkly contravened US policy and preferences. In terms of war aims, during multilateral negotiations aimed at constructing the postwar international economic and political orders, London steadfastly refused to consider any encroachments on the protectionist Imperial System of Preferences or the British colonial empire. Churchill and his senior military advisors further defied the United States by undermining Washington's efforts to build up China, pursuing a postwar British sphere of influence in southwestern Europe and promoting the restoration of France as a great power. London also joined Washington in pressuring Stalin to permit the establishment of representative governments in Poland and other East European countries under Red Army occupation.¹⁰⁴

Britain's adoption of war aims that were increasingly divergent from those pursued by the White House compelled London to act in an increasingly unilateral fashion, undermining the tight military coordination that had previously characterized Anglo-US relations. Specifically, Churchill authorized the clandestine infiltration of French agents into Indochina and the participation of French military personnel in the activities of the British-led Southeast Asia Command, forbade the appointment of anti-monarchist Count Carlo Sforza to a senior position in the post-fascist Italian government, and ordered British forces to intervene in the burgeoning civil war in Greece on behalf of the Greek royal government.¹⁰⁵ England's moves in Italy and Greece elicited an unprecedented public condemnation by Secretary of State Edward Stettinius Jr., to which Whitehall responded by imploring British officials in Italy to stop sharing sensitive messages with their US counterparts.¹⁰⁶

Although British resource sharing with the United States actually increased during this phase so to provide support for ongoing joint operations in Europe, London dramatically reduced such sharing with the USSR. Whereas

¹⁰³ Allen, "Mutual Aid Between the US and the British Empire," 250, 255, 270.

¹⁰⁴ Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*.

¹⁰⁵ Stoler, *Allies in War*, 187–88; Warren F. Kimball, *The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 147; Kimball, *Forged in War*, 298–304; James Edward Miller, *The United States and Italy, 1940–1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 122; Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*, 90–91.

¹⁰⁶ "Present Problems in Italy," *Department of State Bulletin* 11, no. 285 (10 December 1944): 722; Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*, 99.

annual British assistance to the Soviets peaked at £93.3 million for the period July 1943–July 1944, total British aid fell dramatically to £31 million over the course of the war's final fourteen months.¹⁰⁷ On 10 June 1945, Churchill ordered the immediate halt of all military aid to the USSR and, for the first time, stipulated that all civilian items still pledged be withheld until Moscow settled outstanding back payments.¹⁰⁸ Also during this period, the Foreign Office adopted a considerably more stringent set of criteria for information transfers to Moscow.¹⁰⁹

Similar to the assertions of US policymakers during this phase, those of British leaders indicate that London's efforts to minimize cohesion were a function of shifting international systemic conditions that engendered strong fears about the geopolitical ambitions of both the Americans and Soviets. With respect to the United States, although Churchill and other British leaders sought to bind a steadily weakening Britain as closely as possible to the United States, they nevertheless repeatedly expressed the belief that Washington was deliberately seeking to curtail Britain's global power and influence. For example, in December 1944 Secretary of State for War Sir P.J. Grigg wrote Lt. General Bernard Montgomery, the head of the 21st Army Group in France, of his "growing conviction that the Americans and the Russians intend that we shall emerge from this war a third-rate power."¹¹⁰ Two months later, Lord Halifax, the British ambassador to the United States, wrote to Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden that as a result of America's rise to power, Washington's policy would be "less prepared for compromise or evasion," and that the British government "may expect a more aggressive American diplomacy."¹¹¹ In seeming conjunction with Halifax's prediction, over the coming months heavy-handed US economic diplomacy in the Middle East triggered fears in Whitehall that US actions endangered Britain's traditional hegemony in that region. Simultaneous US efforts to preclude the restoration of European colonial control in East Asia prompted the head of the Foreign Office Far Eastern Department to protest, "[The Americans] are virtually conducting political warfare against us in the Far East."¹¹²

British fears and suspicions of the Soviets were even more acute. In the months following the Yalta summit, Churchill expressed his alarm at the "Russian peril" confronting Europe, which he judged to be "enormous."¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ Allen, "Mutual Aid Between the US and the British Empire," 255.

¹⁰⁸ Joan Beaumont, *Comrades in Arm: British Aid to Russia 1941–1945* (London: Davis-Poynter, 1980), 199–200.

¹⁰⁹ Beardsley, "Secrets Between Friends," 462.

¹¹⁰ Sir P.J. Grigg to Lt. Gen. Bernard Montgomery, letter, 6 December 1944, quoted in Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 514–15.

¹¹¹ Lord Halifax to Anthony Eden, cable, 19 February 1945, quoted in Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership*, 51.

¹¹² Quoted in *ibid.*, 47.

¹¹³ Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 6, *Triumph and Tragedy* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1953), 513.

This apprehension was echoed by Lord Cherwell, Churchill's close friend and science advisor, who claimed that Britain's, and perhaps even the world's, postwar survival hinged on the minimization of Soviet power.¹¹⁴ In the immediate aftermath of the German surrender, Churchill drafted a cable to President Truman in which he expressed "deep anxiety" regarding Moscow's renegade and repressive behavior in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. He portentously added, "What will be the position in a year or two, when the British and American Armies have melted . . . and when Russia may choose to keep two or three hundred [divisions] on active service?"¹¹⁵ Later that month, Churchill went so far as to direct his Chiefs of Staff to devise a strategy for forcibly liberating Poland and its neighbors from the grasp of the "Russian bear sprawled over Europe."¹¹⁶

SOVIET ALLIANCE DECISION MAKING

Phase I: January 1942-June 1944

During the Grand Alliance's first temporal phase, the Soviet Union consistently minimized cohesion with both of its partners. On the matter of war aims, the Kremlin almost immediately flouted the terms of the United Nations Declaration by pressuring (unsuccessfully) both London and Washington to recognize formally the territorial gains it had made in eastern Poland and the Baltic states pursuant to the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact of August 1939.¹¹⁷ More ominously, some historians have even argued on the basis of fragmentary evidence that during the spring of 1943 Stalin sought but failed to secure a separate peace with Germany.¹¹⁸

Moscow was also uncooperative in the area of military coordination. In addition to rebuffing the US offer to form a tripartite Allied war council, the Kremlin responded with "delays, interference, and indifference,"¹¹⁹ to White House requests for help on such matters as the rescue of American bomber pilots, the establishment of direct bilateral air and mail links, and assistance in the delivery of relief supplies to the Polish army.¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Beardsley, "Secrets Between Friends," 462.

¹¹⁵ Prime Minister Winston Churchill to President Harry Truman, cable, 13 May 1945, quoted in Max Hastings, *Winston's War: Churchill, 1940-1945* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 461.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in *ibid.*, 462.

¹¹⁷ McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 165-71.

¹¹⁸ Vojtech Mastny, "Stalin and the Prospects of a Separate Peace in World War II," *American Historical Review* 77, no. 5 (December 1972): 1365-88; H.W. Koch, "The Spectre of a Separate Peace in the East: Russo-German 'Peace Feelers,' 1942-44," *Journal of Contemporary History* 10, no. 3 (July 1975): 531-49. Koch adds that further meetings occurred in Sweden in early fall 1944 but were equally fruitless.

¹¹⁹ Admiral Willam Standley, US ambassador to the USSR, to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, cable, 5 July 1942, quoted in Herring, *Aid to Russia*, 83.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*; Kimball, *Forged in War*, 137.

Finally, the Kremlin engaged in minimal resource sharing with its allies. Throughout this period, the efforts of US and British military and diplomatic personnel in Moscow became increasingly frustrated by the Soviets' "adamant refusal to exchange intelligence about the German army and its weapons, and to allow American [and British] observers at the [Eastern] front."¹²¹ Moscow also spurned a British proposal to pool the three allies' war-related technical information.¹²²

The Soviet regime's resistance to enhanced cohesion was so extreme that it was manifested on multiple occasions in which the United States and Britain attempted to share their resources with the USSR. First, the Kremlin refused to provide Washington and London with detailed economic information to justify its requests for massive amounts of material subvention.¹²³ Second, Moscow ordered the British troops offloading Lend-Lease supplies in Soviet ports to shut off the radio transmitters they had been using to jam the German naval communications identifying the position of Allied convoys en route to Russia.¹²⁴ Third, despite the USSR's dire need for tires for its military vehicles, a late 1942 US proposal to build a tire factory on Russian soil foundered due to unrelenting Soviet bureaucratic interference. Fourth, Stalin subverted Operation Velvet, a mission that would have deployed Anglo-US bomber squadrons to the Caucasus.¹²⁵ Fifth, Moscow refused to permit American and British mechanics and pilots to enter the USSR in order to train their Soviet equivalents in the operation of US and British warplanes that had been transferred to the Soviet Union.¹²⁶

In a few respects did the Soviet Union cooperate with its partners, but these efforts were so tightly circumscribed that their effectiveness was largely negated. For example, in February 1944 Stalin nominally agreed to Operation Frantic, the White House proposal to conduct US shuttle-bombing against Germany from bases in the Soviet Union. Kremlin officials proceeded to delay the implementation of the operation until June, however, which meant that the three bases built in Ukraine for the operation were no longer useful due to the rapid movement of the front line hundreds of miles to the west in the interim.¹²⁷ Subsequent negotiations between Washington

¹²¹ Herring, *Aid to Russia*, 83, 97; Beaumont, *Comrades in Arms*, 114.

¹²² Martin Kitchen, *British Policy Towards the Soviet Union During the Second World War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), 187.

¹²³ Herring, *Aid to Russia*, 39, 97; Beaumont, *Comrades in Arms*, 114.

¹²⁴ Beaumont, *Comrades in Arms*, 135, 159–65.

¹²⁵ Richard C. Lukas, *Eagles East: The Army Air Forces and the Soviet Union, 1941–1945* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1970), 163.

¹²⁶ David M. Glantz and Jonathan M. House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 151.

¹²⁷ John R. Deane, *The Strange Alliance: The Story of Our Efforts at Wartime Cooperation With Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1946), 19–21, 107–22. In sum, Operation Frantic produced a mere eighteen bombing and strafing runs against German targets and one supply-dropping mission. Lucas, *Eagles East*, 200–201.

and Moscow to relocate and expand the air bases, as well as US personnel, “failed completely.”¹²⁸ In the final analysis, Gen. John Deane, the head of the US military mission to the USSR, lamented, “We found nothing but a desire [on the part of Soviet officials] to sabotage [Operation Frantic] which they had reluctantly approved. Everything was made difficult, including approval of visas, control of communications, selection of targets, and clearances for landings and departures, and in the end we were literally forced out of Russia by restrictions which had become unbearable.”¹²⁹

Stalin did decide to share some intelligence, improve radio communications, and allow the exchange of weather data with his allies, though even these minimal concessions were only extended “after months of tedious negotiations and frustrating delays, and the Russians usually demanded maximum concessions in return.”¹³⁰

This stark record of virtually complete Soviet noncooperation is belied by a single glaring, but easily explained, exception. In June 1944 Stalin agreed to launch a major Soviet offensive against Germany, Operation Bagration, to coincide with the long-awaited opening of the second front by us and British forces in France. Although this important act of military coordination appears to contradict the neoclassical realist (and liberal) prediction of uniformly minimal autocratic cohesion, it can be accounted for by both theories on the grounds that Stalin did not incur any risks to his domestic political position by merely agreeing to synchronize the launch of his planned offensive with the initiation of Operation Overlord by the United States and Britain.¹³¹

In contrast to Bagration, virtually all other acts of intra-alliance cooperation would have threatened to exact a domestic political price for an autocratic Soviet government. This regime was characterized by the extreme concentration of policymaking power in the hands of its leader; even the highest ranking officials of the Soviet army and government were “unwilling to say or do anything which had not already been authorized by Stalin.”¹³² In terms of civil-military relations, Stalin’s dealings with his officers typified the assertive system of command. Throughout the war, Stalin assiduously cultivated an atmosphere of “fear and unpredictability” amongst his senior officers by arbitrarily appointing and replacing them, fractionating the size of their military commands, dispatching political commissars to monitor their actions, and even bugging their homes and headquarters. According to historian Adam Ulam, “Nowhere else were field officers so closely and continuously, obviously wastefully, supervised, as in the Red Army.” This supervision was conducted via an “interlocking system of political controls—or, to put

¹²⁸ Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, 122.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 125.

¹³⁰ Herring, *Aid to Russia*, 133.

¹³¹ Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, 142–51.

¹³² McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 80.

it bluntly, of spying on the officers—[that] existed at all levels of the military hierarchy.”¹³³ More broadly, Stalin presided over a massive repressive apparatus dedicated to ameliorating the regime’s ever-present fear of internal subversion. Between 1930 and 1953 the Soviet intelligence agency, NKVD, killed, imprisoned, or exiled nearly four million people. In particular, the regime exhibited a “xenophobic fear of foreign contamination and infiltration,” rendering it particularly suspicious of Soviet officials and citizens who had contacts with foreigners.¹³⁴

Allied officials stationed in Moscow attested firsthand to this xenophobia and its negative impact on Russia’s alliance behavior. According to Deane, the Soviet regime’s “distrust of foreigners” represented the greatest deterrent to collaboration with the United States and Britain, as the Kremlin feared that contacts of any kind between Soviet citizens and foreigners would “sow the seed of discontent which would weaken the cohesiveness of the Soviet nation.”¹³⁵ Deane noted that he “was constantly impressed by evidence that Soviet leaders were determined to defeat any joint enterprise that involved close contact with foreigners.”¹³⁶ This conclusion was affirmed in a 1945 report by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff’s Joint Strategic Survey Committee, which pointed out that all instances of Soviet noncooperation with the United States exclusively necessitated some freedom of movement for US personnel in Russian-occupied areas.¹³⁷

The Kremlin’s preponderant domestic political concerns were directly evinced in the trilateral negotiations pertaining to Operation Velvet that were conducted in Moscow in late 1942. The head of the US delegation, US Army Air Force Brig. General Elmer E. Adler, cabled Washington that although the Soviet negotiating team, led by Gen. Fedor Y. Falaeyev, chief of staff of the Red Air Force, was sympathetic to basing Anglo-US bomber squadrons in the Caucasus, Falaeyev nevertheless made it “quite clear” that close fraternization between Soviet and Allied troops would have “a deleterious political effect.” As Adler elaborated:

[Soviet leaders did] not enjoy the thought of foreign soldiers mixing with their own troops and possibly contaminating them with better food, equipment, pay, and other items that would naturally appear with a foreign force. If forced to accept the [air] force they would prefer to

¹³³ Adam B. Ulam, *Stalin: The Man and His Era* (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 578, 579.

¹³⁴ Richard Overy, *The Dictators: Hitler’s Germany, Stalin’s Russia* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 194, 210.

¹³⁵ Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, 296, 302.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 302.

¹³⁷ Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 122.

place it in an area and draw a fence around it so that its operations would be independent but its control in their hands.¹³⁸

British Air Marshal P.H. Drummond, head of the British delegation, echoed that the primary reason Velvet was scuttled was the “almost fanatical urge [on the part of the Kremlin] to keep foreigners out of Caucasia.”¹³⁹ Stalin’s reluctance to allow the intermingling of Soviet and Anglo-US air force personnel was further evident in his subsequent declaration to Roosevelt and Churchill that he would only acquiesce to the operation if the US and British warplanes were transferred to the USSR without their aircrews.¹⁴⁰

The Kremlin’s strong inclination to stanch information flows was also revealed in its oftentimes harsh treatment of those Soviet officials and citizens who interacted with the few Allied officials based in Russia. In a letter to Marshall, Deane remarked, “[Soviet] [o]fficials dare not become too friendly to us, and others are persecuted for this offense.”¹⁴¹ The risks of potential persecution were raised by Moscow’s stipulation that meetings between Soviet officials and their US or British counterparts had to include a note taker recruited from an unrelated agency of the Soviet government.¹⁴²

Phase II: July 1944-September 1945

During the second temporal phase, the continuing Soviet minimization of cohesion was overdetermined due to unfavorable domestic political conditions as well as increasingly unfavorable international systemic ones. In terms of war aims, Stalin violated the terms of the United Nations Declaration, as well as his explicit promise at Yalta to permit the reorganization of the pro-Soviet provisional government in Poland “on a broader democratic basis” via the holding of “free and unfettered elections” under joint Allied supervision.¹⁴³ Stalin also broke the terms of the February 1945 Declaration on Liberated Europe signed at Yalta that obligated the Allies to help the liberated states create “democratic institutions of their own choice,”¹⁴⁴ by stonewalling efforts

¹³⁸ Quoted in Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, *United States Army in World War II: Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941–1942* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1953), 334–35; Lucas, *Eagles East*, 153–59; Choi, “To Fear the Enemy or Allies?” 252.

¹³⁹ Quoted in Lukas, *Eagles East*, 163, 102n.

¹⁴⁰ Herring, *Aid to Russia*, 72–73; Weinberg, *A World at Arms*, 417; McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 223.

¹⁴¹ Gen. John Deane to Gen. George Marshall, letter, 2 December 1944, replicated in Leonard Mosley, *Marshall: Hero for Our Times* (New York: Hearst, 1982), 297.

¹⁴² Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, 302.

¹⁴³ Declaration on Poland, 10 February 1945, quoted in McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*, 557, 558.

¹⁴⁴ Quoted in *ibid.*, 559.

to include non-communists in the Polish government and forcibly implanting non-democratic puppet regimes in Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Moscow abstained from multilateral negotiations regarding the postwar international economic order.¹⁴⁶

The Kremlin similarly eschewed multiple opportunities to enhance military coordination with the United States and Britain. First, in August 1944 Stalin prevented the two allies from delivering desperately needed supplies to Polish rebels fighting the German occupation force in Warsaw by forbidding their warplanes from crossing Soviet-held Hungarian airspace.¹⁴⁷ Second, the Kremlin turned down requests to coordinate more closely Allied air operations in the Mediterranean via the dispatch of Anglo-US liaison officers to the Red Army's Army Group South.¹⁴⁸ This fateful decision resulted in an unnecessary tragedy on 7 November 1944, when US bombers accidentally struck a Soviet troop column in Yugoslavia. Third, Moscow had auspiciously proposed the creation of a combined US-British-USSR military staff to coordinate land operations in late June 1944, but bureaucratic delays in Moscow proved fatal to the plan's execution.¹⁴⁹ Fourth, although Stalin officially agreed in February 1945 to facilitate the prompt repatriation of American and British prisoners of war liberated in Poland, his regime systematically violated the agreement's provisions by, among other things, barring US and British authorities from entering Poland to meet personally with the prisoners.¹⁵⁰ Fifth, Moscow spurned Washington's request during the European war's final months to construct six base stations on Russian soil in order to provide navigational assistance to American bombers flying over Germany.¹⁵¹

Even though both domestic political and international systemic conditions discouraged Soviet cohesion, some evidence exists to suggest that the former trumped the latter in the ally's deliberations. During this period, the Soviets continued to rely heavily on US Lend-Lease shipments, and as discussed above, were furious when Truman finally stopped the flow of aid in August 1945. Despite the continuing need for large-scale US military assistance during this phase of the alliance, Moscow nevertheless continued to impede the aid's flow owing to the overriding domestic imperative of minimizing contacts between Soviet citizens and foreign troops. This calculus is apparent in a November 1944 cable from George Kennan, the US Chargé

¹⁴⁵ Norman A. Graebner, "Yalta, Potsdam, and Beyond: The British and American Perspectives," in *The Rise and Fall of the Grand Alliance*, 227–37.

¹⁴⁶ John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 20–23.

¹⁴⁷ Larson, *Origins of Containment*, 95–102.

¹⁴⁸ Deane, *The Strange Alliance*, 135–37.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 152–54.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 182–201.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 141.

d’Affaires in Moscow, to Secretary of State Cordell Hull. In the communiqué, Kennan argued that the USSR’s reluctance to admit US naval personnel into Russia to facilitate the delivery of Lend-Lease aid “most probably originates in certain Soviet circles within the secret police and possibly the Naval Commissariat as well where the presence of American Naval Personnel in Soviet ports and perhaps even in Moscow is viewed with mixed feelings.”¹⁵²

CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS FOR WARTIME ALLIANCE POLITICS AND US FOREIGN POLICY

In this article, I surveyed the prevailing neorealist and liberal theories of wartime alliance cohesion and introduced a rival neoclassical realist theory: a state will generally only enhance cohesion with its alliance partners if international systemic conditions favor cohesion, and the state in question is a democracy. A preliminary test of the three theories against the record of alliance decision making by the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union during the Grand Alliance of World War II provided stronger support for neoclassical realism than its neorealist and liberal rivals.

If these initial findings withstand further empirical scrutiny, they suggest at least one salient implication for the general practice of wartime alliance politics: autocracies will be far less cooperative and reliable partners than democracies in precisely those circumstances of extreme wartime exigency in which their cooperation will be most needed and valued. Whereas alliances comprised exclusively or largely of autocracies should tend to be brittle and frangible under these exigent conditions, those comprised exclusively or largely of democracies are more likely to be unified and resolute, provided that the members are similarly powerful, agree on the identity of the most dangerous adversary, and minimally fear one another. From the adversary’s vantage point, this suggests that wars against exclusively or predominantly autocratic alliances should not become harder to win once the adversary has managed to achieve an advantageous military position. Conversely, final victory over alliances comprised exclusively or predominantly of democracies should become increasingly difficult to achieve once the adversary has secured a position of military superiority. As a result, democratic partnerships should be more likely than autocratic ones to recover from a position of military disadvantage to mount a successful comeback and eventually triumph in the war.

From the narrower perspective of US foreign policy, the article’s findings suggest that neither the United States nor its most likely adversaries will

¹⁵² Chargé in the Soviet Union George Kennan to the Secretary of State Cordell Hull, cable, 2 November 1944, in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1944, Vol. 4: Europe (Washington, DC: US GPO, 1966), 928.

be able to muster highly cohesive wartime alliances for the foreseeable future. Future wartime alliances led by the United States are not likely to be highly cohesive as the distribution of military power between America and all possible allies is extremely lopsided. In 2012 the United States accounted for 39 percent of global defense expenditures, while its highest spending ally, the United Kingdom, accounted for a mere 3.5 percent.¹⁵³ The adverse impact of this gross disparity in power has likely played at least some role in the pronounced lack of allied unity demonstrated in the recent us-led wars in Iraq (2003–11) and Afghanistan (2001–present). Both of these us-led alliances have been riven by such forms of dissension as separate chains of command, widely differing rules of engagement, and even premature alliance defections.¹⁵⁴ Fortunately for Washington, however, the United States is so militarily powerful that of all states in the international system, it is least in need of allies to win its wars.¹⁵⁵

Meanwhile, the states that pose the greatest threat to the America's national security interests are all autocratic, ranging from the small power "rogue states" of Iran and North Korea to the rising great power of China and the recovering great power of Russia. To the extent that these various antagonists ally with one another to offset us hegemony, policymakers in Washington can take some solace from the likelihood that such alliances will be frail, and if push comes to shove, they will fight below their collective weight and be relatively easy to sever.

¹⁵³ For a chart of states with the highest military expenditure in 2012, see Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, <http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex-graphs-for-data-launch-2013/States-with-the-highest-military-expenditure-in-2012.png>.

¹⁵⁴ Stephen M. Saideman and David P. Auerswald, "Comparing Caveats: Understanding the Sources of National Restrictions upon NATO's Mission in Afghanistan," *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (March 2012): 67–84; Atsushi Tago, "When are Democratic Friends Unreliable? The Unilateral Withdrawal of Troops for the 'Coalition of the Willing,'" *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 2 (March 2009): 219–34.

¹⁵⁵ William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," *International Security* 24, no. 1 (Summer 1999): 5–41.