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The Origins of Alliances

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Introduction: Exploring Alliance Formation

This book is about the origins of alliances.¹ I seek answers to questions such as these: What causes states to support one another's foreign policy or territorial integrity? How do statesmen choose among potential threats when seeking external support? How do the great powers choose which states to protect, and how do weaker states decide whose protection to accept? In short, how do states choose their friends?

The importance of this subject is manifest.² The forces that bring states together and drive them apart will affect the security of individual states by determining both how large a threat they face and how much help they can expect. At the same time, the factors that determine how states choose alliance partners will shape the evolution of the international system as a whole. The ability to establish durable empires, for

1. I define *alliance* as a formal or informal relationship of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states. This definition assumes some level of commitment and an exchange of benefits for both parties; severing the relationship or failing to honor the agreement would presumably cost something, even if it were compensated in other ways. For a good discussion of the various definitions that scholars and diplomats have employed, see Roger V. Dingman, "Theories of, and Approaches to, Alliance Politics," in *Diplomacy: New Approaches in Theory, History, and Policy*, ed. Paul Gordon Lauren (New York, 1979), pp. 245-50.

2. George Modelski has called alliance "one of the dozen or so key terms of International Relations." See his "The Study of Alliances: A Review," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 7, no. 4 (1963): 773. According to Julian K. Friedman, "alliances are the central feature of international political life." See his "Alliance in International Politics," in *Alliance in International Politics*, ed. Julian K. Friedman, Christopher Bladen, and Steven Rosen (Boston, 1970). To Hans J. Morgenthau, alliances "are a necessary function of the balance of power operating in a multiple state system." See his "Alliances in Theory and Practice," in *Alliance Policy in the Cold War*, ed. Arnold Wolfers (Baltimore, Md., 1959), p. 175. According to Ole Holsti, "alliances are apparently a universal component of relations between political units, irrespective of time and place." See Ole Holsti, P. Terrence Hopmann, and John D. Sullivan, *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances* (New York, 1973), p. 2.

example, will depend in large part on how potential victims respond. Will they work together to thwart these ambitions, or can a potential hegemon keep its opposition isolated and weak? Does aggression become easier with each new conquest, or does resistance increase at a faster rate?

Failure to understand the origins of alliances can be fatal. In the Franco-Prussian War, for example, France entered the war confident that Austria-Hungary would soon join it in battle against Prussia. When the Austrians chose to remain neutral (a decision Bismarck's diplomacy had encouraged), a key element of French strategy collapsed.³ In the decades before World War I, Germany's leaders ignored the possibility of a Franco-Russian alliance (1892) and an Anglo-Russian entente (1907), only to be surprised when their own actions helped create the very alignments they had believed were impossible.⁴ In much the same way, Japan's leaders were convinced that their alliance with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy would deter the United States from opposing their expansion in the Far East. They could not have been more wrong; the formation of the Axis encouraged the United States to resist Japanese expansion even more vigorously and to move closer to its wartime alliance with Great Britain and the Soviet Union.⁵

In each of these cases, the error lay in a faulty understanding of the causes of alliances. As a result, these states adopted grand strategies that were seriously flawed. In the simplest terms, a state's grand strategy is a theory explaining how it can "cause" security for itself.⁶ Strategy is thus a set of hypotheses or predictions: if we do A, B, and C, the desired results X, Y, and Z will follow. Ideally, a statement of grand strategy should explain why these results are likely to obtain and provide appropriate evidence. Because the challenges one may face and the capabilities one can employ will be affected by the behavior of other states (e.g., will they help, remain neutral, or oppose?), the hypotheses that statesmen accept about the origins of alliances should play a major role in determining the strategies they select. The success of these policies will depend on whether the hypotheses they embrace are correct.

3. See Richard Smoke, *War: Controlling Escalation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 127-28, 131-33; and Michael Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War* (New York, 1979), pp. 46-48, 64-65.

4. See Imanuel Geiss, *German Foreign Policy 1871-1914* (London, 1979), pp. 66-68.

5. See Louis Morton, "Japan's Decision for War," in *Command Decisions*, ed. Kent Roberts Greenfield (New York, 1959), pp. 67-68; and Robert J. C. Butow, *Tojo and the Coming of the War* (Princeton, N.J., 1960), pp. 66-67.

6. This conception of grand strategy is based on that of Barry R. Posen. See his *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars* (Ithaca, 1984), chap. 1, especially p. 13.

The United States offers no exception to these principles. More than anything else, the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union has been a competition for allies. As a result, many recurring debates over the conduct of U.S. foreign policy ultimately rest on disagreements about the causes of alliances. The policies that have emerged depend on which hypotheses of alliance formation were endorsed. The question is whether or not these hypotheses are correct. Answering this question is the principal goal of this book.

One central issue is how states respond to threats. Do states seek allies in order to balance a threatening power, or are they more likely to bandwagon with the most threatening state? This basic question lies at the heart of a host of policy issues. For example, should the United States increase its military spending and its commitment to NATO to prevent the growth of Soviet military power from causing the "Finlandization" of Europe? Alternatively, should the United States do less so its allies will do more? Similarly, will the fall of the Shah and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan drive the Gulf states into a pro-Soviet position, or are they more likely to join forces with the United States and one another? The answer depends on whether states most often ally to oppose a threatening power or try to appease it.

Throughout the Cold War, U.S. statesmen have consistently embraced the latter view. As the "Basic National Security Policy" formulated by the National Security Council in 1953 stated: "If our allies were uncertain about our ability or will to counter Soviet aggression, they would be strongly tempted to adopt a neutralist position."⁷ "Pactomania" was the logical result. In the same way, the lengthy involvement of the United States in Vietnam was justified by the widespread fear that U.S. allies would defect if the United States withdrew. As Secretary of State Dean Rusk put it: "America's alliances are at the heart of the maintenance of peace, and if it should be discovered that the pledge of America was worthless, the structure of peace would crumble and we would be well on our way to a terrible catastrophe."⁸ Because U.S. statesmen have believed that allies are attracted by displays of

7. "Review of Basic National Security Policy," NSC 162/1, October 30, 1953. Reprinted in *The Pentagon Papers: The Defense Department History of United States Decisionmaking on Vietnam*, Senator Gravel ed. (Boston, 1971), 1: 424. See also Ernest R. May, "The Cold War," in *The Making of America's Soviet Policy*, ed. Joseph S. Nye (New Haven, Conn., 1984), pp. 223-26.

8. Quoted in Franklin B. Weinstein, "The Concept of a Commitment in International Relations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 13, no. 1 (1969): 52.

strength and will, they have sought to preserve an image of credibility and military superiority despite the obvious costs.⁹

A second issue is whether states with similar internal characteristics are more likely to ally than states whose domestic orders are different. The early debates over the implementation of containment, for example, were due in part to disagreements on this point. Where George F. Kennan saw the Communist bloc as prone to ideological rifts and internal divisions (and therefore vulnerable to U.S. blandishments), his opponents in the Truman administration saw the Communist world as a cohesive ideological alliance that had to be confronted militarily because it could not be dissolved through positive inducements. Different beliefs about what held the Soviet alliance system together thus gave rise to very different policy prescriptions.¹⁰ Since then, U.S. opposition to leftist and Marxist movements throughout the world has been based primarily on the belief that ideological solidarity will make these regimes loyal allies of the Soviet Union.¹¹ Here again, an unstated hypothesis about the causes of alignment has been a key element of contemporary U.S. foreign policy.

Finally, can certain policy instruments cause other states to alter their alliance preferences? In particular, can the provision of economic or military aid create loyal allies? How easily and how reliably? Are foreign agents, advisers, and propaganda effective instruments of influence or control? The belief that these instruments will have a significant effect on alliance choices underlies U.S. concern for Soviet arms shipments to the Third World as well as the widespread conviction that states with a large Soviet or Cuban presence are reliable tools of the Kremlin.¹² Once

9. On the importance attached to credibility in postwar U.S. foreign policy, see Patrick Morgan, "Saving Face for the Sake of Deterrence," in *Psychology and Deterrence*, ed. Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein (Baltimore, Md., 1986), especially pp. 137-43; Deborah Welch Larson, "The Bandwagon Metaphor and American Foreign Policy" (paper delivered at the International Studies Association annual meeting, March 1986); and the discussion in chapter 2 of this volume.

10. In retrospect, Kennan's analysis was strikingly prescient, especially with regard to the inevitable tendency for the Soviet Union and China to quarrel. See "U.S. Objectives with Respect to Russia," NSC 20/21, in *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950*, ed. John Lewis Gaddis and Thomas Etzold (New York, 1978), pp. 186-87. See also John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York, 1982), pp. 43-45.

11. Examples include U.S. opposition to (1) the Greek Communist party during the Greek civil war, (2) the Mossadegh government in Iran in 1953, (3) the Arbenz regime in Guatemala in 1954, (4) the Marxist regimes in Castro's Cuba and Allende's Chile, and (5) the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) in Angola. The same concern underlies U.S. opposition to the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, the African National Congress, and the Marxist rebels in El Salvador.

12. For classic examples of this type of reasoning, see U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, "Communist Influence in El Salvador" (Washington, D.C., 1981); U.S. Department of State, Inter-American Series 119, "The Sandinista Military Buildup" (Washington, D.C., 1985), pp. 29-39 and passim; and U.S. Departments of State and Defense,

again, an important element of U.S. national security policy rests on an untested assertion about the effectiveness of certain instruments on alignment.

These popular hypotheses paint a dramatic picture of U.S. insecurity. The belief that states are attracted to strength implies that any appearance of weakness or irresolution could damage the international position of the United States irreparably. The belief that ideology is a powerful cause of alignment implies that virtually all Marxist governments and leftist movements are reliable Soviet assets. And if foreign aid or foreign agents can create loyal satellites, then the United States is also threatened when non-Marxist countries receive material support from the Soviet Union. If these hypotheses are correct, in short, the United States faces an extraordinary challenge.

THE ARGUMENT

In the pages that follow, I argue that each of those beliefs is exaggerated. First, I demonstrate that balancing is far more common than bandwagoning. In contrast to traditional balance of power theorists, however, I suggest that states ally to balance against threats rather than against power alone. Although the distribution of power is an extremely important factor, the level of threat is also affected by geographic proximity, offensive capabilities, and perceived intentions. Thus I propose balance of threat theory as a better alternative than balance of power theory.

Second, the evidence shows that ideology is less powerful than balancing as a motive for alignment. Indeed, I argue that many apparently ideological alliances are in fact a form of balancing behavior. The record also shows that certain ideologies are extremely divisive. In other words, states sharing these ideologies are more likely to compete than to form durable alliances.

Third, I conclude that neither foreign aid nor political penetration is by itself a powerful cause of alignment. Even more important, neither is an effective way to gain leverage except under very unusual conditions.

Taken together, these results help explain why the international position of the United States is extremely favorable and likely to remain so. Because states balance against threats, (not against power alone), the United States has been able to create and sustain a global alliance whose

"The Soviet-Cuban Connection in Central America and the Caribbean" (Washington, D.C., 1985), pp. 3-10, 27-28, and passim. See also "Excerpts from Reagan's Speech on Aid for Nicaraguan Rebels," *New York Times*, June 25, 1986, p. A12.

capabilities exceed those of the Soviet Union and its own allies by a considerable margin. Ideological rifts (e.g., the Sino-Soviet split) reinforce Soviet isolation. Neither extensive foreign aid nor covert political penetration is likely to alter these tendencies.

Once we understand the origins of alliances, we can correctly judge the burden of preserving U.S. national security. It is relatively light. We can also see how recent U.S. foreign policy has been misguided, and we can identify how present errors can be corrected. Thus an enhanced theoretical understanding of the origins of alliances will yield important practical results as well.

THE ALLIANCE LITERATURE

Although the literature on alliances is enormous, much of it does not address the questions identified here.¹³ Most of the existing research on alliances has examined other issues, such as whether there is a relationship between alliance formation and the likelihood of war and whether the rate of alliance formation fits some specified mathematical model.¹⁴ Similarly, although the extensive collective goods literature on

13. One recent survey, based on U.S. sources, identified some 270 articles or books addressing different aspects of alliance dynamics. According to its author, "little of the research on alliances and alliance dynamics has been cumulative." See Michael Don Ward, "Research Gaps in Alliance Dynamics," *Monograph Series in World Affairs*, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver, 19, no. 1 (1982): 5. For other surveys of the copious alliance literature, consult Holsti, Hopmann, and Sullivan, *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances*, chap. 1 and app. C; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and J. David Singer, "Alliance, Capabilities, and War," *Political Science Annual*, 4 (1973); Philip Burgess and David Moore, "Inter-Nation Alliances: An Inventory and Appraisal of Propositions," *Political Science Annual*, 3 (1972); and Brian L. Job, "Grins without Cats: In Pursuit of Knowledge of Inter-nation Alliances," in "Cumulation in International Relations Research," ed. P. Terrence Hopmann, Dina Zinnes, and J. David Singer, *Monograph Series in World Affairs*, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver, vol. 18, bk. 3 (1981).

14. Examples of this genre include Robert Rood and Patrick McGowan, "Alliance Behavior in Balance of Power Systems," *American Political Science Review*, 79, no. 3 (1976); Brian L. Job, "Membership in Inter-nation Alliances: 1815-1865," and Randolph Siverson and George T. Duncan, "Stochastic Models of International Alliance Initiation: 1885-1965," in *Mathematical Models in International Relations*, ed. Dina Zinnes and William Gillespie (New York, 1976), pp. 74-109; George T. Duncan and Randolph Siverson, "Flexibility of Alliance Partner Choice in Multipolar Systems: Models and Tests," *International Studies Quarterly*, 26, no. 4 (1982); R. P. Y. Li and W. R. Thompson, "The Stochastic Process of Alliance Formation Behavior," *American Political Science Review*, 72, no. 4 (1978); W. J. Horvath and G. C. Foster, "Stochastic Models of War Alliances," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 7, no. 2 (1963); Jack S. Levy, "Alliance Formation and War Behavior: An Analysis of the Great Powers, 1495-1975," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 25, no. 4 (1981); J. David Singer and Melvin Small, "Alliance Aggregation and the Onset of War," in *Alliances: Latent War Communities in the Contemporary World*, ed. Francis A. Beer (New York, 1970); and Charles W. Kegley and Gregory A. Raymond, "Alliance Norms and War: A New Piece in an Old Puzzle," *International Studies Quarterly*, 26, no. 4 (1982).

alliances implicitly assumes that alliances are created to provide security against threats, these models focus on explaining the distribution of burdens within existing alliances rather than on explaining why the alliances were formed in the first place.¹⁵

Nevertheless, a number of works do examine the origins of alliances. Among the traditional works on international politics are many accounts of individual alliances and several important theoretical treatments. Hans Morgenthau's classic *Politics among Nations*, for example, contains a lengthy discussion of alliances supported by a variety of historical illustrations. Similar analyses are provided by George Liska and Robert L. Rothstein. Like Morgenthau, Liska relies on anecdotal evidence to support his points, whereas Rothstein bases his conclusions on case studies of Belgium and the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia) in the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁶

The traditional literature almost always falls within the broad compass of balance of power theory, although other hypotheses appear as well. Thus Liska writes that "alliances are against, and only derivatively for, someone or something," and Morgenthau refers to alliances as "a necessary function of the balance of power operating in a multiple state system."¹⁷ At the same time, however, Liska suggests that "alignment . . . may [also] express ideological or ethnic affinities," and he states that "opportunistic alignments" may occur when a state believes that the effort to balance power will fail.¹⁸ To complicate matters further, Paul Schroeder has argued that alliances are formed either to (1) oppose a threat, (2) accommodate a threat through a "pact of restraint," or (3) provide the great powers with a "tool of management" over weaker states.¹⁹ In short, although most of the traditional literature relies heavily on balance of power concepts, doubts remain regarding the universal applicability of this hypothesis.

A limitation of the traditional approach is that its proponents rarely offer systematic tests of general hypotheses. Although Liska provides many apt examples, he does not attempt to assess the relative validity of

15. See Mancur Olson and Richard Zeckhauser, "An Economic Theory of Alliances," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 48, no. 3 (1966).

16. See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 4th ed. (New York, 1967); George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* (Baltimore, Md., 1962); and Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York, 1968).

17. See Liska, *Nations in Alliance*, p. 12; and Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, p. 175.

18. Liska, *Nations in Alliance*, pp. 27, 42-43, 55-56. Rothstein makes a similar point: "Small powers . . . were forced to play a perilous game: moving quickly from the lighter to the heavier side of the balance as soon as an apparent victor . . . could be discerned." See *Alliances and Small Powers*, p. 11.

19. See Paul Schroeder, "Alliances, 1815-1945: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management," in *Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems*, ed. Klaus Knorr (Lawrence, Kansas, 1976).

his many interesting propositions. Case studies on individual alliances can provide more reliable evidence but may not tell us much about how different states would behave in different circumstances. Schroeder fares better on this score, because he supports his arguments with a survey of the major European alliances from 1815 to 1945. But even he does not examine which of the possible motives for alignment is most common or identify the factors that might affect the strength of each.²⁰ The question of which hypotheses provide the best guide for policy is left unanswered.

The belief that states ally to oppose powerful or threatening states has been challenged by several quantitative studies as well. Using sophisticated indices of national capabilities and a cooperation versus conflict scale created by coding diplomatic events, Brian Healy and Arthur Stein argue that European great power alliances from 1870 to 1881 result from bandwagoning (which they term the ingratiation effect) rather than from a desire to balance power.²¹ Because Germany's ascendancy after 1870 was associated with increased cooperation from most other states and because an anti-German alliance did not form in this period, they reject the hypothesis that states "act to oppose any state [or coalition] which tends to assume a position of predominance."²²

Despite the sophistication and originality of this work, there are several problems. First, the methodology is suspect, because it assumes that coders can estimate the true meaning (i.e., the level of conflict or cooperation) of a discrete diplomatic event divorced from its historical context.²³ Second, the results are based on events that were atypical. Germany's favorable position (including the free hand it enjoyed during the Franco-Prussian War) was due primarily to the great effort Bismarck devoted to convincing others that Germany was not an aggressive

20. There may be a conceptual problem here as well. [The desire to ally in order to aggregate power and the desire to ally in order to manage weaker states are not incompatible] For example, a great power threatened by another great power may want to ally with weaker states both to increase its capabilities and to influence their behavior.

21. See Brian Healy and Arthur Stein, "The Balance of Power in International History: Theory and Reality," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 17, no. 1 (1973). For a related work, see Richard Rosecrance, Alan Alexandroff, Brian Healy, and Arthur Stein, "Power, Balance of Power, and Status in Nineteenth Century International Relations," *Sage Professional Papers in International Studies* (Beverly Hills, Calif., 1974). For an extension that challenges several of Healy and Stein's results, see H. Brooke McDonald and Richard Rosecrance, "Alliance and Structural Balance in the International System: A Reinterpretation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 29, no. 3 (1985).

22. This hypothesis is drawn from Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (New York, 1957).

23. For a persuasive critique along these lines, see Paul W. Schroeder, "Quantitative Studies in the Balance of Power: An Historian's Reaction," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 21, no. 1 (1977).

state.²⁴ Far from refuting the tendency of states to oppose predominant powers, Healy and Stein's work reveals that power can be less important than other factors, such as perceived intentions.²⁵ In particular, Germany failed to provoke a countervailing coalition because Bismarck's adroit diplomacy made friendship with Germany seem both possible and preferable. The ingratiation effect may thus be largely a testimonial to Bismarck's diplomatic artistry.

Another challenge to balance of power theory has emerged from the ranks of expected utility theorists. Claiming to offer a formal theory of how states choose alliance partners, these authors suggest that states form alliances to increase their utility, measured in terms of security, risk, or welfare.²⁶ After correlating observed alliance dyads with various measures of utility, Michael Altfeld concludes that "alliances do not appear to be random; . . . potential alliances which fail to increase both partners' security almost never form."²⁷ In a similar work, David Newman claims to disprove balance of power theory by showing that states whose power is increasing are more likely to form alliances, because they are more attractive partners.²⁸

There are serious problems here as well. Expected utility theory does not identify who will ally with whom; it can only predict when states may seek alignment with someone. Furthermore, the fact that states whose capabilities are increasing tend to form alliances does not refute balance of power theory. After all, a state whose security position is threatened will probably attempt to increase its relative power (e.g. by spending more on defense) while simultaneously seeking an alliance with another state. Thus what Newman claims is a causal relationship (increases in power encourage alignment) may well be spurious. Even

24. During the Franco-Prussian War, for example, Bismarck maneuvered France into starting the war and encouraged Russian fears that Austria-Hungary would intervene on the side of France. Russia promptly mobilized its troops, which convinced Austria-Hungary to remain neutral. See Smoke, *War*, pp. 127-28, 131-33. On Bismarck's foreign policy in this period, see Gordon A. Craig, *Germany: 1866-1945* (London, 1978), pp. 101-4.

25. For a related argument by these same authors and their collaborators, see Rosecrance et al., "Power, Balance of Power, and Status," pp. 37-39.

26. Relevant works here are Michael F. Altfeld and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Choosing Sides in Wars," *International Studies Quarterly*, 23, no. 1 (1979); David Newman, "Security and Alliances: A Theoretical Study of Alliance Formation" (diss., University of Rochester, 1984); and Michael F. Altfeld, "The Decision to Ally: A Theory and Test," *Western Political Quarterly*, 37, no. 4 (1984).

27. See Altfeld, "Decision to Ally," p. 538 and passim. This conclusion is based on the fact that 25 percent of all dyads showing positive utility actually form an alliance, whereas only 2 percent of those showing negative utility do so. Of course, these figures tell us nothing about which dyads will be preferred or why 75 percent of the dyads exhibiting positive utility do not ally.

28. Newman, "Security and Alliances," pp. 21, 53-60.

were this not the case, two states whose capabilities are increasing might well form an alliance against a third state that is growing still faster or that appears especially aggressive. This type of response would still be an example of balancing behavior.

Finally, some authors have used game theory to analyze alliance behavior. William Riker's seminal work on political coalitions examines the optimal size of n -person alliances, and Glenn Snyder used two-person game theory to illuminate the trade-offs that states face in seeking to maintain allied support while avoiding the risk that their allies will entrap them in unwanted wars.²⁹ Both authors reach conclusions that are consistent with balance of power theory (i.e., Riker's prediction that the players will seek a "minimum winning coalition" implies that states will join the weaker side).

Unfortunately, because game theory models are based solely on the distribution of power and the structure of possible payoffs, they do not take into account the impact of perceptions, ideology, and geography. Among other things, this limitation helps explain why Riker's attempt to apply his insights to international politics is only partly successful.³⁰ And as Snyder admits, two-person game theory tells us more about the behavior within coalitions than it does about the players' choice of partners: "game theory does not predict who will align with whom."³¹ As with most of the other literature on alliances, in short, game theory has provided interesting answers to a different set of questions.

The existing scholarship on alliances is useful as a source of hypotheses. It does not, however, tell us which hypotheses are valid. As one student of this subject has observed, "We have little if any reliable

29. See William H. Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (New Haven, Conn., 1962); and Glenn Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics*, 36, no. 4 (1984).

30. Riker's conclusion, titled "Reflections on Empires," still makes for fascinating reading. Drawing upon his model of n -person coalitions, Riker predicts that the Soviet-American rivalry will show (1) the superpowers paying ever-greater prices to attract or keep allies, (2) increased tensions as the outcome of each realignment is seen as increasingly vital, (3) an increased probability of general war, and (4) the eventual decline of the two superpowers as a result of the first three tendencies. Although there is evidence of these tendencies throughout the Cold War, this evidence is probably due as much to misperceptions by both superpowers as to the logic of an n -person game. In particular, Riker's deductions rest on his belief that by 1950 "the U.S. was opposed by a minority coalition which could check many American actions and might even reasonably aspire to defeat it" (*Theory of Political Coalitions*, p. 223). If this scenario were true, then Riker's explanations would hold. In fact, however, the United States and its allies were vastly superior to the Soviet alliance network during this period. For example, the West controlled over three times the GNP produced by the Soviet Union and its satellites and spent larger amounts on defense as well. Because many U.S. leaders believed the Soviets to be more powerful than they were, however, and because they accepted several dubious theories of alliance formation, the politics of the early Cold War approximated Riker's prediction, but not for the reasons he describes.

31. Snyder, "Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," p. 463.

information about the relative potency of the various reasons why nations . . . join alliances."³² Thus, despite the enormous impact that debates about the origins of alliances exert on the conduct of U.S. foreign policy, the same disputes persist. What is needed is a strategy for resolving them.

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The method I have employed is straightforward. The principal historical evidence I have used is the diplomatic history of the Middle East between 1955 and 1979.³³ Through a survey of these events, I have identified thirty-six separate bilateral or multilateral alliance commitments, involving eighty-six national decisions. After identifying the motives that led each state to select certain allies at different times, I have compared these results with the predictions of each hypothesis. Two questions are central: (1) Which hypothesis explains the greatest number of alliances? and (2) Are there identifiable conditions that affect which type of behavior is to be expected (i.e., which hypothesis is likely to apply)?

This approach is designed to overcome some of the limitations found in the works described earlier. Although historical case studies provide the most detailed evidence regarding the causes of a particular alliance, attempting to test several general hypotheses through a single case study is obviously problematic. Comparative case studies are more promising, but a large number of cases would be needed to establish valid conclusions. This difficulty is especially troublesome when the hypotheses under consideration are not mutually exclusive (a problem faced throughout this book).

Reliance on historical anecdotes or a large statistical sample is equally troublesome. Anecdotal evidence cannot tell which causes are most powerful or widespread, and statistical manipulations cannot provide direct evidence about the perceptions and motivations that inspired a particular alliance decision. Nor can they readily take into account the novel contextual features of a given case.

In order to overcome these limitations, I have employed a methodology that combines the features of a focused comparison and a statis-

32. Ward, "Research Gaps in Alliance Dynamics," p. 18.

33. I have identified the main alliance commitments of nine Middle East states and the two superpowers. The states are the United States, the Soviet Union, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, North Yemen, and South Yemen. I have also included several others (e.g., Great Britain and France) when excluding them would clearly have been misleading.

tical-correlative analysis.³⁴ By examining a large number of alignments (thirty-six), I have enhanced the external validity of my results and increased their robustness. Even if the ambiguity of the evidence leaves my interpretation of a few cases open to debate, my conclusions are likely to be valid as long as most of the analysis is sound. Finally, because my evaluation of each alliance is based on a careful reading of available historical accounts, the results can be informed by evidence on perceptions and motivations as well as the impact of unique contextual factors. Given the objectives of the study, this compromise between generality and specificity seems necessary and appropriate.

Definitions

I use the terms *alliance* and *alignment* interchangeably throughout the book. For my purposes, an alliance is a formal or informal arrangement for security cooperation between two or more sovereign states. Employing this rather broad definition makes sense for several reasons. First, many contemporary states are reluctant to sign formal treaties with their allies. To limit my analysis to formal alliances would omit a large number of important cases. Second, precise distinctions—for example, between formal and informal alliances—would probably distort more than they would reveal. There has never been a formal treaty of alliance between the United States and Israel, but no one would question the level of commitment between these two states. Changes in that commitment, moreover, have been revealed primarily by changes in behavior or by verbal statements, not by the rewriting of a document. Similarly, the Soviet Union and Egypt did not sign a formal treaty until 1971 but were obviously close allies long before then. And the 1971 Soviet-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was actually a sign of growing tension between the two countries, not a symbol of enhanced commitment. Finally, any effort to take formal statements of inter-Arab solidarity at face value would be fraught with peril, as any student of Middle East politics knows. Thus an attempt to employ a strict typology of alliance commitments could easily be misleading, because the true meaning of either formal or informal arrangements is likely to vary from case to case.³⁵

34. On these different approaches, see Alexander L. George, "Case Study and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in Lauren, *Diplomacy: New Approaches*, pp. 61–62 and *passim*.

35. My decision not to employ a strict typology does not mean that there is no difference between formal and informal commitments or that a typology of alliances is impossible to devise. I have simply decided to rely upon a more subjective assessment of the various alliances examined in this study rather than employ a formal taxonomy that might not accurately reflect the nature of the specific commitment. On the differences between formal and informal commitments, see the perceptive analysis by Robert A. Kann in "Alliances versus Ententes," *World Politics*, 28, no. 4 (1976).

Even more important, establishing a strict typology of commitments is simply not necessary for my purposes. I am interested in identifying the broad forces that lead states to support one another in international affairs, but I do not seek to explain the precise arrangements the parties ultimately choose. The specific commitments that allies accept will reflect a host of idiosyncratic features that are unlikely to be easily generalized. Thus I make no claim to be able to predict exactly how states will choose to implement their mutual commitments, but I do seek to explain why they choose to do so in the first place and to identify which of several potential partners they are likely to prefer. Resolving these questions will be challenge enough.

Why the Middle East?

I have chosen to investigate alliance formation in the Middle East for several reasons. First, the Middle East has been and remains an area of considerable strategic importance. Its importance is revealed by the efforts that both superpowers have devoted to acquiring and supporting allies in the region, efforts that have led to serious superpower confrontations on several occasions.³⁶ Second, alliance commitments in the Middle East have shifted frequently throughout the postwar period, as these states adjusted to changing internal and external circumstances. As a result, the diplomacy of the Middle East provides a large number of cases for consideration and is likely to reveal more about the factors that determine alliance choices than would examination of a less turbulent region.

Most important of all, the Middle East provides a strong test of many familiar hypotheses. Because most propositions about alliance formation (or international relations theory in general, for that matter) have been derived from the history of the European great power system, it is especially appropriate to examine their utility in predicting the behavior of states that are neither European nor great powers. Moreover, many of these regimes are relatively young and lack the diplomatic experience

36. According to Henry Kissinger, "the Middle East lies at the crossroads of three continents. Because of the area's strategic importance, and because it provides the energy on which much of the world depends, outside powers have continued to involve themselves in its conflicts, often competitively." Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, 1979), p. 285. Richard Nixon termed the region "a powder keg" and stated that "it is like the Balkans before World War II—where the two superpowers . . . could be drawn into a confrontation that neither of them wants." Quoted in William B. Quandt, *Decisions: American Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967–1976* (Berkeley, Calif., 1977), pp. 82, 100. By the late 1970s, superpower arms transfers to the Middle East constituted roughly 40 percent of the global total, more than double the amount sent to any other region. See ACDA, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1968–1977* (Washington, D.C., n.d.), p. 8.

and traditions of the European great powers. Thus, if familiar hypotheses apply to this region as well, that is strong testimony to their explanatory power. Furthermore, the Middle East has been swept by intense ideological rivalries, major shifts in relative power, and significant superpower involvement throughout the period in question. As chapter 2 will show, these factors lie at the heart of the most popular hypotheses about alliance formation. Accordingly, the Middle East is an especially appropriate arena within which to assess them.

Methodological Barriers

Despite these strengths, I have faced a number of potential methodological problems in writing this book. Although several can be only partially alleviated, none presents an insurmountable barrier.

As I already noted, the concept of alliance is difficult to define and measure with precision. As will become clear in the next chapter, the same is true for such independent variables as level of threat and ideological solidarity. Moreover, many of the alliances examined in this study are overdetermined: they result from a number of separate causes. In such circumstances, measuring the importance of each different cause precisely (in order to distinguish between different hypotheses) is extremely difficult. To deal with this problem, I consider a large number of separate alignments while remaining alert for crucial cases that support one hypothesis while excluding others. I also include direct evidence (e.g., elite testimony) that identifies which causal factors were the most important in a particular instance.

A second potential difficulty arises from my focus on the Middle East. It might be argued that this region is *sui generis*, that any results derived from examining alliances in the Middle East cannot be applied to other areas or to different time periods. It might also be suggested that adequate understanding of Middle Eastern diplomacy requires specialized training and a knowledge of unique cultural factors that I cannot claim.³⁷

Although these considerations are not without merit, they do not present an overwhelming barrier. The argument that the Middle East is *sui generis* applies with equal force to any other region. Yet international relations scholars have long relied on historical cases and quantitative data drawn from European diplomatic history without being accused of

37. For arguments to this effect, see Leonard Binder, "The Middle East as a Subordinate Political System," *World Politics*, 10, no. 3 (1958); Fouad Ajami, "The Middle East: Important for the Wrong Reasons," *Journal of International Affairs*, 29, no. 1 (1979); and L. Carl Brown, *International Politics and the Middle East* (Princeton, N.J., 1984).

a narrow geographic, temporal, or cultural focus. Nonetheless, I have addressed this problem in two ways. First, I have drawn on European history in elaborating the different hypotheses. Second, after testing these propositions on the Middle East, I have applied them to the current array of global alliance commitments. By drawing on evidence from several different contexts, I have significantly reduced the limitations of relying primarily on evidence from the Middle East.

Of course, it may be true that alliances in the Middle East exhibit unique patterns of behavior. If so, that situation is not so much a barrier to theoretical work as a challenge to the theorist. The task is to explain how unique regional characteristics produce the observed behavior. Indeed, that is precisely what I attempt in later chapters, when I examine the impact of pan-Arabism on alliances in the Arab world.

Finally, because I am relying primarily on secondary sources in investigating these alliances, my assessment of contemporary Middle East diplomacy rests on the scholarship that area specialists have provided. Unfortunately, the historiography on recent Middle East politics is uneven—because of the difficulty of archival research and the obvious biases with which many accounts are written. Even primary sources and elite testimony must be treated with caution, given the instrumental motives that most participants in Middle East diplomacy have in offering their accounts. To compensate for these problems, I have tried to document events and arguments as extensively as possible, relying on multiple sources and the most widely accepted historical accounts.

I will proceed as follows. In chapter 2, I will develop the concepts and hypotheses that will guide the remainder of the study. In Chapters 3 and 4, I will describe the evolution of alliance commitments in the Middle East, beginning with the Baghdad Pact in 1955 and ending with the Arab responses to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979. In these chapters, I describe the various alliance relationships formed during this period, identify their origins, and place them within a broader historical context.

These tasks accomplished, I begin the task of comparing hypothesis and evidence. In chapter 5, I explore the competing propositions that states ally to balance against threats or to bandwagon with them. In chapter 6, I consider the importance of ideology as a cause of alliances. In chapter 7, I examine the role of foreign aid and transnational penetration as instruments of alliance formation. Finally, in chapter 8, I provide a comparative assessment of the different hypotheses, extend the analysis to alliances outside the Middle East, and reveal what these results imply for U.S. foreign policy.

A final word. This book is primarily an exercise in international relations theory, not Middle East studies. I have not tried to provide a

definitive diplomatic history of the Middle East since 1955. Instead, I have analyzed Middle East alliances in order to resolve several important disputes within the fields of international relations theory and national security policy. I will now consider these disputes in more detail.

[2]

Explaining Alliance Formation

In this chapter I propose five general explanations for international alliances. I explore the logic of the various hypotheses, present illustrative examples, and outline the conditions under which the behavior predicted by each should be expected.

ALLIANCES AS A RESPONSE TO THREAT: BALANCING AND BANDWAGONING

When confronted by a significant external threat, states may either balance or bandwagon. Balancing is defined as allying with others against the prevailing threat; bandwagoning refers to alignment with the source of danger. Thus two distinct hypotheses about how states will select their alliance partners can be identified on the basis of whether the states ally against or with the principal external threat.¹

These two hypotheses depict very different worlds. If balancing is more common than bandwagoning, then states are more secure, because aggressors will face combined opposition. But if bandwagoning is the dominant tendency, then security is scarce, because successful aggressors will attract additional allies, enhancing their power while reducing that of their opponents.

Both scholars and statesmen have repeatedly embraced one or the other of these hypotheses, but they have generally failed either to frame their beliefs carefully or to evaluate their accuracy. Accordingly, I pre-

1. My use of the terms *balancing* and *bandwagoning* follows that of Kenneth Waltz (who credits it to Stephen Van Evera) in his *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass., 1979). Arnold Wolfers uses a similar terminology in his essay "The Balance of Power in Theory and Practice," in *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore, Md., 1962), pp. 122-24.

sent each hypothesis in its simplest form and then consider several variations. I then consider which type of behavior—balancing or bandwagoning—is more common and suggest when each response is likely to occur.

Balancing Behavior

The belief that states form alliances in order to prevent stronger powers from dominating them lies at the heart of traditional balance of power theory.² According to this view, states join alliances to protect themselves from states or coalitions whose superior resources could pose a threat. States choose to balance for two main reasons.

First, they place their survival at risk if they fail to curb a potential hegemon before it becomes too strong. To ally with the dominant power means placing one's trust in its continued benevolence. The safer strategy is to join with those who cannot readily dominate their allies, in order to avoid being dominated by those who can.³ As Winston Churchill explained Britain's traditional alliance policy: "For four hundred years the foreign policy of England has been to oppose the strongest, most aggressive, most dominating power on the Continent. . . . [I]t would have been easy . . . and tempting to join with the stronger and share the fruits of his conquest. However, we always took the harder course, joined with the less strong powers, . . . and thus defeated the Continental military tyrant whoever he was."⁴ More recently, Henry Kissinger advocated a rapprochement with China, because he believed that in a triangular relationship it was better to align with the weaker side.⁵

Second, joining the weaker side increases the new member's influ-

2. For analyses of the classical writings on the balance of power, see Edward V. Gulick, *Europe's Classical Balance of Power* (New York, 1955), pt. 1; F. H. Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace: Theory and Practice in the History of Relations between States* (Cambridge, England, 1963), pt. 1; Iris L. Claude, *Power and International Relations* (New York, 1962), chaps. 2 and 3; Robert E. Osgood and Robert W. Tucker, *Force, Order, and Justice* (Baltimore, Md., 1967), pp. 96–104 and passim; and Martin Wight, "The Balance of Power," in *Diplomatic Investigations*, ed. Martin Wight and Herbert Butterfield (London, 1966). Modern versions of the theory can be found in Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, chap. 6; Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*; and Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, Pt. 4.

3. As Vattel wrote several centuries ago: "The surest means of preserving this balance of power would be to bring it about that no State should be much superior to the others. . . . [But] this idea could not be realized without injustice and violence. . . . It is simpler, . . . and more just to have recourse to the method . . . of forming alliances in order to make a stand against a very powerful sovereign and prevent him from dominating." Quoted in Gulick, *Europe's Classical Balance of Power*, p. 60.

4. Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 1: *The Gathering Storm* (Boston, 1948), pp. 207–8.

5. Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 178.

ence within the alliance, because the weaker side has greater need for assistance. Allying with the stronger side, by contrast, gives the new member little influence (because it adds relatively less to the coalition) and leaves it vulnerable to the whims of its partners. Joining the weaker side should be the preferred choice.⁶

Bandwagoning Behavior

The belief that states will balance is unsurprising, given the many familiar examples of states joining together to resist a threatening state or coalition.⁷ Yet, despite the powerful evidence that history provides in support of the balancing hypothesis, the belief that the opposite response is more likely is widespread. According to one scholar: "In international politics, nothing succeeds like success. Momentum accrues to the gainer and accelerates his movement. The appearance of irreversibility in his gains enfeebles one side and stimulates the other all the more. The bandwagon collects those on the sidelines."⁸

The bandwagoning hypothesis is especially popular with statesmen seeking to justify overseas involvements or increased military budgets. For example, German admiral Alfred von Tirpitz's famous risk theory rested on this type of logic. By building a great battle fleet, Tirpitz argued, Germany could force England into neutrality or alliance with her by posing a threat to England's vital maritime supremacy.⁹

Bandwagoning beliefs have also been a recurring theme throughout the Cold War. Soviet efforts to intimidate both Norway and Turkey into not joining NATO reveal the Soviet conviction that states will accommodate readily to threats, although these moves merely encouraged Nor-

6. In the words of Kenneth Waltz: "Secondary states, if they are free to choose, flock to the weaker side; for it is the stronger side that threatens them. On the weaker side they are both more appreciated and safer, provided, of course, that the coalition they form achieves enough defensive or deterrent strength to dissuade adversaries from attacking." See *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 126–27.

7. This theme is developed in Ludwig Dehio, *The Precarious Balance* (New York, 1965); Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*; and Gulick, *Europe's Classical Balance of Power*.

8. W. Scott Thompson, "The Communist International System," *Orbis*, 20, no. 4 (1977).

9. See William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism* (New York, 1953), pp. 434–35; and Craig, *Germany 1866–1945*, pp. 303–14. This view was not confined to military circles in Germany. In February 1914, Secretary of State Jagow predicted that Britain would remain neutral in the event of a continental war, expressing the widespread view that drove German policy prior to World War I. As he told the German ambassador in London: "We have not built our fleet in vain, and . . . people in England will seriously ask themselves whether it will be just that simple and without danger to play the role of France's guardian angel against us." Quoted in Imanuel Geiss, *July 1914* (New York, 1967), pp. 24–25.

way and Turkey to align more closely with the West.¹⁰ Soviet officials made a similar error in believing that the growth of Soviet military power in the 1960s and 1970s would lead to a permanent shift in the correlation of forces against the West. Instead, it contributed to a Sino-American rapprochement in the 1970s and the largest peacetime increase in U.S. military power in the 1980s.¹¹

American officials have been equally fond of bandwagoning notions. According to NSC-68, the classified study that helped justify a major U.S. military buildup in the 1950s: "In the absence of an affirmative decision [to increase U.S. military capabilities] . . . our friends will become more than a liability to us, they will become a positive increment to Soviet power."¹² President John F. Kennedy once claimed that "if the United States were to falter, the whole world . . . would inevitably begin to move toward the Communist bloc."¹³ And though Henry Kissinger often argued that the United States should form balancing alliances to contain the Soviet Union, he apparently believed that U.S. allies were likely to bandwagon. As he put it, "If leaders around the world . . . assume that the U.S. lacked either the forces or the will . . . they will accommodate themselves to what they will regard as the dominant trend."¹⁴ Ronald Reagan's claim, "If we cannot defend ourselves [in Central America] . . . then we cannot expect to prevail elsewhere. . . . [O]ur credibility will collapse and our alliances will crumble," reveals the same logic in a familiar role—that of justifying overseas intervention.¹⁵

These assertions contain a common theme: states are attracted to strength. The more powerful the state and the more clearly this power is demonstrated, the more likely others are to ally with it. By contrast, a decline in a state's relative position will lead its allies to opt for neutrality

10. For the effects of the Soviet pressure on Turkey, see George Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, 4th ed. (Ithaca, 1980), pp. 134–38; and Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East* (Princeton, N.J., 1980), pp. 355–78. For the Norwegian response to Soviet pressure, see Herbert Feis, *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945–50* (New York, 1970), p. 381; and Geir Lundestad, *America, Scandinavia, and the Cold War, 1945–1949* (New York, 1980), pp. 308–9.

11. See Dimitri K. Simes, "Soviet Policy toward the United States," in Nye, *The Making of America's Soviet Policy*, pp. 307–8.

12. NSC-68 ("United States Objectives and Programs for National Security"), reprinted in Gaddis and Etzold, *Containment*, p. 404. Similar passages can be found on pp. 389, 414, and 434.

13. Quoted in Seyom Brown, *The Faces of Power: Constancy and Change in United States Foreign Policy from Truman to Johnson* (New York, 1968), p. 217.

14. Quoted in U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Soviet Union and the Third World: Watershed in Great Power Policy?* 97th Cong., 1st sess., 1977, pp. 157–58.

15. *New York Times*, April 28, 1983, p. A12. In the same speech, Reagan also said: "If Europe and for alliances such as NATO? . . . Which ally, which friend would trust us then?"

at best or to defect to the other side at worst. The belief that states are prone to bandwagoning implies that most alliances are extremely fragile.

What is the logic behind this hypothesis? Two distinct motives can be identified. First, bandwagoning may be a form of appeasement. By aligning with an ascendant state or coalition, the bandwagoner may hope to avoid an attack by diverting it elsewhere.

Second, a state may align with the dominant side in wartime in order to share the spoils of victory. Mussolini's declaration of war on France in 1940 and Russia's entry into the war against Japan in 1945 illustrate this type of bandwagoning, as do Italian and Rumanian alliance choices in World War I.¹⁶ By joining the side that they believed would triumph, each hoped to make territorial gains at the end of the fighting.

Stalin's decision to align with Hitler in 1939 illustrates both motives nicely. The Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty led to the dismemberment of Poland and may have deflected Hitler's ambitions westward temporarily. Stalin was thus able to gain both time and territory by bandwagoning with Germany.¹⁷ In general, however, these two motives for bandwagoning are quite different. In the first, bandwagoning is chosen for defensive reasons, as a means of preserving one's independence in the face of a potential threat. In the second, a bandwagoning state chooses the leading side for offensive reasons, in order to share the fruits of victory. In either case, however, such behavior stands in sharp contrast to the predictions of the balancing hypothesis.

Different Sources of Threat

Balancing and bandwagoning are usually framed solely in terms of capabilities. Balancing is alignment with the weaker side, bandwagoning with the stronger.¹⁸ This conception should be revised, however, to account for the other factors that statesmen consider when deciding with whom to ally. Although power is an important part of the equation, it is not the only one. It is more accurate to say that states tend to ally with or against the foreign power that poses the greatest threat. For example, states may balance by allying with other strong states if a

16. See Denis Mack Smith, *Mussolini* (New York, 1982), pp. 234–35, 246–50; Adam Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917–1973* (New York, 1974), pp. 394–98; and A. J. P. Taylor, *The First World War* (New York, 1980), pp. 88–90, 153.

17. See Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence*, pp. 276–77; Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin: A Political Biography* (London, 1966), pp. 437–43; and Joachim Fest, *Hitler* (New York, 1974), pp. 583–84, 592–93.

18. The preeminent example of balance of power theory based exclusively on the distribution of capabilities is Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, chap. 6. For examples of theorists who argue that other factors can be important, see Gulick, *Europe's Classical Balance of Power*, pp. 25, 45–47, 60–62.

weaker power is more dangerous for other reasons. Thus the coalitions that defeated Germany in World War I and World War II were vastly superior in total resources, but they came together when it became clear that the aggressive aims of the Wilhelmines and Nazis posed the greater danger.¹⁹ Because balancing and bandwagoning are more accurately viewed as a response to threats, it is important to consider other factors that will affect the level of threat that states may pose: aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions.

Aggregate Power

All else being equal, the greater a state's total resources (e.g., population, industrial and military capability, and technological prowess), the greater a potential threat it can pose to others. Recognizing this fact, Walter Lippmann and George Kennan defined the aim of U.S. grand strategy as that of preventing any single state from controlling more industrial resources than the United States did. In practical terms, it means allying against any state that appears powerful enough to dominate the combined resources of industrial Eurasia.²⁰ Similarly, Sir Edward Grey, British foreign secretary in 1914, justified British intervention against the Dual Alliance by saying: "To stand aside would mean the domination of Germany; the subordination of France and Russia; the isolation of Britain . . . and ultimately Germany would wield the whole power of the continent."²¹ In the same way, Castlereagh's efforts to create a "just distribution of the forces in Europe" revealed his own concern for the distribution of aggregate power.²² The total power that

19. In World War I, the alliance of Great Britain, France, and Russia controlled 27.9 percent of world industrial production, while Germany and Austria together controlled only 19.2 percent. With Russia out of the war but with the United States joining Britain and France, the percentage opposing the Dual Alliance reached 51.7 percent, an advantage of more than 2 to 1. In World War II, the defense expenditures of the United States, Great Britain, and Russia exceeded those of Germany by roughly 4.5 to 1. Even allowing for Germany's control of Europe and the burdens of the war against Japan, the Grand Alliance possessed an enormous advantage in overall capabilities. Thus the formation of the two most important alliances in the twentieth century cannot be explained by focusing on power alone. For these and other statistics on the relative power in the two wars, see Paul M. Kennedy, "The First World War and the International Power System," *International Security*, 9, no. 1 (1984); and *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (London, 1983), pp. 309-15.

20. For a summary of these ideas, see Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, pp. 25-88. Kennan's ideas are found in *Realities of American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J., 1954), pp. 63-65. Lippmann's still compelling analysis is found in Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War: A Study of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York, 1947).

21. Quoted in Bernadotte C. Schmitt, *The Coming of the War in 1914* (New York, 1968), 2: 115.

22. Castlereagh's policy is described in Harold Nicolson, *The Congress of Vienna* (New York, 1946), p. 205-6.

states can wield is thus an important component of the threat that they pose to others.

Although power can pose a threat, it can also be prized. States with great power have the capacity to either punish enemies or reward friends. By itself, therefore, a state's aggregate power may provide a motive for balancing or bandwagoning.

Geographic Proximity

Because the ability to project power declines with distance, states that are nearby pose a greater threat than those that are far away.²³ Other things being equal, therefore, states are more likely to make their alliance choices in response to nearby powers than in response to those that are distant. For example, the British Foreign Office responded to German complaints about the attention paid to Germany's naval expansion by saying: "If the British press pays more attention to the increase of Germany's naval power than to a similar movement in Brazil . . . this is no doubt due to the proximity of the German coasts and the remoteness of Brazil."²⁴ More recently, President Reagan justified U.S. intervention in Central America in much the same way: "Central America is much closer to the United States than many of the world's trouble spots that concern us. . . . El Salvador is nearer to Texas than Texas is to Massachusetts. Nicaragua is just as close to Miami, San Antonio, and Tucson as those cities are to Washington."²⁵

As with aggregate power, proximate threats can lead to balancing or bandwagoning. When proximate threats trigger a balancing response, alliance networks that resemble checkerboards are the likely result. Students of diplomatic history have long been taught that neighbors of neighbors are friends, and the tendency for encircling states to align against a central power was first described in Kautilya's writings in the fourth century.²⁶ Examples include France and Russia against Wil-

23. See Harvey Starr and Benjamin A. Most, "The Substance and Study of Borders in International Relations Research," *International Studies Quarterly*, 20, no. 4 (1976). For a discussion of the relationship between power and distance, see Kenneth A. Boulding, *Conflict and Defense: A General Theory* (New York, 1962), pp. 229-30, 245-47. For an interesting practical critique, see Albert Wohlstetter, "Illusions of Distance," *Foreign Affairs*, 46, no. 2 (1968).

24. Quoted in Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (London, 1980), p. 421.

25. *New York Times*, April 28, 1983, p. A12.

26. Kautilya's analysis ran as follows: "The king who is situated anywhere immediately on the circumference of the conqueror's territory is termed the enemy. The king who is likewise situated close to the enemy, but separated from the conqueror only by the enemy, is termed the friend (of the conqueror). . . . In front of the conqueror and close to the enemy, there happen to be situated kings such as the conqueror's friend, next to him the enemy's friend, and next to the last, the conqueror's friend, and next, the enemy's friend's friend." See Kautilya, "Arthashastra," in *Balance of Power*, ed. Paul A. Seabury (San Francisco, 1965), p. 8.

helmet Germany, France, and the Little Entente in the 1930s; the Soviet Union and Vietnam against China and Cambodia in the 1970s; and the tacit alignment between Iran and Syria against Iraq and its various Arab supporters.

Alternatively, when a threat from a proximate power leads to bandwagoning, the familiar phenomenon of a sphere of influence is created. Small states bordering a great power may be so vulnerable that they choose to bandwagon rather than balance, especially if a powerful neighbor has demonstrated its ability to compel obedience. Thus Finland, whose name has undeservedly become synonymous with bandwagoning, chose to do so only after being defeated by the Soviet Union twice within a five-year period.

Offensive Power

All else being equal, states with large offensive capabilities are more likely to provoke an alliance than are those that are incapable of attacking because of geography, military posture, or something else.²⁷ Although offensive capability and geographic proximity are clearly related—states that are close to one another can threaten one another more readily—they are not identical.²⁸

Offensive power is also closely related but not identical to aggregate power. Specifically, offensive power is the ability to threaten the sovereignty or territorial integrity of another state at an acceptable cost. The ease with which aggregate power can be converted into offensive power (i.e., by amassing large, mobile military capabilities) is affected by the various factors that determine the relative advantage to the offense or defense at any particular period.

Once again, the effects of offensive power may vary. The immediate threat that offensive capabilities pose may create a strong incentive for others to balance.²⁹ Tirpitz's risk strategy backfired for precisely this

27. The best discussions of the implications of offense and defense are in Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, 30, no. 3 (1978); Stephen W. Van Evera, "Causes of War" (diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1984); and George Quester, *Offense and Defense in the International System* (New York, 1977). For an analysis and critique of these theories, see Jack S. Levy, "The Offensive/Defensive Balance of Military Technology: A Theoretical and Historical Analysis," *International Studies Quarterly*, 28, no. 2 (1984).

28. The distinction lies in the fact that there are a variety of factors unrelated to geographic proximity that alter the offense/defense balance. Proximity also tends to produce greater conflicts of interest, such as border disputes, between the states involved. These conflicts of interest are the result of proximity but can be distinct from the issue of offensive or defensive advantages.

29. See William L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments* (New York, 1950), pp. 3–5; Raymond J. Sontag, *European Diplomatic History, 1871–1932* (New York, 1933), pp. 4–5; Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," p. 189; and Quester, *Offense and Defense in the International System*, pp. 105–6.

reason. England viewed the German battle fleet as a potent offensive threat and redoubled its own naval efforts while reinforcing ties with France and Russia.³⁰ However, when offensive power permits rapid conquest, vulnerable states may see little hope in resisting. Balancing may seem unwise because one's allies may not be able to provide assistance quickly enough. This tendency may be one reason that spheres of influence emerge: states that close to a country with large offensive capabilities (and that are far from potential allies) may be forced to bandwagon because balancing alliances are simply not viable.³¹

Aggressive Intentions

Finally, states that are viewed as aggressive are likely to provoke others to balance against them. As noted earlier, Nazi Germany faced an overwhelming countervailing coalition because it combined substantial power with extremely dangerous ambitions. Indeed, even states with rather modest capabilities may prompt others to balance if they are perceived as especially aggressive. Thus Libyan conduct has prompted Egypt, Israel, France, the United States, Chad, and the Sudan to coordinate political and military responses against Colonel Qadhafi's activities.³²

Perceptions of intent are likely to play an especially crucial role in alliance choices. For example, changing perceptions of German aims helped create the Triple Entente. Whereas Bismarck had carefully defended the status quo after 1870, the expansionist ambitions of his successors alarmed the other European powers.³³ Although the growth of German power played a major role, the importance of German intentions should not be overlooked. The impact of perceptions is nicely revealed in Eyre Crowe's famous 1907 memorandum defining British policy toward Germany. Crowe's analysis is all the more striking because he had few objections to the growth of German power per se:

30. As Imanuel Geiss notes: "Finding an agreement with Britain along German lines without a substantial naval agreement thus amounted to squaring the circle." See his *German Foreign Policy*, p. 131. See also Kennedy, *Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism*, pp. 416–23.

31. Thus alliance formation becomes more frenetic when the offense is believed to have the advantage: great powers will balance more vigorously, and weak states will bandwagon more frequently. A world of tight alliances and few neutral states is the likely result.

32. For a discussion of Libya's international position, see Claudia Wright, "Libya and the West: Headlong into Confrontation?" *International Affairs*, 58, no. 1 (1981–1982). More recently, both the United States and France have taken direct military action against Libya, and a number of other countries have imposed economic sanctions against Qadhafi's regime.

33. See Craig, *Germany 1866–1945*, pp. 101, 242–47, and chap. 10; Geiss, *German Foreign Policy*, pp. 66–68; and Kennedy, *Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism*, chaps. 14 and 20.

The mere existence and healthy activity of a powerful Germany is an undoubted blessing to this world. . . . So long, then, as Germany competes for an intellectual and moral leadership of the world in reliance on its own natural advantages and energies England cannot but admire. . . . [S]o long as Germany's action does not overstep the line of legitimate protection of existing rights it can always count upon the sympathy and good will, and even the moral support of England. . . . It would be of real advantage if the determination not to bar Germany's legitimate and peaceful expansion were . . . pronounced as authoritatively as possible, provided that care was taken . . . to make it quite clear that this benevolent attitude will give way to determined opposition at the first sign of British or allied interests being adversely affected.³⁴

In short, Britain will oppose Germany only if Germany is aggressive and seeks to expand through conquest. Intention, not power, is crucial.

When a state is believed to be unalterably aggressive, other states are unlikely to bandwagon. After all, if an aggressor's intentions cannot be changed by an alliance with it, a vulnerable state, even if allied, is likely to become a victim. Balancing with others may be the only way to avoid this fate. Thus Prime Minister de Broqueville of Belgium rejected the German ultimatum of August 2, 1914, saying: "If die we must, better death with honor. We have no other choice. Our submission would serve no end. . . . Let us make no mistake about it, if Germany is victorious, Belgium, whatever her attitude, will be annexed to the Reich."³⁵ Thus the more aggressive or expansionist a state appears to be, the more likely it is to trigger an opposing coalition.

By defining the basic hypotheses in terms of threats rather than power alone, we gain a more complete picture of the factors that statesmen will consider when making alliance choices. One cannot determine a priori, however, which sources of threat will be most important in any given case; one can say only that all of them are likely to play a role. And the greater the threat, the greater the probability that the vulnerable state will seek an alliance.

34. "Memorandum by Sir Eyre Crowe on the Present State of British Relations with France and Germany, January 1, 1907," in *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914*, ed. G. P. Gooch and Harold Temperley (London, 1928), 3: 397-420. See also G. W. Monger, *The End of Isolation: British Foreign Policy, 1900-1907* (London, 1963), pp. 313-15. Sir Edward Grey drew a similar conclusion about Britain's alliance policy: "Great Britain has not in theory been opposed to the predominance of a strong group in Europe when it seemed to make for stability and peace. . . . [I]t is only when the dominant power becomes aggressive that she, by an instinct of self-defence, if not by deliberate policy, comes gravitates to anything that can be fairly described as a Balance of Power." See Edward Grey, Viscount of Fallodon, K.G., *Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916* (New York, 1925), 1: 8 and passim. See also Kennedy, *Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 431.

35. Quoted in Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914* (London, 1952), 3: 458.

The Implications of Balancing and Bandwagoning

The two general hypotheses of balancing and bandwagoning paint starkly contrasting pictures of international politics. Resolving the question of which hypothesis is more accurate is especially important, because each implies very different policy prescriptions. What sort of world does each depict, and what policies are implied?

If balancing is the dominant tendency, then threatening states will provoke others to align against them. Because those who seek to dominate others will attract widespread opposition, status quo states can take a relatively sanguine view of threats. Credibility is less important in a balancing world, because one's allies will resist threatening states out of their own self-interest, not because they expect others to do it for them. Thus the fear of allies defecting will decline. Moreover, if balancing is the norm and if statesmen understand this tendency, aggression will be discouraged because those who contemplate it will anticipate resistance.

In a balancing world, policies that convey restraint and benevolence are best. Strong states may be valued as allies because they have much to offer their partners, but they must take particular care to avoid appearing aggressive. Foreign and defense policies that minimize the threat one poses to others make the most sense in such a world.

A bandwagoning world, by contrast, is much more competitive. If states tend to ally with those who seem most dangerous, then great powers will be rewarded if they appear both strong and potentially aggressive. International rivalries will be more intense, because a single defeat may signal the decline of one side and the ascendancy of the other. This situation is especially alarming in a bandwagoning world, because additional defections and a further decline in position are to be expected. Moreover, if statesmen believe that bandwagoning is widespread, they will be more inclined to use force. This tendency is true for both aggressors and status quo powers. The former will use force because they will assume that others will be unlikely to balance against them and because they can attract more allies through belligerence or brinkmanship. The latter will follow suit because they will fear the gains their opponents will make by appearing powerful and resolute.³⁶

36. It is worth noting that Napoleon and Hitler underestimated the costs of aggression by assuming that their potential enemies would bandwagon. After Munich, for example, Hitler dismissed the possibility of opposition by claiming that British and French statesmen were "little worms." Napoleon apparently believed that England could not "reasonably make war on us unaided" and assumed that the Peace of Amiens guaranteed that England had abandoned its opposition to France. On these points, see Fest, *Hitler*, pp. 594-95; Liska, *Nations in Alliance*, p. 45; and Geoffrey Bruun, *Europe and the French Imperium: 1799-1814* (New York, 1938), p. 118. Because Hitler and Napoleon believed in a bandwagoning world, they were excessively eager to go to war.

Finally, misperceiving the relative propensity to balance or bandwagon is dangerous, because the policies that are appropriate for one situation will backfire in the other. If statesmen follow the balancing prescription in a bandwagoning world, their moderate responses and relaxed view of threats will encourage their allies to defect, leaving them isolated against an overwhelming coalition. Conversely, following the bandwagoning prescription in a world of balancers (employing power and threats frequently) will lead others to oppose you more and more vigorously.³⁷

These concerns are not merely theoretical. In the 1930s, France failed to recognize that her allies in the Little Entente were prone to bandwagon, a tendency that French military and diplomatic policies reinforced.³⁸ As noted earlier, Soviet attempts to intimidate Turkey and Norway after World War II reveal the opposite error; they merely provoked a greater U.S. commitment to these regions and cemented their entry into NATO. Likewise, the self-encircling bellicosity of Wilhelmine Germany and Imperial Japan reflected the assumption, prevalent in both states, that bandwagoning was the dominant tendency in international affairs.

When Do States Balance? When Do They Bandwagon?

These examples highlight the importance of identifying whether states are more likely to balance or bandwagon and which sources of threat have the greatest impact on the decision. An answer to the questions of when states balance and when they bandwagon is deferred to chapter 5, but several observations can be made here. In general, we should expect balancing behavior to be much more common than bandwagoning, and we should expect bandwagoning to occur only under certain identifiable conditions.

Although many statesmen fear that potential allies will align with the strongest side, this fear receives little support from most of international history. For example, every attempt to achieve hegemony in Europe

37. This situation is analogous to Robert Jervis's distinction between the deterrence model and the spiral model. The former calls for opposition to a suspected aggressor, the latter for appeasement. Balancing and bandwagoning are the alliance equivalents of deterring and appeasing. See Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J., 1976), chap. 3.

38. The French attempt to contain Germany after World War I was undermined both by the Locarno Treaty (which guaranteed the French border with Germany but failed to provide similar guarantees for France's allies) and by the French adoption of a defensive military doctrine, which made it impossible for France to come to the aid of its allies. See Telford Taylor, *Munich: The Price of Peace* (New York, 1980), pp. 111-12; and Richard D. Challenger, *The French Theory of the Nation in Arms* (New York, 1955), pp. 264-65.

since the Thirty Years War has been thwarted by a defensive coalition formed precisely for the purpose of defeating the potential hegemon.³⁹ Other examples are equally telling.⁴⁰ Although isolated cases of bandwagoning do occur, the great powers have shown a remarkable tendency to ignore other temptations and follow the balancing prescription when necessary.

This tendency should not surprise us. Balancing should be preferred for the simple reason that no statesman can be completely sure of what another will do. Bandwagoning is dangerous because it increases the resources available to a threatening power and requires placing trust in its continued forbearance. Because perceptions are unreliable and intentions can change, it is safer to balance against potential threats than to rely on the hope that a state will remain benevolently disposed.

But if balancing is to be expected, bandwagoning remains a possibility. Several factors may affect the relative propensity for states to select this course.

Strong versus Weak States

In general, the weaker the state, the more likely it is to bandwagon rather than balance. This situation occurs because weak states add little to the strength of a defensive coalition but incur the wrath of the more threatening states nonetheless. Because weak states can do little to affect the outcome (and may suffer grievously in the process), they must choose the winning side. Only when their decision can affect the outcome is it rational for them to join the weaker alliance.⁴¹ By contrast, strong states can turn a losing coalition into a winning one. And because their decision may mean the difference between victory and defeat, they are likely to be amply rewarded for their contribution.

Weak states are also likely to be especially sensitive to proximate

39. See Dehio, *The Precarious Balance*; Georg Schwarzenberger, *Power Politics* (London, 1941); Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*; and Jack S. Levy, "Theories of General War," unpublished manuscript, 1984. An extensively revised version of this paper can be found in *World Politics*, 37, no. 3 (1985).

40. Prominent recent examples include (1) the enhanced cooperation among the ASEAN states following the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam and the Vietnamese conquest of Cambodia; (2) the rapprochement between the United States and Communist China in the 1970s (and the renewed rivalry between China and Vietnam); (3) the alignment of the Front-Line States against South Africa throughout the 1970s; (4) the formation of a Gulf Cooperation Council in the Persian Gulf following the Iranian revolution. On the South African and Persian Gulf examples, see Mahnaz Z. Ispahani, "Alone Together: Regional Security Arrangements in Southern Africa and the Arabia Gulf," *International Security*, 8, no. 4 (1984). Whatever one thinks of the efficacy of these arrangements, the tendency they illustrate is striking.

41. See Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, p. 11. This problem is one of collective goods. The weakest states cannot provide for their own security, so they bandwagon with the strongest while hoping others will defend them anyway.

power. Where great powers have both global interests and global capabilities, weak states will be concerned primarily with events in their immediate vicinity. Moreover, weak states can be expected to balance when threatened by states with roughly equal capabilities but they will be tempted to bandwagon when threatened by a great power. Obviously, when the great power is capable of rapid and effective action (i.e., when its offensive capabilities are especially strong), this temptation will be even greater.

The Availability of Allies

States will also be tempted to bandwagon when allies are simply unavailable. This statement is not simply tautological, because states may balance by mobilizing their own resources instead of relying on allied support. They are more likely to do so, however, when they are confident that allied assistance will be available. Thus a further prerequisite for balancing behavior is an effective system of diplomatic communication. The ability to communicate enables potential allies to recognize their shared interests and coordinate their responses.⁴² If weak states see no possibility of outside assistance, however, they may be forced to accommodate the most imminent threat. Thus the first Shah of Iran saw the British withdrawal from Kandahar in 1881 as a signal to bandwagon with Russia. As he told the British representative, all he had received from Great Britain was "good advice and honeyed words—nothing else."⁴³ Finland's policy of partial alignment with the Soviet Union suggests the same lesson. When Finland joined forces with Nazi Germany during World War II, it alienated the potential allies (the United States and Great Britain) that might otherwise have helped protect it from Soviet pressure after the war.⁴⁴

Of course, excessive confidence in allied support will encourage weak states to free-ride, relying on the efforts of others to provide security. Free-riding is the optimal policy for a weak state, because its efforts will contribute little in any case. Among the great powers, the belief that

42. One reason for Rome's durable hegemony in the ancient world may have been the fact that her various opponents found it difficult to coordinate effective opposition against her. See Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore, Md., 1976), pp. 192, 199–200. By contrast, when a workable diplomatic system was established during the Renaissance, prospects for European hegemony declined drastically. On this point, see Gulick, *Europe's Classical Balance of Power*, p. 16; Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (New York, 1977), p. 106 and chap. 7; Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Boston, 1971), chaps. 13–16; and Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy* (London, 1963), chap. 1.

43. Quoted in C. J. Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists* (New York, 1967), p. 85.

44. See Fred Singleton, "The Myth of Finlandisation," *International Affairs*, 57, no. 2 (1981), especially pp. 276–78. Singleton points out that the Western allies approved the 1944 armistice between Finland and the Soviet Union (which established Soviet predominance there) in 1947.

allies are readily available encourages buck-passing; states that are threatened strive to pass to others the burdens of standing up to the aggressor. Neither response is a form of bandwagoning, but both suggest that effective balancing behavior is more likely to occur when members of an alliance are not convinced that their partners are unconditionally loyal.⁴⁵

Taken together, these factors help explain the formation of spheres of influence surrounding the great powers. Although strong neighbors of strong states are likely to balance, small and weak neighbors of the great powers may be more inclined to bandwagon. Because they will be the first victims of expansion, because they lack the capabilities to stand alone, and because a defensive alliance may operate too slowly to do them much good, accommodating a threatening great power may be tempting.⁴⁶

Peace and War

Finally, the context in which alliance choices are made will affect decisions to balance or bandwagon. States are more likely to balance in peacetime or in the early stages of a war, as they seek to deter or defeat the powers posing the greatest threat. But once the outcome appears certain, some will be tempted to defect from the losing side at an opportune moment. Thus both Rumania and Bulgaria allied with Nazi Germany initially and then abandoned Germany for the Allies, as the tides of war ebbed and flowed across Europe in World War II.⁴⁷

The restoration of peace, however, restores the incentive to balance. As many observers have noted, victorious coalitions are likely to disintegrate with the conclusion of peace. Prominent examples include Austria and Prussia after their war with Denmark in 1864, Britain and France after World War I, the Soviet Union and the United States after World War II,

45. For discussions on the problems of buck-passing, see Posen, *Sources of Strategic Doctrine*, pp. 63–64 and passim. See also Glenn Snyder's discussion of abandonment in his "Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," pp. 466–68; and the discussion of the free-rider problem in Olson and Zeckhauser, "Economic Theory of Alliances."

46. King Leopold of Belgium justified Belgium's policy of neutrality after World War I by saying, "An alliance, even if purely defensive, does not lead to the goal [of security] for no matter how prompt the help of an ally might be, it would not come until after the invader's attack which will be overwhelming." Quoted in Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, pp. 111–12. Urho Kekkonen of Finland argued for accommodation with the Soviet Union in much the same way: "It cannot be in Finland's interests to be the ally of some great power, constantly on guard in its peripheral position on the Russian border and the first to be overrun by the enemy, and devoid of political importance to lend any significance to its word when decisions over war and peace are being taken." See Urho Kekkonen, *A President's View* (London, 1982), pp. 42–43 and passim.

47. For an analysis of Balkan diplomacy during World War II, see "Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, 1941–1944," in *Survey of International Affairs, 1939–46: Hitler's Europe*, ed. Arnold Toynbee and Veronica Toynbee (London, 1954), pp. 604–31.

The Origins of Alliances

and China and Vietnam after the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. This recurring pattern provides further support for the proposition that balancing is the dominant tendency in international politics and that bandwagoning is the opportunistic exception.⁴⁸

Summary of Hypotheses on Balancing and Bandwagoning

Hypotheses on Balancing

1. *General form:* States facing an external threat will align with others to oppose the states posing the threat.
2. The greater the threatening state's aggregate power, the greater the tendency for others to align against it.
3. The nearer a powerful state, the greater the tendency for those nearby to align against it. Therefore, neighboring states are less likely to be allies than are states separated by at least one other power.
4. The greater a state's offensive capabilities, the greater the tendency for others to align against it. Therefore, states with offensively oriented military capabilities are likely to provoke other states to form defensive coalitions.
5. The more aggressive a state's perceived intentions, the more likely others are to align against that state.
6. Alliances formed during wartime will disintegrate when the enemy is defeated.

Hypotheses on Bandwagoning

The hypotheses on bandwagoning are the opposite of those on balancing.

1. *General form:* States facing an external threat will ally with the most threatening power.
2. The greater a state's aggregate capabilities, the greater the tendency for others to align with it.
3. The nearer a powerful state, the greater the tendency for those nearby to align with it.
4. The greater a state's offensive capabilities, the greater the tendency for others to align with it.

48. The role of different sources of threat also explains why coalitions possessing overwhelming power may stay together even after their enemies are clearly doomed (but not yet defeated). For example, focusing on aggregate power alone would have led us to expect the Grand Alliance to have disintegrated long before the end of the war (i.e., once the Axis was clearly overmatched). The fact that German and Japanese intentions appeared so malign helps explain why the Allies preserved their alliance long enough to obtain the unconditional surrender of both countries.

Explaining Alliance Formation

5. The more aggressive a state's perceived intentions, the less likely other states are to align against it.
6. Alliances formed to oppose a threat will disintegrate when the threat becomes serious.

Hypotheses on the Conditions Favoring Balancing or Bandwagoning

1. Balancing is more common than bandwagoning.
2. The stronger the state, the greater its tendency to balance. Weak states will balance against other weak states but may bandwagon when threatened by great powers.
3. The greater the probability of allied support, the greater the tendency to balance. When adequate allied support is certain, however, the tendency for free-riding or buck-passing increases.
4. The more unalterably aggressive a state is perceived to be, the greater the tendency for others to balance against it.
5. In wartime, the closer one side is to victory, the greater the tendency for others to bandwagon with it.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCKING TOGETHER (AND FLYING APART): IDEOLOGY AND ALLIANCE FORMATION

Ideological solidarity (to use Hans Morgenthau's term) refers to alliances that result from states sharing political, cultural, or other traits. According to the hypothesis of ideological solidarity, the more similar two or more states are, the more likely they are to ally. This hypothesis stands in sharp contrast to the hypotheses just considered, which view alliances as expedient responses to external threats. As a result, most realist scholars downplay the importance of ideology in alliance choices.⁴⁹

Yet despite their skepticism, the belief that like states attract has been loudly and frequently proclaimed. Edmund Burke, for example, believed that alliances were the product of a "correspondence in laws, customs, and habits of life" among states.⁵⁰ Despite Lord Palmerston's famous claim that England "has no permanent friends; she has only permanent interests," his policy as foreign secretary suggests a belief in

49. For scholarly discussions that question the importance of ideology in alliance formation, see Edwin Fedder, "The Concept of Alliance," *International Studies Quarterly*, 12, no. 1 (1968): 86; Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, pp. 183-84; and Schwarzenberger, *Power Politics*, pp. 112-14. For a quantitative analysis that supports these assertions, see Holsti, Joppmann, and Sullivan, *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances*, pp. 61-64.

50. Edmund Burke, *First Letter on a Regicidal Peace*, cited in Wight and Butterfield, *Diplomatic Investigations*, p. 97.

the natural affinity of democracies. As he said in 1834: "Our policy ought now to be to form a Western confederacy of free states as a counterpoise to the Eastern League of arbitrary governments. We shall be on the advance, they on the decline, and all the smaller planets in Europe will have a natural tendency to gravitate towards our system."⁵¹

More recently, Soviet clients such as the late Samora Machel of Mozambique and Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia have emphasized the "natural" alignment of socialist states, a concept that Soviet officials also endorse.⁵² In the same spirit, Ronald Reagan is fond of describing how the United States and its allies have "rediscovered their democratic values," values that "unite us in a stewardship of peace and freedom with our allies and friends."⁵³ And as noted in chapter 1, U.S. opposition to leftist movements in the Third World has been based on the same belief, that these groups are naturally inclined to ally with the Soviet Union. Indeed, the so-called Reagan Doctrine, which calls for active support for anti-Communist insurgencies throughout the developing world, is merely the latest manifestation of this general policy.⁵⁴

What is the logic behind such beliefs? Several possibilities can be identified. First, alignment with similar states may be viewed as a way of defending one's own political principles. After all, if statesmen believe their own system of government is inherently good, then protecting states with similar systems must be considered good as well. Second, states with similar traits are likely to fear one another less, because they find it harder to imagine an inherently good state deciding to attack them.⁵⁵ Third, alignment with similar states may enhance the legitimacy

51. Quoted in Charles K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston* (London, 1951), 1: 390. Palmerston's belief that weak states are prone to bandwagon is also evident in this passage.

52. See U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Soviet Union and the Third World*, pp. 46-48; and U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Soviet Union in the Third World, 1980-85: An Imperial Burden or Political Asset?* 99th Cong., 1st sess., 1985, pp. 201, 231-32. It is worth noting that Machel had largely abandoned his pro-Soviet position by the time of his death in 1986, in an effort to reduce pressure from South Africa and to obtain economic aid from the West.

53. "State of the Union Message," *New York Times*, January 26, 1983.

54. See Richard J. Barnet, *Intervention and Revolution: The United States in the Third World* (New York, 1968); Richard E. Feinberg and Kenneth A. Oye, "After the Fall: U.S. Policy toward Radical Regimes," *World Policy Journal*, 1, no. 1 (1983); Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, pp. 96, 136-44, 175-82, 284-88; and Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J., 1978), pp. 338-42 and passim. On the Reagan Doctrine, see U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, *U.S. Policy toward Anti-Communist Insurgencies*, 99th Cong., 1st sess., 1985; and George P. Shultz, "New Realities and Ways of Thinking," *Foreign Affairs*, 63, no. 3 (1985), pp. 710, 712-13.

55. Thus Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru believed that a policy of appeasement would ensure good relations between India and China, because he saw China as an Asian country that, like India, had recently achieved its freedom from imperialist interference.

of a weak regime by demonstrating that it is part of a large, popular movement. Fourth, the ideology itself may prescribe alignment. Marxism-Leninism is perhaps the most obvious example of this possibility.⁵⁶

Many examples can be cited in support of this hypothesis. Australia fought Germany in both world wars, despite the fact that Germany did not pose a direct threat to Australia in either one. According to one account, the colonies' loyalty to Great Britain was "not one of all to one but all to all, to the British ideal and way of life wherever it was to be found."⁵⁷ In the nineteenth century, the Holy Alliance that followed Napoleon's defeat and the League of the Three Emperors in 1873 united similar states in opposition to alternative political systems, although questions of power and security also played a role.⁵⁸ The Treaty of Munchengratz in 1833 and the Quadruple Alliance of 1834, which divided Europe neatly along ideological lines (notwithstanding occasional rifts within the two coalitions), also offer apt examples.⁵⁹

Birds of a Feather Flying Apart: Divisive Ideologies

The examples just mentioned illustrate how a common ideology can help create effective alliances. Less widely recognized, however, is the fact that certain types of ideology cause conflict and dissension rather than solidarity and alignment. In particular, when the ideology calls for the members to form a centralized movement obeying a single authoritative leadership, the likelihood of conflict among the members is increased. This somewhat paradoxical result may occur for several reasons.

First, because the ideology is a source of legitimacy for each of the

As a result, he did not see China as an imminent threat. The Sino-Indian War of 1962 revealed that Nehru had overestimated the power of "Asian solidarity." See Vidya Prakash Dutt, "India and China: Betrayal, Humiliation, Reappraisal," in *Policies toward China: Views from Six Continents*, ed. A. M. Halpern (New York, 1965), pp. 202-9; and Michael Brecher, *Nehru: A Political Biography* (London, 1959), pp. 588-92.

56. For a discussion of the centralizing tenets of Marxism-Leninism and a general history of the World Communist Movement, see Richard Lowenthal, *World Communism: The Disintegration of a Secular Faith* (New York, 1964).

57. See James A. Williamson, *Great Britain and the Commonwealth* (London, 1965), pp. 180-81.

58. The Holy Alliance began with a declaration by the principal European sovereigns that they would refrain from using force against one another. By 1820, England had withdrawn over the issue of intervention against liberal movements, leaving Austria, Hungary, Russia, and Prussia allied against the threat of liberal revolutions. See Nicolson, *Congress of Vienna*, pp. 242-43, 245-51, and chap. 16. On the League of the Three Emperors, see Geiss, *German Foreign Policy*, pp. 29-30; and Craig, *Germany 1866-1945*, pp. 103-4.

59. See Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, 1: 386-410; and Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, pp. 215-17.

when they are already fairly secure. When faced by great danger, however, they will take whatever allies they can get. Winston Churchill captured this idea in his famous statement, "If Hitler invaded Hell, I should at least make a favorable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons"—a sentiment that Franklin D. Roosevelt shared.⁶⁷ These views can be compared with earlier British and U.S. attitudes. Until the late 1930s, Germany's weakness made it possible for Britain, France, and the United States to treat the Soviet Union with disdain, a revulsion based largely on ideology and echoed by the Soviets. Only when Nazi Germany began to pose a significant threat did these ideological preferences lose their power.⁶⁸ In short, security considerations are likely to take precedence over ideological preferences, and ideologically based alliances are unlikely to survive when more pragmatic interests intrude.

Several interesting implications follow. Any factors that tend to make states more secure should increase the importance of ideological considerations in alliance choices. If Kenneth Waltz is correct that bipolar worlds are the most stable, then the impact of ideology should be greater in a bipolar world. Not only will the bipolar rivalry encourage both superpowers to support third parties freely (giving third parties the option to choose the ideologically most compatible side), but the caution that bipolarity imposes on superpower conduct may permit most other states to follow ideological preferences rather than security requirements.⁶⁹ In addition, other factors that make defense easy and conquest difficult should increase the importance of ideology in alliance choices. Thus an underlying cause of the ideological alliances of the 1820s and 1830s may have been the condition of defense dominance that seems to have prevailed during this period.⁷⁰ Nuclear weapons may make ideology somewhat more important today for precisely this rea-

67. Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 3: *The Grand Alliance* (Boston, 1950), p. 370. Roosevelt told Ambassador Joseph Davies, "I can't take communism nor can you, but to cross this bridge I would hold hands with the Devil." Quoted in John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States: An Interpretative History* (New York, 1978), p. 149.

68. See Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States*, chaps. 4 and 5.

69. See Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," *Daedalus*, 93, no. 3 (1964); and Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, chap. 8; Glenn Snyder and Paul Diesing, *Conflict among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making, and System Structure in International Crises* (Princeton, N.J., 1977), pp. 419-29; and Dinerstein, "Transformation of Alliance Systems," p. 593.

70. On this point, see Osgood and Tucker, *Force, Order, and Justice*, pp. 52-53, 78-81; Quester, *Offense and Defense in the International System*, pp. 73-76; Robert Jervis, "Security Regimes," in *International Regimes*, ed. Stephen D. Krasner (Ithaca, 1983), pp. 178-84; and Stanislaw Andrewski, *Military Organization and Society* (Berkeley, Calif., 1968), pp. 68-69. The main reason for defense dominance was the widespread preference for small standing armies among the conservative regimes of that period, which feared the effects of large standing armies on internal stability.

son. Because nuclear deterrence makes it more difficult for great powers to threaten weaker states (and gives the superpowers a strong incentive to moderate the conduct of others as well), third parties need formal alliances less and can pay greater attention to ideological factors when choosing alliance partners.

This situation reveals an important paradox. Ideology is most important when defense is dominant and states are most secure. That is, states must worry most about ideological monoliths in circumstances in which it will also be relatively easy for them to defend themselves. In other words, the conditions under which ideology is a significant cause of alignment are the conditions under which large, ideologically based alliances are the least dangerous.

Second, when weak or unstable regimes rely on ideological arguments to bolster their legitimacy, this reliance may affect their alliance choices. In particular, weak regimes may try to enhance their popularity (and attract external support) by seeking membership in a large and popular movement. By aligning with a larger group, a weak regime may hope to convince its citizens that it is pursuing worthy and widely accepted aims—that it is part of the forces of progress. Cuba's self-propelled entry into the Communist world may provide one example of this type of behavior. By declaring himself to be a Marxist-Leninist, Castro was able to both extract greater Soviet assistance and demonstrate his rejection of imperialist ideas while enjoying the benefits of membership in a large, worldwide movement. Accordingly, we can expect regimes whose legitimacy is precarious to enter ideologically based alliances.

Third, it is worth noting that we may exaggerate the apparent importance of ideology by taking the rhetoric of statesmen too seriously. For both internal and external reasons, statesmen are likely to describe their allies in favorable terms, suggesting that a strong ideological affinity exists. This tactic helps convince adversaries that the alliance is viable and increases the likelihood of public support in both countries. Thus Joseph Stalin received a deliberate whitewashing during World War II, one that transformed the former "Communist tyrant" into the heroic "Uncle Joe."⁷¹

Moreover, if the leaders of one state believe that ideology determines international alignments, they will view similar states as potential friends and dissimilar ones as potential enemies. Because they will view the former with approval and the latter with suspicion, relations with similar states will generally be cordial and relations with states espous-

71. See Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy: 1932-1945* (London, 1979), pp. 296-98. On the general tendency for allies to exaggerate their level of agreement, see Robert Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," *World Politics*, 20, no. 3 (1968): 463.

ing a different ideology will generally be poor. As a result, those espousing a different ideology are more likely to join forces in opposition. The belief that like states attract can easily be self-fulfilling, even if most states are relatively indifferent to ideological considerations. For both reasons, the tendency for birds of a feather to flock together may be overstated.

Finally, we should not overlook the close relationship between ideological factors and security considerations. Because all states try to minimize domestic opposition (not to mention violent internal upheavals), ideological movements that endanger a particular domestic order can pose every bit as significant a threat as that posed by military power. As a result, many ideological alliances may just be balancing alliances in disguise if they have been formed to oppose the spread of a hostile ideology. The Holy Alliance of Russia, Prussia, and Austria-Hungary is an obvious example. In the same way, weak regimes may bandwagon by altering their ideological positions when a new ideological movement appears to be gaining momentum. The distinction between these hypotheses may not be as sharp as the realist perspective suggests. A central question to consider later is whether contemporary Middle East states have been willing to sacrifice their security in order to gratify their ideological preferences or whether ideology reflects an aspiration that is readily ignored when necessity arises.

Summary of Hypotheses on Ideology and Alliance Formation

1. *General form:* The more similar the domestic ideology of two or more states, the more likely they are to ally.
2. The more centralized and hierarchical the movement prescribed by the ideology, the more conflictive and fragile any resulting alliance will be. Therefore, Leninist movements will find stable alliances more difficult to sustain than will either monarchies or democracies.
3. The more secure a state perceives itself to be, the greater the impact of ideology on alliance choices. Therefore, ideological alignments are more likely in a bipolar world. And therefore, the greater the advantage to the defense in warfare, the greater the impact of ideology on alliance choices.
4. States lacking domestic legitimacy will be more likely to seek ideological alliances to increase internal and external support.
5. The impact of ideology on the choice of alliance partners will be exaggerated; statesmen will overestimate the degree of ideological agreement among both their allies and their adversaries.

FOREIGN AID AND ALLIANCE FORMATION

According to this set of arguments, the provision of economic or military assistance can create effective allies, because it communicates favorable intentions, because it evokes a sense of gratitude, or because the recipient becomes dependent on the donor. Stated simply, the hypothesis is: the more aid, the tighter the resulting alliance. This hypothesis helps justify most economic and military assistance programs, as well as U.S. concern over Soviet arms shipments and economic aid to various Third World countries. In 1983, for example, U.S. undersecretary of defense Fred C. Ikle warned that Soviet arms assistance to Cuba and Nicaragua threatened to turn Central America into "another Eastern Europe," just as other U.S. officials saw Soviet military aid in other areas as a reliable tool of influence.⁷² Regardless of the context, the argument is the same: the provision of military or economic assistance is believed to give suppliers significant leverage over recipients.⁷³

As with the other hypotheses examined in this chapter, this belief is not without some basis. Throughout history, states have often provided some form of side payment to attract allies. Louis XIV purchased English neutrality during his campaign for hegemony in Europe by dispensing subsidies to the impoverished court of James II.⁷⁴ In World War I, Britain and France obtained the support of various Arab leaders by providing a gold subsidy and by promising them territorial acquisitions after the war. Similar pledges swung Italy to their side as well.⁷⁵ Historians generally agree that France's loans to Russia played a role in encouraging the Franco-Russian alliance of 1902.⁷⁶ In short, various kinds of foreign aid are frequently part of the process of forging alliances.

To conclude that the provision of aid is the principal cause of align-

72. *New York Times*, March 15, 1983. Former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown explained Soviet arms exports in similar terms: "How else are they going to expand their influence? . . . They're doing what they're good at. . . . When they ship out tanks to the Third World to use against neighbors that increases their political influence." *Washington Post*, December 7, 1980, p. A10.

73. See Hans J. Morgenthau, "A Political Theory of Foreign Aid," *American Political Science Review*, 56, no. 2 (1962): 302-3.

74. See John Wolf, *The Emergence of the Great Powers* (New York, 1962), pp. 18, 26, 103.

75. See Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, p. 81; Howard M. Sachar, *The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914-1924* (New York, 1969), pp. 125-30, 136; Bernadotte Schmitt and Harold M. Vedeler, *The World in the Crucible: 1914-1918* (New York, 1984), pp. 92-94.

76. Jacob Viner, "International Finance and Balance of Power Diplomacy, 1881-1914," in Viner, *International Economics: Studies* (Glencoe, Ill., 1952); George F. Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order* (Princeton, N.J., 1978), pp. 342-46; and Fritz Stern, *Gold and Iron: Bismarck, Bleichroder, and the Building of the German Empire* (New York, 1979), pp. 439-47.

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ment or a powerful tool of influence, however, may be incorrect. The notion that aid causes alignment ignores the fact that military or economic assistance is offered and accepted only when both parties believe it is in their interest to do so. In particular, offering or accepting aid is one way that states with different capabilities can respond to a common threat. Thus Secretary of State Alexander Haig justified the U.S. security assistance program by saying, "The friendly states we support can themselves help us assure our most vital national interests."⁷⁷ This statement suggests that an aid relationship may be more the result of political alignment than a cause of it. For example, no one would claim that the Grand Alliance in World War II was caused by U.S. Lend-Lease aid to Great Britain and Russia. It is more accurate to say that Lend-Lease was a means by which U.S. industrial might could be applied more effectively against the common enemy.⁷⁸ Yet those who now assert that Soviet or U.S. military aid can create reliable proxies are in effect making just such a claim; they are focusing solely on the means by which an alliance is implemented and ignoring the common political goals that inspired the relationship in the first place.

Accordingly, when evaluating the importance of economic or military assistance on alliances, we should consider the degree to which such assistance has powerful independent effects on the recipient's conduct and the conditions that will increase the influence that aid brings. If we are worried about Soviet military assistance, for example, we want to know whether or not this assistance will enable Moscow to control aid recipients for its own purposes. Similarly, before the United States provides military aid to an ally, it should consider whether or not this assistance will be used in ways that are consistent with U.S. interests. The question thus becomes: when does foreign aid give suppliers effective political leverage? Several additional hypotheses address this point.⁷⁹

77. See Alexander Haig, "Security and Development Assistance," in U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *Current Policy* #264 (Washington, D.C., March 19, 1981), p. 2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff use similar language: "Security Assistance Programs contribute to U.S. national security objectives by assisting allies . . . to meet their defense needs and supporting collective security efforts." See U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *U.S. Military Posture for FY1987* (Washington, D.C., 1986), p. 83.

78. See Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chap. 1; and William H. McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia: Their Cooperation and Conflict, 1941-1946* (London, 1953), pp. 137-55 and passim.

79. There is an extensive literature on the sources and conditions of economic leverage. Interestingly, writers focusing solely on the phenomena of arms transfers and economic assistance usually assume that aid can produce substantial leverage, whereas writers focusing on the more general subjects of economic leverage and coercion are much less optimistic about the possibility of states achieving significant control over others via direct economic pressure. In evaluating this literature, I have found the following works es-

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Monopoly Supply of an Important Asset

The more valuable the asset offered and the greater the degree of monopoly that the supplier enjoys, the more effective the asset will be as an instrument of alliance formation. The logic here is obvious; when aid is especially valuable and when alternatives are nonexistent, recipients will be more willing to follow the donor's preferences in order to obtain assistance. Suppliers will thus have greater leverage. Obviously, if alternative sources are available, leverage will be significantly reduced.

Several implications follow. First, the impact of such aid on alliance choices (and the degree of leverage obtained through foreign aid) will be enhanced when a continuous supply of the commodity in question is needed. Examples include food, hard currency, and military equipment during wartime. Items that are valuable, that are difficult to store, or that require frequent resupply will give the donor greater leverage than will items that can be stockpiled or that are provided on a once-only basis.⁸⁰

Second, military aid may be an especially important source of leverage when the recipients face a significant external threat. In this respect, foreign aid can be one way of balancing against a common foe. It also reinforces the idea that the importance of a given asset will depend on the context in which it is offered (i.e., on the specific circumstances the recipient faces).

Asymmetrical Dependence

Leverage will be enhanced if the supplier enjoys an asymmetry of dependence vis-à-vis the recipient. For example, if a client state faces an imminent threat, but its principal patron does not, then the latter's ability to influence the former's conduct should increase. When dependence is mutual, however, both states must adapt to their partner's interests. In short, when one ally does not need the other very much, its leverage should increase.

Conversely, the more important the recipient is to the donor, the

pecially helpful: Ariel Levite and Athanassios Platias, "Evaluating Small States' Dependence on Arms Imports: An Alternative Perspective" (Ithaca, 1983); Albert O. Hirschman, *State Power and the Structure of International Trade* (Berkeley, Calif., 1945), especially pp. 29-40; James A. Caporaso, "Dependence, Dependency, and Power in the Global System: A Structural and Behavioral Analysis," *International Organization*, 32, no. 1 (1978); Klaus Knorr, *The Power of Nations* (New York, 1975); Klaus Knorr, "Is International Coercion Waning or Rising?" *International Security*, 1, no. 4 (1977); Michael Mastanduno, "Strategies of Economic Containment," *World Politics*, 37, no. 4 (1985); and Steven E. Miller, "Arms Races Conference in Bellagio, Italy, 1979).

⁸⁰ See Robert E. Harkavy, *Arms Trade and International Systems* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), p. 101.

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more aid it is likely to receive but the less leverage such aid will produce. Patrons will be reluctant to pressure important allies too severely by reducing the level of support. This tendency will be increased by the fact that the provision of aid usually commits the donor's own prestige. A client's threats to realign if its interests are not served will be all the more effective once an ally has invested heavily in the relationship. In fact, large aid programs, far from providing suppliers with effective leverage, may actually indicate that the client has successfully coerced the patron into providing ever-increasing amounts of support.

Asymmetry of Motivation

The relative importance of the issues on which alliance members differ will also affect the amount of leverage that patrons can exert over their clients. Other things being equal, when the recipient cares more about a particular issue, the supplier's ability to influence the recipient is reduced. This reduction occurs because the cost of complying with the patron's wishes may be greater than the cost of renouncing assistance.⁸¹

Thus even powerful patrons are unlikely to exert perfect control over their clients. Because recipients are usually weaker than suppliers, they have more at stake. They are thus likely to bargain harder to ensure that their interests are protected. In general, therefore, the asymmetry of motivation will favor recipients. As a result, the leverage available from large foreign aid programs will usually be less than donors expect.

Decision-Making Autonomy

Finally, leverage will be enhanced when the patron is politically capable of manipulating the level of assistance provided to the client. Authoritarian governments are likely to be better at using foreign aid to influence their allies' policies, because they face fewer internal obstacles to a decrease in assistance. By contrast, a state whose domestic political process is easily hamstrung by conflicting interest groups may find it difficult to make credible threats to reduce support in order to control the behavior of even heavily dependent client states.⁸²

These four conditions will largely determine the independent impact

81. This formulation is similar to the one employed by Klaus Knorr in "Is International Coercion Waning or Rising?" pp. 102-10. On the conditions favoring successful coercion, consult Alexander L. George, David Hall, and William Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: Laos, Cuba, Vietnam* (Boston, 1971), pp. 216-20.

82. See Stephen D. Krasner's discussion of policy making in a "weak state" in *Defending the National Interest*, chap. 3; and Mastanduno, "Strategies of Economic Containment," pp. 519-20, 522-24.

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of foreign aid on international alliances. When they are considered in light of the hypotheses we have already examined, several additional hypotheses can be inferred.

First, foreign aid can also affect alliance choices by providing a clear and credible signal that a powerful state does not have aggressive intentions. A generous offer of military assistance may be worth a thousand friendly words, for great powers are unlikely to try to increase the military capabilities of those toward whom they harbor aggressive intentions.

Second, the more that leaders of a supplier regime embrace the bandwagon hypothesis, the more easily clients will be able to defy attempts at pressure and extract additional assistance. When statesmen fear bandwagoning, they fear the cascading effects that even a single defection might produce. In such circumstances, patrons are willing to invest large sums to prevent the loss of even a minor ally. As a result, they find their potential leverage evaporating still further. In the same way, when statesmen believe ideology is extremely important, they place a high value on preserving ideologically similar regimes. Their reluctance to endanger these allies by reducing aid (even when this might make the allies more compliant) further reduces the impact of foreign assistance.⁸³

Third, the provision of aid may often be self-defeating. After all, if the assistance is valuable enough to be appreciated, it is likely to leave the recipient better off than before. As the client's capabilities improve, it will be better equipped to resist the patron's blandishments or counter subsequent pressure. The link between aid and influence is weakened even more.

Taken together, these propositions suggest that foreign aid plays a relatively minor role in alliance formation. It encourages favorable perceptions of the donor, but it provides the patron with effective leverage only under rather rare circumstances. These conditions are instructive in themselves; aid is most likely to create reliable proxies when the recipients are so vulnerable and dependent that they are forced to follow the patron's wishes even when those wishes conflict with their own. Ironically, foreign aid is likely to be useful in manipulating allies that don't matter very much or in influencing more consequential states only on matters that are of vital importance to the patron. There is ample evidence for this observation; although Great Britain financed and equipped the coalition that defeated Napoleon, her efforts produced an unruly coalition in which British leverage was at best erratic. Much the

83. On these points, see Robert O. Keohane, "The Big Influence of Small Allies," *Foreign Policy*, no. 2 (Spring 1971).

same lesson can be drawn from the U.S. experience with Lend-Lease in World War II.⁸⁴

Summary of Hypotheses on Foreign Aid and Alliance Formation

1. *General form:* The more aid provided by one state to another, the greater the likelihood that the two will form an alliance. The more aid, the greater the control by the donor over the recipient.
2. Foreign aid is a special form of balancing behavior. Therefore, the greater the external threat facing the recipient, the greater the effect of aid on alignment.
3. The greater the donor's monopoly on the commodity provided, the greater its leverage over the recipient.
4. The greater the asymmetry of dependence favoring the donor, the greater its leverage over the recipient.
5. The greater the asymmetry of motivation favoring the donor, the greater its leverage over the recipient. Because the recipient's security is usually more precarious, however, asymmetry of motivation will usually favor the recipient.
6. The weaker the domestic political decision-making apparatus of the donor, the less leverage it can exert on the recipient.

TRANSNATIONAL PENETRATION AND ALLIANCE FORMATION

A final set of hypotheses concerns the effects of *transnational penetration*, which I define as the manipulation of one state's domestic political system by another.⁸⁵ This penetration may take at least three forms: (1) Public officials whose loyalties are divided may use their influence to move their country closer to another. (2) Lobbyists may use a variety of means to alter public perceptions and policy decisions regarding a potential ally. (3) Foreign propaganda may be used to sway elite and mass attitudes. These hypotheses predict that alliances can be readily formed by manipulation of foreign governments through these indirect avenues of influence.

Although penetration has received relatively little attention in recent

84. See Robert Sherwig, *Guineas and Gunpowder: British Foreign Aid in the Wars with France, 1793-1815* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), pp. 311-13, 350-55; and McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia*.

85. For careful distinctions among different types of penetration, see Karen Dawisha, "Soviet Cultural Relations with Iraq, Syria and Egypt, 1955-1970," *Soviet Studies*, 27, no. 3 (1975).

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scholarly research, examples are easy to find.⁸⁶ The Turkish decision to ally with Germany in World War I was due in part to the influence of Liman von Sanders, a German officer serving as inspector-general of the Turkish army.⁸⁷ During the war itself, Britain conducted an effective propaganda campaign in the United States, and it played an important role in the U.S. decision to intervene.⁸⁸ During the 1950s, the China Lobby exerted a substantial influence over U.S. policy in the Far East—and especially the alliance with Taiwan—by manipulating public opinion and influential U.S. officials.⁸⁹ Finally, the belief that penetration is an effective tool of alliance building has inspired the political indoctrination programs that accompanied U.S. military training and educational assistance to various developing countries, as well as U.S. concern over similar Soviet programs.⁹⁰

As with foreign aid, however, the true causal relationship between transnational penetration and international alliances is often unclear. In particular, widespread contacts between two states (in the form of educational assistance, military training, and the like) are as likely to be the result of common interests and a close alliance as they are to be the cause of them. The observed association may well be partly spurious; both extensive contacts and alignment may be the result of some other cause (e.g., an external threat). Once again, therefore, we should consider the circumstances under which penetration will have the greatest independent effect on alliance formation. When is it more likely to alter alliance choices rather than merely reflect preexisting preferences?

Open versus Closed Societies

First, penetration will be more effective against open societies. When power is diffuse, when state and society are more accessible to propaganda from abroad or to lobbyists representing foreign interests, or

86. Exceptions include K. J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1967), chap. 8; Andrew M. Scott, *The Revolution in Statecraft: Informal Penetration* (New York, 1965); and Nicholas O. Berry, "The Management of Foreign Penetration," *Orbis*, 17, no. 3 (1973).

87. Schmitt and Vedeler, *The World in the Crucible*, pp. 98-102; and A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe: 1848-1918* (London, 1952), pp. 508-11, 533-34.

88. See Horace C. Peterson, *Propaganda for War: The British Campaign against American Neutrality, 1914-1918* (Norman, Okla., 1939).

89. See Ross Y. Koen, *The China Lobby in American Politics* (New York, 1974); and Stanley Bachrack, *The Committee for One Million: "China Lobby" Politics* (New York, 1976).

90. Miles D. Wolpin, "External Political Socialization as a Source of Conservative Military Behavior in the Third World," in *Militarism in Developing Countries*, ed. Kenneth Fidel (New Brunswick, N.J., 1975); Anthony Cordesman, "U.S. and Soviet Competition in Arms Exports and Military Assistance," *Armed Forces Journal International*, 118, no. 12 (1981): 66-67; and U.S. Department of Defense, *Soviet Military Power* (Washington, D.C., 1983), pp. 86-90.

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when censorship is rare, transnational penetration is more likely to work. Thus we would expect a democratic state such as the United States to be more susceptible to penetration than an authoritarian regime such as the Soviet Union.

Ends and Means

The effectiveness of penetration will also depend on the ends sought by the state intending to penetrate another state. In particular, if one state seeks to encourage alignment solely by manipulating public and elite attitudes in another country, this effort is unlikely to be viewed as a direct threat to the independence of the state in question. However, if realignment is sought by the subversion of one regime (e.g., through hostile propaganda or support for dissident groups), then the target regime will probably react negatively toward the state directing the campaign.

The means employed may make a difference as well. If the means are viewed as legitimate, the likelihood of a hostile backlash is reduced. For example, attempts to coopt or indoctrinate foreign troops through a military training program are likely to be viewed with suspicion, whereas lobbying efforts by accredited representatives in a democratic society are more likely to be seen as politics as usual.⁹¹

These two conditions are closely related. The more open a given political system, the greater the range of activities that will be viewed as legitimate avenues of influence and the less the effort required to effect a change. By contrast, altering the behavior of a highly centralized, authoritarian regime may require either coopting or removing the top leadership itself. Needless to say, efforts to do this are likely to lead to suspicion and hostility rather than amity and alliance. Thus, when penetration does contribute to alliance formation, it will generally be where the means are perceived as legitimate and where other important incentives for the alliance already exist.

Taken together, these conditions imply that penetration will be an important cause of alliance formation only in rather rare circumstances. Two possibilities can be identified. First, states that lack established government institutions may be more vulnerable to pressure, especially if they are forced to rely on foreigners to provide essential skills. Such states will usually be weak and relatively unimportant. Second, and conversely, penetration may also be relatively effective against the largest powers, because their attention is divided and because foreign

91. Even democracies can be sensitive to overt foreign manipulation. Thus the China Lobby tried to prevent careful scrutiny of all its activities. See Bachrack, *Committee for One Million*.

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elites can readily acquire expertise on how to manipulate the system, especially if they received part of their education in the country in question. In both cases, however, penetration will be most effective when it serves to reinforce other motives for alignment—that is, when lobbyists or propagandists are preaching to the converted.

Summary of Hypotheses on Penetration and Alliance Formation

1. *General form:* The greater one state's access to the political system of another, the greater the tendency for the two to ally.
2. Penetration is more effective against open societies.
3. Penetration is more effective when the objectives are limited. Therefore, the more intrusive the act of penetration, the greater the probability that it will have a negative effect on alignment.
4. Penetration is most effective when other causes contribute to the alliance.

CONCLUSION

The hypotheses examined in this chapter imply very different worlds. If balancing is the norm, if ideology exerts little effect or is often divisive, and if foreign aid and penetration are rather weak causes, then hegemony over the international system will be extremely difficult to achieve. Most states will find security plentiful. But if the bandwagoning hypothesis is more accurate, if ideology is a powerful force for alignment, and if foreign aid and penetration can readily bring reliable control over others, then hegemony will be much easier (although it will also be rather fragile).⁹² Even great powers will view their security as precarious.

Because the implications of each hypothesis are different, it is important to determine which of the hypotheses presented here offers the best guide to state behavior. The next task, therefore, is to assemble a body of evidence that will enable us to perform this assessment.

92. If bandwagoning is common, a dominant position may be fragile because a few small defeats may cause a flood of defections. Once allies have concluded that the dominant power's fortunes are waning, the bandwagoning hypothesis predicts that they will quickly realign. The fortunes of the great powers are thus highly elastic in a bandwagoning world, because small events anywhere will have major consequences.