CHAPTER ONE

Linking Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

After the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, was bombed on October 23, 1983, killing 241 marines, it took the full efforts of administration officials and congressional Republicans to persuade President Ronald Reagan to redeploy American forces offshore on February 7, 1984, despite the strong public sentiment opposing the continued American involvement. But after 18 American soldiers were killed and 78 wounded in Somalia on October 3, 1993, President Bill Clinton quickly reversed his policy on October 7 in the face of a similar negative public reaction, by announcing the withdrawal of American troops by March 31, 1994. Even though public opinion moved sharply against a continued U.S. commitment in both cases after American troops died, one president chose to ignore public opposition, and another reacted quickly to it.

This variation in reaction to public opinion emerges on longer-term issues as well. After a lengthy interagency review, President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1954 announced a new strategic doctrine emphasizing nuclear weapons, even though he harbored serious private doubts regarding the policy's efficacy. Although the public did not clamor for a dramatic revision of strategic doctrine, Eisenhower believed that radical action was necessary to sustain long-term public support. In 1983, however, Reagan announced his vision for strategic defenses against missiles without consulting with his main foreign and defense policy advisers.

The public may have been disenchanted with the existing strategic doctrine and subsequently approved of Reagan's decision, but this did not influence his policy choice. (For a discussion of the Reagan and Clinton cases, see chapters 8 and 9; the Eisenhower decision is discussed in chapter 6.) That is, one president reacted to public opinion when it approved of the status quo, and another ignored the public when pressured for a policy change. Although I will examine later the factors that accounted for these different reactions, these brief examples suggest that policymakers do not necessarily evaluate public opinion in similar ways. These instances illustrate a key point, that the prevailing public opinion does not directly translate into policy outcomes.

Instead, the differing influence of public opinion is mediated largely through a president's beliefs about the proper influence that public opinion should have on foreign policymaking. The theory presented in this book explains why presidents undertake different policy initiatives when faced with similar public sentiments and why some presidents react to public opinion in what appears to be a counterintuitive manner based on objective circumstances. Building on recent work demonstrating a conditional influence of public opinion, I develop the theory that a decision maker's reaction to public opinion is based on the interaction between the person's beliefs about the proper role of public opinion in formulating foreign policy and the prevailing decision context. My findings suggest that some individuals' beliefs make them relatively open to decisions responding to public opinion, whereas others' beliefs cause them to ignore the public's view when contemplating foreign policy choices. As the strictures of time and information change, the influence of public opinion on these persons shifts in a predictable manner. Through an examination of cases from post–World War II American presidential administrations, this book explores the plausibility of the theory's explanation of when and why decision makers become concerned with public opinion when formulating foreign policy.

This exploration is informed by earlier perspectives that provide a range of answers to the question of how, if at all, public opinion affects foreign policy. Long-standing debates in American politics and international relations point to normative tensions surrounding the role of public opinion in determining foreign policy. From American politics, two strands of democratic theory suggest alternative views of the manner in which elected officials respond to public opinion.

The *delegate view* of democratic representation contends that officials act as the public's representative by acting on their constituents'

wishes. Public opinion, it is argued, should play a vital role in formulating policy, and policies should reflect public preferences on important matters, as expressed through available mechanisms (e.g., voting, polls, interest-group activity).[1] Abraham Lincoln supported this view in 1836: "While acting as [his constituents'] representative, I shall be governed by their will on all subjects on which I have the means of knowing what their will is; and on all others, I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests." Then in 1848, he noted, "The primary, the cardinal, the one great living principle of all democratic representative government—the principle that the representative is bound to carry out the known will of his constituents."[2] This view implies that policymakers carefully consider and even follow the dictates of public opinion when formulating policy.

The *trustee view* of democratic representation suggests that elected officials rely more on their own judgment than on the presumably uninformed opinions of their constituents. In this view, officials handle the complicated issues facing the government, and the public's involvement is limited primarily to selecting candidates at the ballot box. Because this view portrays the public as uninformed, proponents tend to regard any response to public opinion between elections as unwise and undesirable. In the *Federalist Papers* 71, Alexander Hamilton argued,

> The republican principle demands that the deliberate sense of the community should govern the conduct of those to whom they intrust the management of their affairs; but it does not require an unqualified complaisance to every sudden breeze or passion. [Instead,] when occasions present themselves in which the interests of the people are at variance with their inclinations, it is the duty of persons whom they have appointed to be guardians of those interests, to withstand the temporary delusion in order to give them time and opportunity for more cool and sedate reflection.

Edmund Burke made a similar argument:

> [A representative's] unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. . . . Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.[3]

According to this view, the public's role should be limited to selecting the best persons at elections and then standing back to allow them to

determine the public's best interests. Although most modern analysts believe that a balance between the delegate and trustee perspectives is best for democratic governance,[4] this book argues that individuals have particular patterns of response to public opinion—only some of which reflect a balance between the delegate and trustee views—based on their beliefs about the proper role of public opinion in their decisions.

Another theoretical debate in the international relations literature concerns the disagreement between realists and Wilsonian liberals over the influence of public opinion on foreign policy. Despite believing that public opinion usually has little influence, classical realists (whose view is related to the trustee perspective), such as Hans Morgenthau and Walter Lippmann, contend that when public opinion does affect decisions, it perniciously constrains the free hand of policymakers to make wise foreign policy. Morgenthau speaks for most realists in holding that "the rational requirements of good foreign policy cannot from the outset count on the support of a public opinion whose preferences are emotional rather than rational." According to him, the public's preferences contradict the necessities of sound policy and would "sacrifice tomorrow's real benefit for today's apparent advantage."[5] Lippmann argued that the public's slow response to events and lack of relevant information threatens the well-being of any nation that relies on public opinion to guide its foreign policy:

> The unhappy truth is that the prevailing public opinion has been destructively wrong at the critical junctures. The people have imposed a veto on the judgments of informed and responsible officials. They have compelled the government, which usually knew what would have been wiser, or was necessary, or was more expedient, to be too late with too little, or too long with too much, too pacifist in peace and too bellicose in war, too neutralist or appeasing in negotiation or too intransigent.[6]

Even though Lippmann was emphasizing here the constraining influence of public opinion, most realists contend that public opinion rarely influences foreign policy choices.

Although realists concede that public opinion has sometimes caused difficulties for decision makers, these scholars conclude that elites usually either ignore the public's preferences altogether or persuade the public to support their chosen policy. Realists argue that formulating foreign policy requires complicated trade-offs, access to secret information, and sophisticated reasoning, which the public lacks. Given the emotional or moody foundations of public opinion, realists recommend

that policymakers not consider public opinion as they formulate foreign policy. Instead, after deciding on a policy, officials might work to build public support for the chosen alternative. This view suggests that policymakers will likely develop policy with attention only to national security requirements while largely leaving public sentiments out of the equation. Having chosen an alternative, officials might then move to secure public support for a policy through educational efforts to change public opinion. Even though public opinion and foreign policy might eventually align with each other, the realists contend this result occurs primarily because of policymakers' efforts to alter public opinion. This realist perspective, which Ole R. Holsti labels the "Almond-Lippmann consensus," dominated thinking about public opinion and foreign policy for much of the period after World War II.[7]

Although not usually concerned with public opinion and foreign policy, neorealist views on this subject are similar to the thinking of classical realists. Neorealists such as Kenneth Waltz distinguish between theories of foreign policy choice and systemic theories of international outcomes but still echo the sentiments of classical realists regarding public opinion and foreign policy. For example, John Mearsheimer observes, "Public opinion on national security issues is notoriously fickle and responsive to elite manipulation and world events."[8] To the extent that neorealists do consider public opinion, elites are expected either to ignore or to educate the public in national security policy, in much the same manner as described by the classical realists. (Given these similarities, the term *realist* is used throughout this book with the understanding that it applies to both classical realist and neorealist expectations.)

In contrast to the realists, Wilsonian liberals (whose view is closely related to the delegate perspective) argue that public opinion should affect foreign policy formulation because of democratic norms and the public's moderating influence on possibly adventurous and overambitious elites.[9] Like other liberals, Woodrow Wilson believed the public possessed an inherent virtuous quality that supplied a valuable and steady direction to a nation's foreign policy. In his mind, public opinion provided the only prudent guide to foreign policy, because "only a free people could hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own." He insisted that reason, not passion or ignorance, directed the public's opinion on the weighty matters of state. Given public opinion's sound foundation and constancy of purpose, he maintained that democratic leaders should discern and implement the public's will.[10]

Wilsonian liberals believe that public opinion affects foreign policy formulation by limiting extreme elite tendencies, providing policy innovations, and leading the government to select the policy the public prefers. Since democracies ultimately require the consent of the governed, Wilsonian liberals note that public opinion can provide a brake on elite adventurism or dissuade policymakers from attempting dangerously risky actions for fear of losing public support. As a result, in decisions requiring quick action, public opinion might constrain the range of action that policymakers perceive as possible. Because it can take a great deal of time for public opinion (through letters, protests, interest group activity, etc.) to communicate its demands to government officials, Wilsonian liberals suggest that officials respond to public opinion when making decisions on issues that develop over a longer period of time. Accordingly, government officials might actually choose to implement foreign policies that the public prefers. In contrast to the realists, Wilsonian liberals think that public opinion and foreign policy eventually align because public opinion can alter the policy choices of elected officials.

The realist and Wilsonian liberal perspectives spawned a large literature examining the question of public opinion's influence on foreign policy. Despite the high degree of consistency (92 percent) between public opinion and foreign policy at the aggregate level,[11] research has provided varying explanations for this correlation between the public's view and the actions of elected officials. First, some scholars maintain that the public supports the government's actions because of the elite's manipulation of public perceptions, its educational/leadership efforts, or the public's general tendency to support the elite's foreign policy. Accordingly, public opinion plays little or no role in determining policy and responds directly to the elite's actions. Although many scholars have supported this view, Bernard Cohen provides perhaps the strongest statement of the public's limited influence. Based on his interviews with State Department officials in the 1950s and 1960s, he argued to the extent that these officials considered public opinion, they attempted to shape it, not follow it. In a poignant statement that Cohen found typical of the views held in the State Department, one official remarked, "To hell with public opinion. . . . We should lead, and not follow."[12] To varying degrees, other analysts have emphasized the ability of elites to generate support for their policies through efforts to change public opinion, to shape the conduct and reporting of polls, and/or to manipulate events.[13] This position represents the consensus realist position after

World War II which argued that most correlations between policy and opinion existed because of expressions of public support after the government had taken action.[14]

In regard to decision making, this literature suggests that public opinion receives little, if any, consideration during policy formulation. To the extent that decision makers do weigh it, elites try to shape public opinion to support their chosen policies. This view implies two separate forms of behavior: (1) Decision makers ignore public opinion (with public support automatically following policy), and (2) decision makers ignore public opinion during policy formulation but make concerted efforts to change the public's mind after settling on a policy.

A second group of scholars argue that public opinion is consistently considered in foreign policy formulation but mostly influences policy by eliminating options as unacceptable because of public opposition. These proponents contend that mass opinion may not cause policymakers to choose a specific policy but that it does set the parameters of acceptable alternatives by "ruling out" one or more policies. These researchers emphasize that public opinion broadly constrains decision makers because either they anticipate the future electoral consequences of their policy or they react to the public opinion of the moment. For example, Bruce Russett observed, "Public opinion sets broad limits of constraint, identifying a range of policies in which decision makers can choose, and in which they must choose if they are not to face rejection in the voting booths." By allowing several acceptable policies, he contended, opinion and policy "interact" in such a way that leaders both react to and manipulate public opinion.[15] In his study of American policy toward China between 1949 and 1979, Leonard Kusnitz noted that public opinion limited the range of viable policy options because officials anticipated the public's reaction and feared electoral retribution.[16] In a study methodologically similar to Cohen's and employing intensive interviews with both State Department and National Security Council staff members during the final years of the Reagan administration, Philip Powlick found that public opinion acted as a rough first cut at policy options, since officials thought that a successful policy needed to have public support or at least a lack of public disapproval.[17] Other researchers provide specific examples from case studies in which public opinion limited the policy options that decision makers considered or in which public constraint and elite leadership interacted.[18] Despite varying degrees of emphasis, these researchers agreed that public opinion does limit the range of choices available but still leaves open a number of options.

They also refrained from contending that public opinion leads to the selection of one specific policy or, rather, is merely manipulated by the elites. Instead, public opinion and policy are thought to interact in a manner that lies somewhere between these extremes.

A third line of research, mostly employing quantitative correlational methods, contends that mass public opinion can cause decision makers to choose policies the public prefers. Most notable is Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro's extensive examination of public opinion surveys and policies which revealed a high degree of congruence (defined as consistency between opinion and policy and whether changes in policy and changes in opinion occurred at the same time) between public preferences and foreign policies. Although expressing a note of caution, the authors concluded that public opinion affected policy more often than policy altered opinion, with opinion often acting as a proximate cause of policy change.[19] Public opinion also appears to influence aggregate levels of defense spending, congressional vote decisions related to defense issues, and presidential decisions during wartime.[20] High public approval ratings seem to influence presidential decisions to employ military force more than international conditions do.[21] This research also suggests that democratic responsiveness and elite efforts at manipulation can exist at the same time. Even though democratic governments developed sophisticated polling operations in an attempt to manipulate public opinion or to increase their leverage relative to other political actors, these actions also had a "recoil effect" that caused them to become more sensitive and responsive to public preferences.[22] These proponents paint a picture of an elite that may often turn to public opinion to assess policy means and ends.

Finally, other research emphasizes a conditional view of when these three influence processes may occur. Thomas Graham's extensive study of public opinion and arms control policy found that public opinion often affected policy but that this influence depended greatly on the level of public support for a policy option.[23] He concluded that decision makers could successfully oppose public preferences if less than 59 percent of the public supported a policy option. But levels of 60 percent or more did significantly affect decision making. In addition to the level of public support, Graham pointed to the effectiveness of elite communication strategies, the stage of the policy process, and elite awareness of the dimensions of public opinion as other possible conditions affecting public influence.[24] Several other conditions also may affect the public's influence, including domestic structure,[25] close proximity of a decision

to the next election,[26] the type of issue under consideration,[27] individual sensitivity to public opinion,[28] and the decision context.[29]

The Argument

We now have a better understanding of the connection between opinion and policy based on this earlier work, but we still have much to learn about this relationship, the possible linkages between public opinion and decision making, and the potential causes of variance in the public's influence.[30] This book seeks to provide partial answers to these questions by investigating two of the conditioning variables of public opinion's influence: sensitivity to public opinion (which is measured through individual beliefs) and decision context. To examine these influences, I use case studies to track possible influence patterns and to evaluate these conditional variables.

Much of the book's argument rests on the importance of beliefs in determining a policymaker's response to public opinion. Earlier research found that beliefs affect how people interpret and respond to the political environment, help guide actions in the political realm, and alter foreign policy behavior.[31] A belief contains "the information that a person has about other people, objects, and issues. The information may be factual or it may only be one person's opinion."[32] A belief system is "the set of lenses through which information concerning the physical and social environment is received."[33] These lenses "usually include principles and general ideas on the nature of the social and physical environment that constitutes the policymaker's field of action."[34]

Beliefs may shape and constrain decision making indirectly by providing a prism or filter through which the world is perceived; they may affect how decision makers evaluate policy possibilities; and they may define the kinds and levels of political support that is desirable or necessary.[35] These findings suggest important implications for potential linkage processes. If decision makers believe that public opinion has little relevance to a foreign policy's success, they may ignore it when formulating policy. However, if elites believe that foreign policies face serious difficulties because of public opposition, they may be more inclined to factor public opinion into their assessments of policy options.

A leader's personal beliefs and characteristics are more likely to affect policy choices (1) in more ambiguous and nonroutine situations,

(2) in decisions made at the top of the hierarchical ladder in which the leader is likely to participate and has final authority for the decision, and (3) when the person has available a broad range of possible actions.[36] These conditions imply that beliefs about public opinion held by presidential-level policymakers may affect decision-making behavior to a greater extent than is found at lower echelons.[37] Since decision makers' views about how public opinion has reacted to and affected policy in the past may determine how policymakers respond to public opinion in subsequent decision making, an examination of the beliefs at the presidential level may enhance our understanding of the connection between opinion and policy by linking these individual perspectives with policy choices.

This research examines individual beliefs about public opinion in two areas: (1) normative beliefs and (2) practical beliefs. *Normative beliefs* consist of an individual's judgment concerning the *desirability* of input from public opinion affecting foreign policy choices. Part of this view rests on the decision maker's assessment of the character of public opinion (i.e., whether it is emotional, stable, informed, etc.). *Practical beliefs* represent the decision maker's assessment of the *necessity* of public support of a foreign policy for it to be successful. The combination of an individual's normative and practical beliefs may affect when and how that person responds to public opinion. Although previous research implied that the least common view among policymakers is the combination of a desire for little public input and a denial of the need for public support ("guardians" in the terminology employed later), policymakers expressed a range of attitudes toward similar questions, roughly along these dimensions.[38]

Using normative and practical beliefs as the defining dimensions, four distinct belief orientations are possible (see table 1.1; the labels were chosen for their descriptive value). For clarity, these orientations are presented as theoretical ideal types. In reality, these beliefs are likely to exist along a continuum, and individuals may have specific variations. Along with a description of the orientation and suggestions of its influence on behavior, two examples are given for each. One example is taken from statements by former American secretaries of state, and the other comes from private interviews with American foreign policy officials reported in earlier research. (These examples are for illustrative purposes only. A more extensive analysis such as reported in this study would be necessary before actually determining these individuals' beliefs.)

TABLE 1.1 **Beliefs Orientations**

Is it desirable for input from public opinion to affect foreign policy choices?	Is public support of a foreign policy necessary? Yes	No
Yes	Delegate	Executor
No	Pragmatist	Guardian

Delegates

Delegates believe that it is desirable for public opinion to influence policy choices and necessary to have public support for a successful foreign policy. These individuals view their position as agents for the public, having been sent to pursue certain policies or as acting as the public would want them to do on a given issue.[39] Delegates will probably use public opinion extensively to assess foreign policy means and goals, and public opinion is a prime consideration in their choice of any policy, with the policymaker attempting to implement the public will or at least not acting against the public's wishes. After making a decision, delegates are likely to try to educate the public about how the policy they selected responds to the public's preferences.

In addition to policy substance, delegates may be sensitive about the timing of their foreign policies. That is, they may postpone policy initiatives until public support develops for an action, either on its own or after educational efforts. Although individuals with different beliefs may try to persuade the public to support their policy *once they have acted,* delegates are more apt to postpone the policy until after public support has materialized. In this case, the delegates would not choose a policy based on the public's view but would be sensitive to the public's desires regarding the time at which a policy initiative was pursued. This behavior might be particularly noticeable on issues that allow a longer decision time.

James F. Byrnes, secretary of state for President Harry Truman, provides an example of a statement reflecting the delegate orientation: "We must have an institution [in charge of foreign policy] that is responsive to the will of the people and able to translate our policies into effective action." Noting the increased attention to public opinion in the State Department, he observed that "behind these efforts is the firm realization that our foreign policy must be responsive to and

have the firm support of the American people." More recently, a State Department official in the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau commented,

> I think any good policy from a more experienced professional almost instinctively takes public opinion into account when they [*sic*] formulate foreign policy. You really cannot have a successful policy that does not enjoy popular support, and the idea that you can pursue something and eventually persuade people to buy it. . . . Maybe you can, but I think that's an approach to policy that is fraught with peril. It's much better to know that you have solid support for policy early on.[40]

Executors

Executors are people who carry out or perform tasks for other people. Even though they are chosen by others and consider their input, executors do not necessarily require the active support of the persons for whom they perform the tasks (e.g., the executor of a will). In the context of this book, executors feel that the public's input into policy formulation is desirable but believe that its support is not necessary for a successful policy. For executors, public opinion should be one of the initial factors considered in foreign policy formulation, and it might limit the options under consideration or suggest possible alternatives. If executors do not have information on public opinion or disagree with it, they will likely rely on their own best judgment because they do not believe in the need for public opinion actively supporting each policy. Executors will probably not pay much attention to leading the public. If they do consider leading it, they will likely only think about it instrumentally, with the goal of affecting other actors, such as Congress, rather than as an end in itself.

President Lyndon Johnson's secretary of state, Dean Rusk, expressed views falling under the executor orientation:

> One flaw of government officials is that they often underestimate the capacity of ordinary citizens to make sensible judgments about public issues. Political leaders and policy officers must always remember to ask, "What would the American people think about this issue if they knew about it tomorrow morning?" This doesn't mean that the passing whims of the American people are suitable guidelines for policy. Edmund Burke once reminded the electors of Bristol that he was not in Parliament simply to represent their every whim, but to bring to bear his conscience, his abilities, and his judgment on the issues.[41]

Likewise, a deputy assistant secretary in the State Department remarked, "My own personal inclination is that, by and large, the executive is in need of a balance out there in the public, and the chances of pursuing a policy that's either unwise or short-sighted is lessened because of the role public opinion plays."[42]

Pragmatists

Pragmatists believe that even though public input affecting foreign policy choices is not desirable, public support of the chosen policy is necessary. The pragmatist's views are reminiscent of the perspective of scholar Hans Morgenthau, who believed that policymakers in a democracy must balance the rational requirements of foreign policy dictated by the national interest with the necessity of maintaining support from the public.[43] He likened this process to the diplomat performing the "highest feat of statesmanship: trimming his sails to the winds of popular passion while using them to carry the ship of state to the port of good foreign policy, on however roundabout and zigzag a course."[44] Pragmatists should attempt to lead the public to gain support for their preferred option and to use their own best judgment as the "first cut" in determining a sound foreign policy. In contrast to delegates, who seek to demonstrate how policy aligns with public preferences, pragmatists will likely approach explanatory efforts with the sole purpose of creating public support. If generating public support does not appear possible, then public opinion may limit the range of feasible options.

Consonant with the pragmatist belief system, President Bill Clinton's secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, stated that she would "talk about foreign policy, not in abstract terms, but in human terms and in bipartisan terms," . . . "because in our democracy, we cannot pursue policies abroad that are not understood and supported here at home." Similarly, a former assistant secretary for public affairs in the State Department explained, "You should study the problem carefully in terms of the national interest and decide on the ideal course. Only then should you consider congressional and public opinion with an eye towards educating such opinion in the necessities of the situation."[45]

Guardians

Finally, *guardians* find public input into foreign policy choices to be undesirable and believe that the public's support is not necessary for a successful foreign policy. Once in power, guardians may see themselves as best left on their own as experts to act in the national interest.[46] The

noted newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann argued, "[The people] can elect the government. They can remove it. They can approve or disapprove its performance. But they cannot administer the government. . . . A mass cannot govern."[47]

Similarly, the former diplomat George Kennan found public opinion a poor basis for policy, contending that it "can be easily led astray into areas of emotionalism and subjectivity which make it a poor and inadequate guide for national action." Kennan recommended moving against the tide of public opinion if required by the dictates of national interest: "History does not forgive us our national mistakes because they are explicable in terms of our domestic politics." To rectify this problem, he suggested developing a principle of professionalism that might shield foreign policy from domestic tides.[48]

Guardians will probably ignore public opinion in their decisions and determine foreign policy based on their own judgment with little reference to public support. In contrast to delegates, guardians may try to educate the public, to show them not how a policy aligns with public preferences but how the policy serves the national interest.

A statement by Ronald Reagan's secretary of state, George Shultz, is typical of the guardian's belief system: "My view is that democratically elected and accountable individuals have been placed in positions where they can and must make decisions to defend our national security. The risk and burden of leadership is that those decision will receive, or not receive, the support of the people on their merits." Echoing this sentiment, a desk officer in the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs reported, "I don't think anyone is terribly anxious to find out more about public opinion to use as a guide to policy. The tendency in this building is you would rather not deal with it because it's a wild card and it's an impediment to rational policymaking."[49]

This book argues that beliefs about public opinion interact with the decision context and affect the influence of public opinion on foreign policy. A *decision context* is defined by (1) the level of threat to important values or goals (high or low), (2) the length of the available decision time (short or long), and (3) the policymaker's awareness of the need for a decision on an issue (surprise or anticipation).[50] A high-threat situation exists when policymakers "recognize that achievement of their goal or objective can be impeded or entirely obstructed." A decision time is short when decision makers perceive that "in a restricted period of time the situation will be altered in some major way. After the situation is

modified, a decision is either no longer possible or must be made under less favorable circumstances." Finally, surprise refers to "the absence of awareness on the part of policymakers that the situation is likely to occur."[51]

These three characteristics combine to create situational ideal types with separate expectations of decision-making behavior. Because this study focuses on presidential decision making, I looked only at cases with a high threat to important values, since presidents are likely to be involved in these decisions.[52] The two remaining decision context factors, decision time and awareness, mainly affect the amount and type of information that the decision makers possess. High threat combined with the other two factors yields four decision contexts: (1) crisis (short decision time and surprise), (2) reflexive (short decision time and anticipation), (3) innovative (extended decision time and surprise), and (4) deliberative (extended decision time and anticipation).[53]

The decision-making process should vary between these contexts in a predictable manner. Since the crisis context allows the circumvention of normal bureaucratic procedures and information may be in short supply, decision makers may react quickly based on their preconceived notions. Reflexive contexts may be characterized by limited information searches because of the time pressure, but decision makers may rely heavily on previously developed contingency plans and not consider many alternatives because of the anticipation of the issue. Innovative contexts are likely to contain an extensive search of options and information instigated by the high threat and allowed by the extended time. Since the surprise and long decision time may "shake up" entrenched patterns of behavior, policymakers have an opportunity to propose new policy approaches to old problems. Finally, deliberative contexts usually lead to an intensive search for options and information that involve many agencies and possibly cause organizational conflicts.[54]

These situational pressures should interact with belief orientations. When only a short amount of time is available to make a decision, the restricted amount of time for information searches may result in officials' having only vague ideas about public opinion. Delegates, who are most concerned with public opinion, will not have enough information to follow it. Since these people will want to consider public opinion but will lack the information, they are probably broadly constrained by their impression of public preferences. Since executors do not feel they need

public support for their foreign policies to succeed and usually do not have much information about the public's view, public opinion will likely have no influence on their decisions in these contexts. If executors do learn information about public opinion, the public's influence will probably depend on the strength of their policy preferences. If executors have strong preferences, public opinion should still have no influence on their policy decision. But if they have only weak preferences, public opinion will likely limit their decision. In any case, executors will probably remain open to information about public opinion in reaching a decision. Because of their focus on public support, pragmatists are probably constrained by public opinion for fear of losing public support. The short decision time allowed for a choice is likely to prevent them from feeling confident that they can successfully persuade the public to support a policy it does not already accept. Guardians will likely ignore the public, given their lack of information about public opinion and the need for a quick decision.

When the decision time is long, policymakers have more information about public opinion. Accordingly, delegates are likely use the longer period to determine public preferences and to follow them when making their choice. If the public opposes a policy that a delegate favors, he will probably wait for the public to support the preferred policy alternative (either on its own or after education efforts) before embarking on it. Depending on the strength of their preferences, executors will likely be either constrained by public opinion (if they lack a strong view) or be unaffected by public opinion (if they have a strong preference). If an executor has strong preferences, she may attempt to persuade the public to soften its opposition. In any case, the executor should be open to information about public opinion. Pragmatists should use the extended time to gain the public's support for the policy. Guardians are likely to use this information to mitigate public opposition by leading the public to support their preferred policy.

A summary of these predictions appears in table 1.2. At this idealized level, the surprise/anticipation factor is not expected to interact with beliefs in determining an individual's reaction to public opinion. As a result, the predictions for the reflexive context are the same as those for the crisis context, and the innovative context behavior is expected to be like the deliberative context. For this reason, table 1.2 outlines predictions only for the crisis and deliberative contexts. Of course, individuals could hold beliefs that would differentiate between decisions with surprise or anticipation.

TABLE 1.2 **Predictions for Orientations**

Decision Contexts	**Orientations**			
	DELEGATE	EXECUTOR	PRAGMATIST	GUARDIAN
Crisis	Constrain	No impact/ *Constrain*	Constrain	No impact
Deliberative	Follow	Lead/ *Constrain*	Lead	Lead

Note: The behavior prediction for the executor is in roman type if the individual has strong policy preferences and is in italics if the individual has weak preferences.

Alternative Explanations

In contrast to the beliefs model, realist and Wilsonian liberal theories provide the prevailing expectations of public opinion's influence on policymaking. By offering an alternative that is contingent on the person making the decision, the beliefs model challenges the explanatory framework proposed by these theories. First, as discussed earlier, realists believe that policymakers ignore public opinion when making a decision and lead the public to support their chosen alternative when implementing the policy. Given the time pressure, informational constraints, and the severe threat inherent in a crisis, realist views imply that public opinion has little impact in this context, since policymakers give it little, if any, attention. If policymakers consider public opinion at all, they think about it only in regard to leading it when implementing their chosen policy.

Realists argue that as the decision context becomes less crisislike (moving from the crisis context to the reflexive, innovative, and deliberative contexts) and allows more opportunities for reflection, decision makers continue to discount public opinion when selecting a policy but pay more attention to leading the public when implementing it. In the reflexive context, the realist view implies that public opinion will continue to have little effect given the premium on time and high threat to security. However, since this situation was anticipated, decision makers may use this opportunity to examine the issue and formulate contingency plans, including plans to lead public opinion. In the innovative and deliberative contexts, realist theory suggests that to generate public support, decision makers may employ the considerable decision time allowed to assess and instigate an effort to educate the public about the

policy. Realists feel that public opinion may also restrict these longer-term decisions in a pernicious manner as the public becomes mobilized either to support or oppose specific policy options. This constraining role might be expected to be more apparent in the deliberative context than in the innovative context because the extended time and anticipation in a deliberative situation allow many groups both inside and outside the government to attempt to influence the handling of a specific problem.

As discussed earlier, regardless of the situation, Wilsonian liberals describe an extensive linkage between public opinion and foreign policy. However, this influence may vary among decision contexts because of information limitations. Crises are characterized by informational shortages and pressures for a quick decision. In these situations, Wilsonian liberals suggest that policymakers may be constrained by public opinion as they pay heed to their impressions of the broad limitations set by the public. In the reflexive context, decision makers may use their anticipation of the issue to attempt to assess public opinion, which may give decision makers a keener perception of public opinion. Even though this effort may give decision makers a clearer idea of the public's desires, the short decision time may still prevent extensive amounts of information regarding public opinion from reaching them, thereby making a constraining influence most likely. In both these contexts, public opinion may also limit extreme or risky responses by policymakers.

Given the longer time allowed for decision making in the innovative and deliberative contexts, Wilsonian liberals see decision makers searching out relevant public opinion information. Public preferences may be more clearly formed and provide a better basis for policy. In addition, decision makers may be more susceptible to pressures from outside the government. In combination, these factors can cause decision makers to follow public opinion. Table 1.3 compares the predictions based on the realist and Wilsonian liberal perspectives.

Implications

This book's exploration of the connection between public opinion and foreign policy contributes to our knowledge in three areas, each of which is revisited in the concluding chapter. First, regarding public opinion's influence on foreign policy, this research adds to our understanding of why and under what conditions public opinion affects the formulation of foreign policy. It also continues the trend of focusing on

TABLE 1.3 **Alternative Explanations**

Situation (all high threat)	**Realist**	**Wilsonian Liberal**
Crisis short time/surprise	No impact/*Lead*	Constrain
Reflexive short time/anticipation	Lead	Constrain
Innovative long time/surprise	Lead	Follow
Deliberative long time/anticipation	Lead/*Constrain*	Follow

Note: Italics indicate conditional predictions.

the conditions under which public opinion influences policy outcomes. Beliefs orientations, as argued in the rest of this book, provide a better explanation of the dynamics of public opinion's influence across a range of presidents than is provided by the realist or Wilsonian liberal perspectives alone. The beliefs model suggests that the realist and Wilsonian liberal predictions and democratic theory's delegate and trustee views can sometimes accurately describe policymaking dynamics, but it depends greatly on the individual and decision context. The beliefs and decision context variables thus offer two important determining conditions regarding whether and how public opinion influences foreign policy. As a result, the descriptive and predictive accuracy of the realist, Wilsonian liberal, and democratic theories depends greatly on processes that these other views have overlooked.

Second, this intensive case study analysis contributes to our understanding of the linkage between public opinion and foreign policy. A persistent question in the literature is, "If public opinion influences foreign policy, how does it do so?"[55] Several linkage processes have been proposed, including anticipated future opinion, perceptions of the current opinion context, and specific indicators of opinion (such as polls and newspapers). Although each of these factors may influence policy, we still do not know which ones, when, and under what conditions.

Public opinion can affect policymaking through a decision maker's anticipation of the public's future reactions.[56] Anticipations may be limited to a policymaker's view of the public's potential reaction in the very near future, such as how the public will react when a policy is

announced. The anticipation may also be directed to how the public will react in the next election to the government's handling of the issue. To form these anticipations, decision makers may use their past experiences to project the public's future option preferences or reactions, especially onto policies on which no specific information about public opinion exists.[57]

This form of opinion linkage might be especially evident in issues of major foreign policy importance that policymakers believe may become factors in the next election.[58] Even though public opinion at a particular point favors one option, policymakers may sense that the public's view in the future will change. As a result, even when information about public opinion is available, decision makers may react more to their anticipation of future opinion as it is expected to be manifested in future elections than to the current public mood. These politicians may respond to their anticipation of opinion by framing policies to generate the most positive future public view or avoid a negative future public reaction. This linkage process implies that decision makers could act against current public opinion because they expect that future opinion will view the situation differently. What appears at first to be a disconnect between opinion and policy may actually represent a more nuanced understanding of opinion by policymakers. This form of linkage has been evident in crises when other information about public opinion was lacking, and earlier research found that this process operated under more normal conditions, especially when public opinion had not been formed.[59]

Images of the existing public opinion context may also affect policy, as Walter Lippmann described in regard to the importance of the "pictures" of public opinion in decision makers' heads as the basis for their reactions to it.[60] Much of public opinion's influence may be linked to the policy process through these broad, impressionistic views of the prevailing context of opinion. V. O. Key argued that the opinion context, "as it is perceived by those responsible for action, conditions many of the acts of those who must make what we may call 'opinion-related decisions.' "[61] Bernard Cohen referred to the opinion context as affecting a decision maker "by creating in the policy-maker an impression of a public attitude or attitudes, or by becoming part of the environment and cultural milieu that help to shape his own thinking, [which] may consciously affect his official behavior."[62] Some scholars have even suggested that relationship between public opinion and foreign policy relies entirely on these perceptions.[63] As with anticipated future opinion, this

linkage process does not necessarily rely on direct knowledge by the policymaker of any immediate expression of public opinion. Even so, since these perceptions of opinion can affect how decision makers perceive international events and how they view and weigh their policy choices, the process may be a critical factor in the opinion and policy connection.

Decision makers may also turn to specific indicators of opinion before making a choice. We often assume that policymakers rely on polling data for all their impressions of public opinion, but other factors (such as letters, editorial opinion, and the views of close associates) may also reveal public opinion. Key defined public opinion as "those opinions held by private persons which governments find it prudent to heed." This definition, Key conceded, relies on ascertaining the attitudes of government officials to determine which opinions they value.[64] Previous work shows that State Department and National Security Council officials rely on a range of indicators and use the news media and elected representatives the most often, mass opinion (such as polls and letters) to a lesser extent, and other elites and interest-group activity the least often.[65] Since these indicators are most commonly associated with public opinion, it would come as no surprise if decision makers turned to these to determine the public's view.

My investigation of American foreign policy decision making shows that although each of the three linkage processes can be found in decision making, the strongest are the anticipation of future opinion and the perceptions of the opinion context. Contrary to what is commonly believed, the least influential linkage process is specific indicators of opinion. Although polls were available throughout each of the decisions I examined, the decision makers were more concerned with how the public would eventually come to view the issue or with their own perceptions of the opinion context. This result was found across a range of presidencies and indicates the importance of a decision maker's perceptions in assessing the linkage between public opinion and foreign policy.

Finally, my work also emphasizes the domestic sources of international relations. One view, usually identified with the neorealist perspective, is that internal factors rarely influence state decisions both in crises and under normal conditions.[66] These proponents contend that especially in crises, the increased secrecy, concentration of authority, and the premium on quick and decisive action brought on by the heightened threat dramatically reduce or eliminate the impact of domestic factors on decision making.[67] In addition, since public opinion polls reveal a

marked increase in the approval of the president's actions during crises, regardless of whether a policy succeeds or fails, decision makers may be less inclined to consider public opinion under these conditions.[68] These researchers contend that the limited influence of domestic factors extends to noncrisis contexts as well.[69]

Liberal theories of international relations emphasize that domestic structure, processes, and societal influences can affect state choices as much as international circumstances and pressures, an emphasis that has contributed to a recent rethinking about the influence of domestic policy on international relations.[70] Scholars now consider domestic influences to be an important determinant of foreign policy behavior. These proponents argue that domestic considerations affect perceptions of the values at stake, the development of options and policy choices, and the timing of international action in both crises and ordinary circumstances.[71] Domestic factors are now thought to influence a range of international behavior, including crisis initiation, crisis escalation, the use of force, international bargaining, and broader strategic policy.[72] According to these proponents, analyses of international behavior cannot be limited to the international conditions, since domestic considerations do significantly affect foreign policy choices.[73] This book's findings support this perspective by suggesting that domestic factors such as public opinion can have an important influence on how decision makers perceive their choices and select among the available alternatives.

Method

To reach these conclusions, I followed a qualitative research design to assess the beliefs model's predictive value and to evaluate the power of alternative approaches to explain the pattern of public opinion's influence on foreign policy.[74] I derived my data from sources such as archival collections, public documents, and memoirs and examined them through congruence and process-tracing procedures. To provide depth, I explored the influence of public opinion on the decisions of President Dwight Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles across the range of decision contexts discussed earlier. To provide breadth, I considered the decision making of Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and Bill Clinton across a more limited set of cases. (For a detailed discussion of data acquisition and analysis, see the methods appendix.)

I measured beliefs using a qualitative content analysis. My analysis of Eisenhower's and Dulles's beliefs examined public and private communications, speeches, and public writings found in archives and other public sources to formulate a coherent picture of the individual's beliefs. As a validity check after I had analyzed the primary materials, I considered the oral history recollections of individuals close to both men concerning Eisenhower's and Dulles's beliefs about public opinion. Because these individuals formed their impression of Eisenhower's and Dulles's beliefs apart from my own analysis, I could use their assessments to judge the accuracy of the qualitative content analysis.[75] For the other post–World War II presidents, I relied on statements of their beliefs made during their presidencies and in their published memoirs. (The theoretical foundation and mechanics of the qualitative content analysis are discussed in the methods appendix.)

A final note about the presentation of primary sources: Some of the sources used in this analysis are records of discussions or minutes of meetings written by note takers rather than transcripts of the meetings. For this reason, some of my quotations report an individual speaking in the third person. Except when noted, documents listed as either a memorandum of conversation or a memorandum of discussion are summaries of the conversations that took place.

Variables and Operationalization

I examined each case as a series of decisions made in four stages: (1) problem representation (which contains two observation points that are analyzed separately: agenda setting and definition of the situation), (2) option generation, (3) policy selection, and (4) policy implementation.[76] *Problem representation* refers to the manner in which decision makers define the stakes involved in a policy. Policymakers assess the interests threatened, possible opportunities, and why they must choose a policy. Agenda setting concerns the choice to consider the issue and the factors that affect this choice. When policymakers define a situation, they look at the issue in terms of the threats and opportunities it might create. Next, *option generation* refers to the identification of possible policies to address the issue and their potential consequences. *Policy selection* is the process of choosing a policy from the possible options, and *policy implementation* refers to the choices necessary to execute the selected alternative. The dependent variable is the choice made during each of these stages and allows an assessment of whether public opinion influences

decision making differently across these stages, as suggested by some earlier researchers.

The first independent variable, the decision-making context, is defined according to the previously mentioned determinants of the policymaking context (threat to important values, decision time, and awareness). Four contexts were selected: crisis, reflexive, innovative, and deliberative. For the more recent presidents, I considered only the more extreme crisis and deliberative contexts.

The second independent variable is the president's normative and practical beliefs about public opinion (Dulles is included in the Eisenhower cases).

The third independent variable is the president's (and Dulles's in the Eisenhower cases) assessment of public opinion. This variable consists of the individual's views of what public opinion is on an issue and what the public wants done either at that time or in the future. The influence of this variable, relative to the fourth independent variable (other interests), on the choices made by policymakers is coded at the end of each case.

The fourth independent variable, which for the sake of simplicity is referred to as *other interests*, consists of all the interest-based (security, economic, etc.) reasons for which policymakers may make decisions, except for public opinion. For example, a decision not to intervene in a conflict because of the possible damage to the United States' strategic position would represent such an interest (whereas a decision not to intervene because of possible divisions in the public would represent a public opinion–based interest). Exactly what the other reasons may be are not important to this study except for the fact that they are not public opinion, since if decision makers see these elements compelling them to make a particular choice, the influence of public opinion will necessarily be diminished.

Finally, three other variables are used as *control variables* to ensure that the effects of the study's explanatory variables are isolated.

First, all cases contain a large national security component, since national security issues provide the most difficult test of the impact of public opinion on policy.[77] Economic policy may be a factor in these cases, but the overriding consideration in these decisions is security. Public opinion is commonly believed, especially in realist circles, to have the least influence on purely national security issues, because it is thought that concerns related to the national interest predominate in these matters. Since this study's cases all involve a high threat to impor-

tant values, the influence of public opinion is most likely to comply with the realists' predictions. For this reason, the results of the study are biased toward finding support for the realist perspective and away from finding an influence of public opinion. As a result, evidence in support of public opinion's influence in these cases would provide more convincing evidence of public opinion's impact on foreign policy.[78]

The second control variable is the president's public approval rating. My cases are from periods when the president's public approval rating was high (above 50 percent). Presidents may concern themselves with approval ratings in large part because they see them as a measurement of their success and power, and so more popular presidents may have more options in regard to foreign policy because a high approval rating may reduce domestic constraints.[79] For this reason, when approval ratings are high, presidents are probably less concerned about public opinion than at other times. In a more negative opinion context, the president may become increasingly focused on taking a more "popular" action rather than a presidentially preferred (based on national security, ideology, etc.), less popular alternative (assuming that the "popular" and "preferred" options are not the same policy).[80] In addition, as support from key domestic groups wanes, presidents may become more tempted to act internationally to bolster their flagging domestic fortunes.[81] In any event, since presidents usually are less concerned with public opinion when they are popular relative to when they are not popular, this control variable biases this study's findings toward the realist model and away from finding an influence of public opinion.

The third control variable is the temporal proximity of the case to the next presidential election. As presidential elections approach, presidents may become unusually concerned about public opinion because of its relation to the election's outcome. If the next presidential election has any effect on the sensitivity of decision makers to public opinion, this effect should decrease as the distance from the next election increases. For this reason, I used a distance of at least one year before the next presidential election. As with the other control variables, this factor serves to ensure that any bias in case selection is slanted away from finding an influence of public opinion, in favor of realist propositions.

Selecting cases that focused on national security and that occurred when the president's approval rating was high and outside an election year provides a set of conditions when public opinion was less likely to be influential. Unless otherwise noted, all the cases fit these control variables. In addition, when combined with the decision context vari-

able, these conditions create the types of situations when the beliefs variable is more likely to have a noticeable influence, especially during the crisis cases. As a result of this case selection process, if beliefs do affect public opinion's influence on foreign policy, it should be noticed under the circumstances examined in this study.

Case Selection

The case studies that I selected are based on the decision context explanatory variable and the three control variables (national security issue, approval rating, electoral proximity). To evaluate the beliefs model and the alternative explanations, I performed an analysis that contained both depth, to trace the decision-making process, and breadth across the various beliefs orientations. When I began my research, I chose the Eisenhower administration for an in-depth analysis because it was the most recent administration for which the majority of archival materials were open to the public. The extensive archival material available in both Eisenhower's and Dulles's personal and official papers allowed access to and insight into their beliefs and policymaking behavior. In addition, the existence of polling during this period provided a context sufficiently similar to that of later administrations. I then identified potential cases focusing on national security and assessed them in relation to the president's approval rating and the temporal proximity to the next presidential election. If they satisfied the qualifications of the control variables, I selected those cases that conformed to the context independent variable, with one case for each of the four contexts. If more than one case fit all these conditions, I chose the one that came closest to the "ideal." The following cases were chosen for intensive analysis: (1) crisis case: Formosa Straits crisis, September through November 1954; (2) reflexive case: possible U.S. intervention to relieve the French garrison at Dien Bien Phu, January through May 1954; (3) innovative case: U.S. reaction to Soviet launching of *Sputnik*, October 1957 through August 1958; and (4) deliberative case: development of the New Look defense strategy, December 1952 through July 1954. After selecting the Eisenhower administration and the cases, I determined the values of the independent variables concerning beliefs (both Eisenhower and Dulles were subsequently categorized as pragmatists), the assessment of public opinion, and the other interests involved in the cases.

When my analysis of the Eisenhower cases suggested the value of the beliefs model, I looked at several more cases from other administrations to determine the generalizability of the model. To evaluate the

breadth of the beliefs model's application, I performed a qualitative content analysis of the beliefs of all the remaining post–World War II presidents and chose four presidents representative of the four beliefs orientations: Carter (executor), Reagan (guardian), Bush (pragmatist), and Clinton (delegate). Because the archival record for these recent cases was still unavailable at the time of this analysis, I could not explore these cases at the same level of detail as the Eisenhower ones. These additional cases were selected following the same criteria as for the Eisenhower cases. Because of the focus on the beliefs variable and the results from the Eisenhower cases showing that surprise did not have a major effect on public opinion's influence, a crisis and a deliberative case were chosen for each president. The crisis cases are (1) Carter: Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, 1979–1980; (2) Reagan: Beirut marine barracks bombing, 1983–1984; (3) Bush: Gulf War, 1990–1991; and (4) Clinton: Somalia, 1993. The deliberative cases are (1) Carter: Panama Canal treaties, 1977–1978; (2) Reagan: origins of the Strategic Defense Initiative, 1983; (3) Bush: reunification of Germany, 1989–1990; and (4) Clinton: intervention in Bosnia, 1995. In two cases (Carter Afghanistan, Reagan Lebanon), the most crisislike cases for the administration barely missed the election distance requirement. Because of the focus on the decision context variable in these follow-on cases, I relaxed the election control variable and remained sensitive to this situation in the analysis and conclusions.

Coding the Influence of Public Opinion and Beliefs

I used two coding schemes to describe the influence of public opinion and beliefs. Once I had determined the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable, I coded the influence of the policymaker's assessments of public opinion on the decision, relative to other interests, regarding four public opinion influence categories derived from the literature (i.e., no impact, lead, constrain, and follow). In addition, for the categories indicating that public opinion does influence policy (constrain and follow), I coded the strength of this influence. The following paragraphs report the indicators used to code the assessment and strength of public opinion's influence.

First, the *no-impact category* indicates that decision makers ignore, or largely ignore, public opinion during policy deliberations (and refrain from attempts to lead public opinion). Any correlation between public opinion and policy results only because public support for policy came after the elites' decisions and not because the elites considered public

opinion in their deliberations or expended much effort to generate public support. To receive this coding, public opinion was mentioned seldom or not at all during discussions. Less stringently, public opinion information might have been mentioned but was dismissed or discounted during deliberations. Although some explanation of decisions is expected after a policy decision, concerted public relations efforts to generate public support should remain absent.[82]

Second, the *lead category* describes situations in which public opinion does not affect policy choices, but decision makers do expend considerable effort to generate public support for the government's policies through attempts to lead the public.[83] Unlike the view that policymakers may completely ignore public opinion, this view implies at least some concern about public opinion. Under this coding, public opinion is considered after a decision has already been made and/or only in reference to how the policy might be explained to the public or how the public might be educated about the policy. Deliberation about public opinion focuses on activities to shape public opinion and not on considerations of whether the policy will receive public support or opposition (except to determine the level of effort to dedicate to leading the public).

Third, the *constrain category* describes public opinion as limiting the options available to decision makers while at the same time allowing a band of acceptable policies from which decision makers can choose. Certain options are ruled out, removed from consideration, or dismissed because of potential public opposition. In their decisions, actors might have preferred certain options but discarded them once potential public reaction was assessed.

Fourth, the final coding outcome is the *follow category*. To receive this coding, policies that conform to the perceived public's preferences were adopted. Evidence supporting this option is a concern by decision makers with implementing exactly or nearly exactly the policy the public wants. Government leaders, too, may show a concern with public opinion as a guide to both policy options and policy choice.

The constrain and follow categories indicate that public opinion did affect the decision. The influence of public opinion ranges from being the sole factor driving a decision to being merely one minor concern of many in shaping a policy. For this reason, the strength of public opinion's influence was coded when a constrain or follow category influence was found. A *strong* influence signifies that the decision was based mostly on public opinion. Other factors, such as security interests, did

not account for the choice reached. A *moderate* influence of public opinion indicates that public opinion was one of the primary factors in a decision but that other issues were also significant to decision makers. Finally, a *mild* influence indicates that considerations other than public opinion accounted for the decision. Public opinion did affect the choice, but it mainly reinforced other factors and was only one of several factors that influenced the decision.

The influence of beliefs was coded according to a congruence procedure and process tracing (see the methods appendix for more information on these processes). Behavior was labeled *inconsistent* if it did not fit predictions based on beliefs. If behavior was congruent with predictions, it was labeled as *consistent*. If the behavior was consistent with predictions and the evidence pointed to an explicit consideration of public opinion in the manner predicted by beliefs, this influence was labeled as *causal*. Sometimes the influence of beliefs was found in more than one of these codings. If behavior fell in both the *causal* and *consistent* categories, it was labeled as *supportive*. If any part of the coding was inconsistent, the component parts are given in the order of their descriptive value.

The remainder of this book reports the findings of this research. The results of the qualitative content analysis of Eisenhower's and Dulles's public opinion beliefs and a comparison of the specific expectations of their behavior based on their beliefs orientation with realist and Wilsonian liberal predictions are presented in chapter 2. The four case studies selected from the Eisenhower administration are examined in successive chapters: chapter 3 discusses the crisis context (1954 Formosa Straits case); chapter 4 considers the reflexive context (1954 Dien Bien Phu case); chapter 5 evaluates the innovative context (1957–1958 *Sputnik* case); and chapter 6 analyzes the deliberative context (1953–1954 New Look case). Chapter 7 reports the findings of the content analysis of the other post–World War II presidents. Brief crisis and deliberative case studies from the Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton presidencies are discussed in chapters 8 and 9, respectively. Finally, chapter 10 discusses the study's findings and outlines their implications for several areas of research.