Violent Peace

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*Militarized Interstate Bargaining
in Latin America*

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To Jane, Alejandro, and Gabriel

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Preface

Interstate Competition in a Heterogeneous World: The Importance of Understanding Violent Peace

The world is a heterogeneous place. Words do not mean the same across ideological, cultural and political divides. One group's "freedom fighters" are another's "terrorists" and vice versa. Disagreement abounds concerning whether the term "free markets" means that one factor of production, capital, should flow without political encumbrance, while another, labor, is highly restricted, although both produce short-term displacements and long-term benefits. For some "democracy" implies only that the political rights of individuals are safeguarded, while for others it incorporates social justice for all. The same person can call prisoners who produce goods and services for the market "prison labor" in China but see them only as "repaying a debt to society" in the U.S.[1]

Whatever the sources of disagreement, and they are virtually infinite,[2] "peace" requires that we find ways of engaging in interstate competition short of "war to eliminate the bad guy so that we may all live in peace." Yet the current state of the study of international relations does not meet these needs. Instead it is seeking the holy grail, as we churn out study after study purporting to find that a particular type of state, liberal and democratic, is so inherently pacific that everywhere states achieve this form, the "Pacific Union" reigns. By the way, we also know which states are "Liberal" and "Democratic" because they don't fight each other.[3]

This book focuses on why military force is often used when states have disagreements. It takes conflict as a given in international relations, but does not assume that military violence is an inevitable result. It takes the possi-

bility of decreasing the use of military force, not its elimination, as a subject of major importance for students of international relations. Many disputes will be definitively resolved, but others will develop. International society will continue to confront the same fundamental task: how can nations that disagree on important matters nevertheless coexist without threatening or using military force against each other?[4]

Most analysts of international politics as well as policymakers combine elements from Realist and Liberal paradigms: military power matters, but under particular circumstances rival states do cooperate in the security realm.[5] In a nutshell, anything that *credibly* increases the benefits of cooperation while decreasing the costs of cooperation, relative to the benefits and costs of conflict, makes cooperation more likely. No big surprise here. Debates essentially revolve around whether costs and benefits are increasing or decreasing in particular circumstances and whether credibility is achieved or not.

This book proposes a conceptual scheme for analyzing the effective determinants of whether disputes become militarized and how far down the continuum toward war they progress (figure 1).

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!-------------------------------------!----------------------------!------------------------!-------------------------------!
Nonviolent              Nonviolent              Covert              Militarized                    War
Disagreements           Sanctions               Action             Disputes
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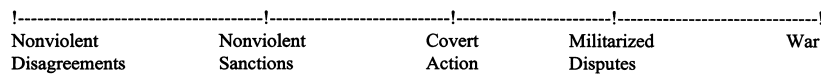
FIGURE 1 Continuum of Interstate Conflict

The argument put forward in this book is that leaders use foreign policy to provide collective and private goods to their domestic constituencies. The threat or actual use of force is part of an overall strategy designed to modify the status quo. That change may aim to unilaterally resolve a dispute, transform a situation in bilateral negotiations, bring in third-party international actors, or even to alter domestic political fortunes. The key question for a leader is whether the use of military force will benefit her constituencies at a cost that they are willing to pay and whether she can survive their displeasure if the costs are high.

The willingness of constituencies to pay costs varies with the value that they attach to the good in question. Their ability to constrain the leader varies with the institutional structure of accountability. The costs of using

military force are influenced by the political-military strategy for the use of force, the strategic balance with the rival nation and the characteristics of the military force used. A leader may choose to use force only when the costs produced by the combination of political-military strategy chosen (S) + the strategic balance (SB) + the characteristics of the force used (CF) are equal to or lower than the costs acceptable to the leader's constituency (CC) minus the slippage in accountability produced by the domestic means of selecting leaders (A). Force will not always be used when these conditions are met, but force will not be used in their absence.

Why Latin America?

The concept of "regional security complex"[6] helps us evaluate this argument about the determinants of the use of force. This is an analytical construct that distinguishes a group of nations from the entire international system based on their particular security relationship. The regional security complex is not simply a geographic designation. States whose individual securities cannot be meaningfully separated from that of another form part of the same complex; e.g., South Korea and the U.S. The security interdependencies may be explicit and purposeful, or they may be the result of "security externalities," in which the costs and benefits of a bilateral security relationship spill over to affect other states.[7] A good example of a security externality is the threat that Brazil felt in the 1920s from U.S. military interventions throughout the Caribbean basin.[8]

This book uses the Latin American experience of the past century to support these claims and to suggest ways to manage competition among heterogeneous states in order to minimize conflict and stimulate cooperation. Latin America is a particularly appropriate place on which to focus. The region is a microcosm of international relations. Numerous states, at different levels of economic development, engage in constant interactions on issues in which their interests are not harmonious. Liberal economic policies have fallen in and out of favor and democracy has spread across the region and receded in three waves over the last century. The U.S. has demonstrated a consistent resolve to intervene in all disputes, militarized or not. A variety of international institutions, global and regional in nature, have sought to promote the peaceful resolution of conflict. Wars have occurred as recently as 1995, militarized disputes number in the hundreds,

there are periodic arms races and arms control agreements, and many disputes have been settled via negotiations. The historical record thus provides important variation on the dependent variable of this study, the use of military force.

The historical record does not support simple explanations. Democracies have threatened and even fought each other (Colombia and Venezuela in 1987 and 1995; Ecuador and Peru throughout the last 15 years). Increased economic integration has not stopped states from threatening and fighting each other (Colombia and Venezuela in 1995; El Salvador and Honduras in 1969; Ecuador and Peru in 1995). Deterrence has failed (Argentina and Great Britain in 1982) and succeeded (Argentina and Chile in 1978). Great powers have stopped the fighting (the U.S. in Central America 1906–7), mediated crisis (Great Britain between Chile and Argentina in 1902 and the U.S. in the Ecuador-Peru war of 1995), and stood aside while the battlefield took its course (the U.S. in the Paraguay-Bolivia war of 1932–35, the Ecuador-Peru war in 1941, as well as the Malvinas/Falklands war of 1982 between Great Britain and Argentina). International institutions have served as fronts for the interests of the region's great power (the Pan American Union and the Organization of American States for the U.S.). These institutions have also been irrelevant (in the invasion of Panama and Granada, as well as during the Chaco War), and provided a forum for mediation (the OAS in the One Hundred Hours War between El Salvador and Honduras in 1969).

In short, Latin America over the last century has been a microcosm of international politics. Although little studied as a laboratory for interstate conflict management, its empirical richness facilitates analytical thinking about the use of military force in other regions after the Cold War.

Organization of the Book

The book has three parts. Part 1 introduces the issue of violent peace, providing theoretical (chapter 1) and empirical (chapter 2) material for the analysis that follows in Part 2. Chapter 1 presents the conceptual framework I use to think about the use of military force in foreign policy. A model of militarized bargaining is developed and the design of the research for assessing its plausibility is discussed. Chapter 2's historical description of wars and militarized disputes in Latin America provides evidence for the phe-

nomenon of violent peace. It also demonstrates the suitability of the region for illustrating the plausibility of the model of militarized bargaining.

Part 2 presents a variety of quantitative, as well as qualitative, analyses of the use of military force. The first three chapters provide theoretical and empirical critiques of the three major paradigms for understanding conflict dynamics in the region: hegemonic management by the U.S. (chapter 3); democratic peace (chapter 4); and the military distribution of power (chapter 5).

The next two chapters illustrate how the militarized bargaining model contributes to explaining the use of military force in interstate disputes. Chapter 6 examines the militarization short of war of the Beagle Channel dispute between Argentina and Chile in 1978, with some discussion of the contrasting case of the militarization leading to war over the Malvinas between Argentina and Great Britain in 1982. Both cases have the same initiating country, run by a military dictatorship, yet two different ways of using force in foreign policy. Chapter 7 examines one enduring rivalry over time, the Ecuador-Peru conflict over the Amazon. This longitudinal analysis allows us to hold countries and issue stable over time. The Beagle and Amazon cases allow insight, respectively, into a military dyad and a democratic dyad.

The Conclusion summarizes the advantages of utilizing the militarized bargaining model for understanding Latin America's violent peace. By helping us to understand the decision to use force, the model also indicates what combination of policies might diminish the likelihood that states will resort to military force in their international relations.

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