PREVENTING CIVIL WAR
How the Potential for International Intervention Can Deter Conflict Onset

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BOLIVIA and Nepal are low-to-middle-income countries with moderate-sized populations, moderate to high degrees of ethnic heterogeneity, and significant amounts of mountainous terrain. Until recently, each was usually governed by nondemocratic governments. Both have neighbors (Peru and India, respectively) that have experienced long-running civil wars; yet since Che Guevara's death in Bolivia in 1967, that country has experienced no internal armed conflicts,[1] whereas in Nepal, a civil war that lasted from 1996 to 2006 led to the loss of thousands of lives.

Why do civil wars occur at some times in some places but not at other times in other places? Understanding why civil wars happen is important because they result in widespread loss of life, economic destruction, and spillover effects on neighboring states. An extensive literature seeks to explain when and where civil wars occur. Quantitative studies have found that civil war is more likely when states have low average incomes, mountainous territory, nondemocratic governments, large populations, and have recently experienced a civil war.[2] Studies examining ethnic groups have shown that groups that are geographically concentrated,[3] poorer or richer than the state average,[4] represented

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[1] This does not mean that Bolivia has been free from political violence, just that this violence has not escalated to civil war.

[2] These relationships have been identified in studies including Fearon and Laitin 2003, Collier and Hoeffler 2004, and Hegre and Sambanis 2006.

[3] Toft 2005.

[4] Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011.

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by many organizations,[5] and excluded from political power[6] are more likely to rebel.

Although these attributes of countries and ethnic groups can help explain the outbreak of conflict, our understanding of civil war is still limited. As Bolivia and Nepal show, among countries with similar predictors of conflict there is wide variation in when and where civil wars occur. Similarly, there is great variability in whether ethnic groups will rebel. Regarding these attributes, it is surprising that civil wars do not occur more often. Many countries have low average incomes, large populations, rough terrain, and nondemocratic governments, and many ethnic groups are fractionalized, discriminated against, and excluded from political power, but civil war is comparatively rare.

In this article, I examine how the potential for large-scale, international military intervention on the behalf of the government can deter the outbreak of civil war. There is a large body of literature on external intervention, but that literature has focused almost exclusively on intervention in civil wars. In a few cases scholars have examined how, under certain conditions, the potential for intervention can make civil war more likely. In contrast, I examine how the potential for intervention can prevent conflict. I analyze the process by which states and dissidents decide whether to use violence to resolve political conflicts, and I argue that for civil war to occur, dissidents must have a motivation for using violence, believe that violence will help them achieve their goals, and be unable to negotiate a compromise settlement with the state prior to the outbreak of conflict. I argue that when dissidents anticipate that an external state or set of states will intervene on the side of the government to a degree that is so overwhelming that the dissidents' costs of fighting exceed their probability of victory, they will anticipate gaining no benefit from fighting and not initiate civil war. I further argue that by freeing states from the threat of violent rebellion, governments anticipating this type of external support can operate with a freer hand toward their population and be more repressive. Although such repression will increase grievances, it should not increase the likelihood of civil war; instead, dissidents will choose other strategies of dissent to seek political change.

I test these arguments using indicators of the likelihood of external intervention on behalf of the government. The primary indicator is that of US hierarchy. Drawing on David Lake's arguments that the United States enters into hierarchical relationships in which subordinate states

[5] Cunningham 2013.
[6] Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010.

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give up some sovereign control in return for the United States providing "order,"[7] I argue that this provision of order means that potential rebels anticipate that the United States will intervene in a civil war. Consistent with the expectations of the theory, I find that states in more hierarchical relationships with the United States are more repressive, more prone to terrorist attacks, more likely to experience nonviolent campaigns, and less likely to experience civil wars. I conclude by discussing the implications of this argument for our understanding of civil war and of how external relations of states affect state-dissident interactions.

The Decision to Begin a Civil War

Civil wars are violent conflicts that take place primarily within one state, involve the government and at least one organized rebel group, and entail some minimum number of people killed.[8] Civil wars do not begin in a vacuum; they often follow a period in which states and dissidents attempt to resolve disputes through nonviolent means. Rebel groups often are outgrowths of political parties, cultural groups, local governments, or traditional power structures that use means other than violence to pursue their goals. Disputes between dissidents and states typically become civil wars when the dissident groups abandon nonviolent means and target the government with violence. Understanding the reasons for the outbreak of civil wars requires considering why dissidents decide to use violence aimed at the state to pursue their demands.[9]

The existing literature on civil war has approached this question in a number of ways. So-called greed-based approaches argue that groups initiate civil war when the opportunity costs of rebellion are low or when the potential economic benefits of rebellion are high.[10] The motivation for rebellion is primarily economic gain. So-called grievance-based approaches argue that violence is more likely when groups have significant economic or political grievances against the state.[11] While occasionally treated as competing factors, greed and grievance increase the motivation for dissidents to use violence.

[7] Lake 2009.

[8] This concept excludes forms of substate violence such as intercommunal conflicts, which do not include the government as a direct participant, as well as riots and other unorganized violence. Specific data sets differ on the death threshold for civil war.

[9] The focus on dissident groups does not mean that states are blameless in the outbreak of civil war. Dissidents may decide to target the state violently in response to the state's use of violence.

[10] See, for example, Collier and Hoeffler 2004.

[11] Many grievance approaches draw on Gurr 1970. See also Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010 and Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011.

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Although the motivation for rebellion is necessary for civil war, it is not sufficient, because dissidents choose from a variety of strategies—including conventional political means, nonviolent direct action, terrorism, conventional warfare, and insurgency—to pursue their aims. Dissidents evaluate the relative costs and likelihood of success of these strategies when deciding how to challenge the state. For violent rebellion to occur, dissidents must have some expectation that violence will help them achieve their aims. This is the basic logic behind arguments that state capacity is the major factor affecting whether or not civil wars occur.[12] Some states are conducive to insurgency because their governments have weak militaries, and their rough terrain enables groups to operate outside of the coercive reach of government. In these states, dissidents can organize insurgency and anticipate some success through violent rebellion. In other states, the government is so powerful that it can repress any violent uprisings, so dissidents cannot anticipate any gain from rebellion.

Civil war is more likely when dissident groups have a strong motivation for rebellion and when they anticipate achieving success at a relatively low cost through violence targeted against the state. Additionally, for civil war to occur, states and dissidents must be unable to reach compromise settlements. Civil wars are costly for states—government personnel and civilians lose their lives, normal economic activity is disrupted, infrastructure is destroyed, state money is diverted from other priorities to the military, and so on. Civil wars are also costly for rebel groups—they face the loss of life, the potential for governmental repression, and the destruction of some of what they are fighting for.[13] Because of such costs, dissidents and states would be better off reaching a compromise prior to the outbreak of conflict.

If both sides have incentives to make compromises to avoid the costs of conflict, why do civil wars ever occur? Scholars in the "bargaining and war" school of thought have identified two main conditions under which violent conflict can occur among rational, unitary actors.[14] First, violent conflict can result from one or both actors being overly optimistic about their chances of winning the conflict. In prewar bargaining,

[12] Fearon and Laitin 2003.

[13] The argument that civil wars are costly for rebels stands somewhat in contrast to the idea that rebels can be motivated by greed and may fight because conflict is profitable. But even if rebels gain access to profitable resources through violence, civil war is still costly since there are other potential routes to obtain these resources that do not incur the costs of fighting.

[14] The bargaining approach to war was first presented succinctly by Fearon 1995, and has been developed by many others, including Powell 2006 and Wagner 2007. These models generally focus on interstate war but Thyne 2009 and others have demonstrated that they can be applied to civil wars.

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each actor compares a compromise settlement with the anticipated outcome of civil war. Information asymmetries in which one side has access to information that the other does not can lead one side to reject a settlement that it would accept were it realistic about its chances of winning the war, and thus can result in a costly civil war.

Second, even with perfect information, civil wars can happen if one side does not trust that the other will follow through on the commitments it makes. If, for example, states offer dissidents a share of political power in return for laying down their arms, but the dissidents do not believe that the state will follow through on that commitment, they may reject the compromise and rebel.[15]

In light of these arguments, civil wars occur when three conditions apply—dissidents are motivated to oppose the state, they anticipate some degree of success through violence, and states and dissidents are unable to reach a settlement that would cause each to reject violence in favor of compromise. A variety of factors, both domestic and international, affects motivation, expectations of success, and the ability to bargain. In the next section, I examine how the potential for external intervention can affect the outbreak of civil war and focus on the conditions under which dissidents anticipate no chance of achieving success through violent rebellion.

The Potential for International Intervention and the Outbreak of Civil War

While the term "civil war" seems to imply that such conflicts are purely domestic, civil wars often have significant external causes and effects.[16] States and rebel groups often receive assistance from external states and other transnational actors, including direct military intervention in such wars.[17] Military intervention can have profound effects on the dynamics of conflict, so states and dissidents consider the potential for intervention when deciding whether to use violence.

Although most of the literature on external intervention examines its effects on ongoing conflicts, a few studies analyze how the potential for

[15] Fearon 1995 identifies an additional "rationalist" explanation for war—issue indivisibility. The role of divisibility is disputed. He largely dismisses indivisibility as an explanation, and Powell 2006 argues that indivisibility is a type of commitment problem. Toft 2006, however, argues that indivisibility is an important explanation for civil war.

[16] On the transnational dynamics of civil war, see Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006; Gleditsch 2007; and Salehyan 2009.

[17] Military intervention in civil war has generated a large scholarly literature. See, for example, Regan 2002; Balch-Lindsay and Enterline 2000; and Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011.

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intervention affects bargaining between states and dissidents prior to the outbreak of war. Rupen Cetinyan demonstrates formally that the willingness of an outside state to support an ethnic group has no effect on the likelihood of ethnic rebellion, but uncertainty about the existence of an external supporter can make rebellion more likely.[18] Clayton Thyne argues that when external states send costly signals about their willingness to intervene in civil war, the signaling should not affect the likelihood of conflict because states and dissidents should interpret these signals the same way and adjust their bargaining positions accordingly. However, cheap signals can make civil war more likely because states and dissidents may interpret the likelihood of intervention differently, leading to different expectations about the probability of victory.[19]

The foci of Cetinyan's and Thyne's work are different, but the general logic is the same. Dissidents decide what demands to make, and states choose what concessions to offer based on their expectations that they will win the conflict. In reality, each side's probability of victory is the inverse of the other's. If, for example, the state has a 60 percent chance of winning the conflict, the potential rebels have a 40 percent chance. These probabilities sum to 100 percent. Since conflict is costly, each side should offer a deal that makes the other slightly better off than it would be if a war was fought to the end, and agreement should be reached. Conflict can happen when these estimates are off—if one or both sides overestimate their probability of victory so that together their subjective estimates of their probability of victory sum to greater than 100 percent. In such cases, each side might offer a deal that it thinks is better than what the other side would anticipate achieving by fighting a war, and this overoptimism could lead one or both sides to reject an offer they should accept.

In Cetinyan's and Thyne's models, if an external state were to intervene, it would change the state's and the dissidents' probabilities of victory by making one side more powerful and so more likely to win while making the other side less likely to win. As long as both sides know the likely effect of intervention, it should affect only the bargaining dynamics between states and dissidents and not the likelihood of war. In the above example, after external intervention the state and rebel group may each have a 50 percent chance of winning the conflict, but these probabilities still sum to 100 percent.[20] However, if one side thinks that an external state will intervene on its behalf and the other side does

[18] Cetinyan 2002.

[19] Thyne 2009.

[20] Although this change in the probability should not affect the likelihood of conflict, it should shift each side's demands. Jenne 2004 demonstrates that minority ethnic groups make more extreme demands when they anticipate external support.

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not think that intervention will occur, the side anticipating intervention will raise its expectation about its probability of victory without the other side's expectation declining. Different expectations about intervention, then, could make conflict more likely by causing one side to be overly optimistic and to reject a compromise it should accept.

Information about the likelihood of intervention has important effects on prewar bargaining, and Cetinyan and Thyne find empirical support for their arguments. But the potential for external intervention can have an additional effect beyond making bargaining failure more likely due to information problems. As noted above, for civil war to occur, dissidents have to have some expectation that they will achieve success by engaging in it. That is, they have to anticipate positive utility from fighting. In a bargaining situation, an actor's expected utility of fighting is a function of two things—the probability of victory (p) and the costs of fighting (c). Each actor discounts its likelihood of winning the conflict by the costs it anticipates paying to achieve that victory. If an actor has a probability of victory that is lower than its anticipated costs ($p < c$), then it cannot anticipate gains by fighting.

This possibility is important for bargaining theory. In bargaining models such as those developed by James Fearon, Cetinyan, and Thyne,[21] bargaining occurs because each side has some positive expected utility from fighting ($p > c$), but the costliness of fighting ($c > 0$) means that each side can be even better off through negotiation. Each side prefers a compromise that gives it more than $p - c$, and since c is always positive, this deal always exists. But if $p - c$ is negative for one side (because $p < c$), then war makes that side worse off and it cannot credibly threaten war. Without that threat, the other side has no incentive to give into any of its demands, and there is no bargaining in the shadow of fighting.

In game-theoretic terms, this means that there is a "corner solution" to the bargaining game.[22] Fearon, Cetinyan, Thyne, and other scholars working on bargaining have examined the interior of the bargaining game—why disputants can, and cannot, reach a specific agreement between their reservation points. The interior game matters only if each side has positive expected utility from fighting. When $p < c$ for one side, bargaining cannot break down because there is no bargaining to break down, and so interior solutions never come up.[23]

[21] Fearon 1995; Cetinyan 2002; Thyne 2009.

[22] A corner solution means that one actor is at the boundary of the game and thus the game—in this case, where each side tries to offer a deal that makes the other side slightly better off than they would be through fighting—never occurs.

[23] Gartzke n.d. makes a similar argument about interstate war: many states are not sufficiently powerful to project power over long distances, and thus their probability of victory in a war with a far-flung state becomes near zero, generating a corner solution.

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This logic helps explain why strong states rarely experience civil wars. In powerful states, dissidents have little chance of winning a war (p is very low), and challenging a powerful state is likely to be very costly (c is high); the expected utility from violent rebellion is negative ($p < c$). The state does not have to offer dissidents anything to induce them not to fight since violence would bring no positive utility.

Even in weaker states, where governments are not as powerful relative to dissidents, external military intervention can be so significant that it greatly reduces the rebels' probability of victory. In Gabon in 1964, for example, members of the military deposed President Léon M'ba in a coup that generated little violence, quickly taking power. But French President Charles de Gaulle honored a 1960 agreement with M'ba and deployed French paratroopers; M'ba was restored to power and the coup plotters were arrested. French intervention meant that the rebellious faction of the military, which had a high probability of victory prior to France's intervention, had a probability of victory very near zero once the paratroopers arrived.

If dissidents anticipate that rebellion will cause external states to conduct an intervention that is so overwhelming it reduces the dissidents' probability of victory essentially to zero, then they will not anticipate achieving success through violence and will not rebel. The literature on military intervention in civil wars has focused on two types of interventions—those that "balance" the conflict, by making the weaker side roughly equal to the stronger side, and those that produce "asymmetry," making one side more powerful than the other. I argue that some interventions, like the French intervention in Gabon, can have a third effect: one leading to "extreme asymmetry," in which dissidents have extremely little chance of winning and are defeated very quickly.

External military intervention to this degree is rare in civil war. Most interventions either create greater military balance or make one side relatively more powerful but not so much that it completely overwhelms the other side.[24] Intervention leading to extreme asymmetry should be rare, because if one side anticipates such intervention, it should decide not to use violence and civil war should not occur. If this theory is correct, external interventions producing extreme asymmetry should only occur when the other side does not anticipate them. Indeed, one of the first things the Gabonese military did after seizing power was to

[24] An example of intervention leading to extreme asymmetry is that of the United Kingdom in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone fought a civil war against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) from 1991 to 2000. In 2000, the UK sent troops to fight alongside the Sierra Leonean army. The British troops quickly overwhelmed the RUF forces, and the rebels returned to the negotiation table and quickly disarmed.

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announce that Gabon's foreign policy would remain pro-France, indicating a desire to discourage French intervention and having some expectation of being successful in doing so.

My argument is that in some cases military intervention in civil war can be so profound that the rebels' costs of fighting exceed their probability of victory, meaning that they cannot anticipate any gain from continuing to fight and therefore are no longer a credible threat. If dissidents anticipate progovernment military intervention on this scale, they will decide not to rebel and civil war will not occur. Relations between France and its former colonies provide evidence that the potential for intervention can have this effect. As it did in Gabon, France has shown a willingness to become militarily involved in its former colonies and, unlike other former colonial powers such as the United Kingdom, has generally not required justification beyond national interest to do so. This willingness to intervene means that dissidents contemplating rebellion in former French colonies have to consider the likelihood of large-scale intervention on behalf of the government when deciding whether to use violence. Fearon and David Laitin find that civil wars are less likely in former French colonies in Africa than in other states that are similar in other factors that make civil war more or less likely.[25] Paul Collier attributes the low occurrence of civil war in these states to France's "over-the-horizon guarantees" to protect the governments of its former colonies, arguing that such guarantees reduce the risk of civil war in Francophone Africa by nearly three-quarters.[26]

My argument about the effect of potential intervention differs from those of Cetinyan and Thyne in two important ways. First, their models suggest that the scale of intervention should affect only the probability of victory for each side and not the likelihood of civil war. This suggestion is correct in the interior of the bargaining game where states and dissidents are trying to find a settlement between their reservation points. But the scale of the intervention does matter when it leads to a corner solution; if intervention causes dissidents' costs of fighting to exceed their probability of victory ($p < c$), then there is no benefit to fighting and civil wars will not happen. Second, unlike Cetinyan's and Thyne's models, my argument does not hinge on private information—a likely intervention leading to extreme asymmetry should prevent civil war even if the government and dissidents are perfectly informed about this likelihood.

[25] Fearon and Laitin 2003.
[26] Collier 2009.

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One point about my argument is that I focus only on the effect of potential military interventions on the government side. But military interventions do happen on behalf of rebels and dissidents, and governments will also consider the potential for these interventions in prewar bargaining. It is probable that an uprising among Iraqi Shia in 1991 was motivated at least in part by the (mis)perception that the United States would come to the aid of the rebels. A similar dynamic may have happened in the early years of the current civil war in Syria, with the rebels expecting (but not receiving) substantial international assistance.

I focus on the preventive effect of potential military interventions on the government side for two main reasons. First, it is much more likely that interventions on behalf of the government will lead to the corner solution to the bargaining game identified here. Nearly all governments maintain a standing army, and rebels are usually militarily weaker than the government. It is extremely rare that intervention will make rebels so powerful as to reduce the government's probability of victory so that it is lower than its costs of fighting. External military support to rebels certainly has an effect on conflict, but that effect is likely to be in the interior of the bargaining game that is the focus of Cetinyan's and Thyne's work. I expect private information about the likelihood of support to rebels to make conflict more likely (as was possibly the case with Iraqi Shia and among the rebels in Syria). I do not expect the potential for prorebel intervention to make civil war less likely by generating a corner solution. Second, in this analysis I focus primarily on the potential for US intervention. As I describe below, US military interventions are empirically much more common on behalf of governments than on behalf of rebels. Thus it is much more likely that the dynamic identified here—in which the potential for intervention makes one side so powerful as to mean that the other side sees no gain from violence and therefore civil war does not happen—occurs on the side of the government than on the rebel side in pre–civil war bargaining.

Empirical Implications

The argument I develop leads to one main implication about the occurrence of civil war: civil war will be less likely when dissidents anticipate that an external state (or states) will intervene on behalf of the government to such an extent that the dissidents' costs of fighting will exceed their probability of victory.

Although I focus on civil war, there are two additional implications

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of this argument. First, when governments anticipate that dissidents know that an external state or states will intervene on the government's behalf to eliminate the dissidents' military threat, those governments have a freer hand in relation to their populations. Governments restrain their behavior to some degree because of the potential threat of civil war. With this threat removed, governments may treat their populations worse, so I expect that states in which the potential for large-scale military intervention on behalf of the government is higher will be more repressive toward their populations. Second, if states are more repressive when they are free from the threat of violent rebellion, then that repression should increase grievance in the population, which should increase the motivation for dissidents to challenge the state.

Does this latter implication counteract the potential for large-scale progovernment intervention to deter civil war? I argue that it does not, because dissidents have other options, such as conventional political channels, protests, strikes, nonviolent direct action, and other strategies like terrorism, available to them to pursue political change. Because the potential for intervention leading to extreme asymmetry means that dissidents have no credible threat of violent rebellion, they will choose one of these other options. I expect, then, that in states where the potential for large-scale progovernment intervention is higher, forms of dissent other than civil war will be more common.

Evaluating these three implications empirically is challenging because the potential for military intervention is not directly observable. But dissidents considering civil war and other forms of dissent and states deciding how to respond to their populations will have expectations about the likelihood of an intervention of this type, and these expectations should affect their decisions. In the next section, I conduct empirical tests using two measures of the likelihood of large-scale military intervention on behalf of the government.

International Hierarchy, the Potential for Intervention, Civil War, Repression, and Dissent

To analyze the effect of dissidents' expectations about the likelihood of large-scale external intervention, I measure the degree to which a state is in a hierarchical relationship with a dominant state. Historically, scholars of international relations have viewed relations between and within states as fundamentally different, with international rela-

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tions being "anarchic" and domestic politics being "hierarchical."[27] In recent years, this conception has been undermined as scholars have demonstrated areas in which external states and international organizations affect the way governments interact with each other and their populations. Lake argues that anarchy and hierarchy are continuous, not dichotomous, and that sovereignty is not an either/or phenomenon; rather, states can relinquish control over some sovereign affairs while retaining control over others.[28]

Why would states give control over some areas of sovereignty to other states? International politics is a dangerous realm and weak states have difficulty assuring their own security. Lake argues that "subordinate" states give up some sovereignty to a "dominant" state in return for that state's protection.[29] Both benefit: the dominant state gains allies, bases for its troops, and can shape the economic order to its advantage; the subordinate state gains protection from threats.

State leaders can face threats to their power both internally, including through coup d'état or violent rebellion, and externally, through conquest or foreign-imposed regime change.[30] For Lake, the dominant state primarily provides protection from external threats.[31] He demonstrates that the United States is more likely to intervene in militarized interstate disputes in states that are in more hierarchical relationships with it, suggesting that the United States does in fact provide this protection. Although historically it was quite common for conquest to eliminate states from the international system, such "state death" has been extremely rare since World War II.[32] Foreign-imposed regime change is somewhat more common, but still quite rare.

More typically, leaders lose power through a civil war or coup d'état, so leaders of subordinate states are probably more concerned about internal threats than external. If leaders of subordinate states give up sovereignty to dominant states to assure protection, and if those leaders are more concerned about internal threats, then subordinate states also (or even primarily) enter into hierarchical relationships to attain protection against the loss of power due to internal violence. This arrangement should mean that the dominant state will intervene to protect the gov-

[27] This view was articulated most clearly in structural realism (Waltz 1979), but the anarchy/hierarchy distinction was retained in such approaches as neoliberalism and constructivism.

[28] Lake 2009.

[29] Lake 2009.

[30] Powell 2014a and Powell 2014b examine the way leaders respond to the threats posed by coups, civil conflict, and external threats together.

[31] Lake 2009.

[32] Fazal 2004.

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ernment in a civil war. Since the dominant state is typically much more powerful than the subordinate state, such intervention should cause the dissidents' probability of victory to be very low.

As a result, governments and dissidents in states that are in hierarchical relationships should anticipate large-scale intervention on behalf of the government in a potential civil war. Such anticipation means that the dissidents will expect less benefit from civil war and will therefore be less likely to rebel violently, so civil war should be less likely in states in more hierarchical relationships. Additionally, if states with external protection from civil war are less restrained in dealing with their populations, then states in the more hierarchical relationships should be more repressive. This is particularly true because the protection from external threats provided by the dominant state means that the subordinate state can focus exclusively on internal threats and so may actually have greater capacity to repress their populations. Finally, while dissidents in states that receive the protection provided by hierarchy are less likely to violently rebel, they will be more likely to use other means of dissent to try to achieve their goals, so occurrances of these should be more common. I test each of these propositions with two measures of hierarchical relationships.

Measures of Hierarchy

The primary measure is from Lake and captures the degree of hierarchy between the United States and every other state in the international system by year, from 1950 to 2005.[33] Lake uses two indices to measure hierarchy—"security hierarchy" and "economic hierarchy." Each comprises two component measures. Security hierarchy is a combination of the total number of US troops on a country's soil (divided by the country's population) and the number of independent security alliances the country possesses. Economic hierarchy includes a measurement of the country's exchange-rate regime and its relative trade dependence on the United States.

These indices are designed to capture the degree to which a state has given up sovereignty to the United States (the higher the value, the more sovereignty given up). States that have a large number of US troops (per capita) on their soil, have most if not all of their alliances in common with the United States, depend heavily on US trade, and have the dollar as their currency are in more hierarchical relationships than states that do not. If Lake is correct that subordinate states trade

[33] The data in Lake 2009 cover the period 1950–2000 and have since been expanded to 2005.

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sovereignty for protection, then the United States should be more likely to intervene in civil wars to protect the governments of states that are in more hierarchical relationships with it. Since the United States is much more powerful than most of its subordinates, this intervention should lead the dissidents' expected probability of victory to be very near zero.

Is the United States more likely to intervene in wars in these countries? Evaluating this likelihood empirically is difficult, because if my argument is correct, when dissidents anticipate large-scale US intervention they should not start civil wars. There is some research on public opinion demonstrating that the US public is much more supportive of military intervention to stop aggressive and threatening states than of interventions oriented toward affecting political change within a state—including efforts both to overthrow and to protect governments.[34] The results of some polls suggest that the United States would be hesitant to intervene in civil wars, and many long-running, pro-government US military interventions, such as those in Vietnam and Iraq, have been unsuccessful and unpopular. But the type of interventions described here—those leading the dissidents' probability of victory to be very near zero—will generally look much more like the French intervention in Gabon, the United Kingdom's in Sierra Leone, or the US interventions in Grenada and Panama, all of which were quick and decisive. Public opinion evidence has shown that, even if intervention is initially unpopular, if it is quick and successful, public opinion becomes much more favorable to it (the halo effect), which is what occurred in the cases of Grenada and Panama.

In addition, empirical evidence demonstrates that when civil wars do occur, the United States is much more likely to intervene on behalf of governments than of rebels. The International Military Interventions Dataset provides data on all military interventions from 1946 to 2005.[35] It identifies 39.5 percent of US interventions as being either to support governments or to oppose rebels, compared to 16 percent to oppose governments.[36] The Uppsala Conflict Data Project (UCDP) External Support Data provide information on a much wider range of support to civil war actors from 1975 to 2011.[37] They identify the United States as supporting actors in 592 conflict years, with 470 of these (79 percent) being instances of support to governments.

[34] Jentleson 1992.

[35] Pickering and Kisangani 2009.

[36] The data also identify 28.4 percent of US interventions as neutral and another 15.6 percent with other objectives, such as supporting or opposing a third-party government.

[37] Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011.

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I expect that dissidents in states in more hierarchical relationships with the United States will anticipate US intervention in a potential civil war. This expectation will not deter all potential rebels. In some cases, dissidents might anticipate a counterbalancing intervention that will boost their probability of victory; in others, they might anticipate adopting a strategy that will allow them to impose costs on the government even with US intervention. This expectation means, however, that on average, rebels will see their prospects of victory decline significantly, and in many cases this effect will be large enough to lead to the corner solution. As such, ceteris paribus, I expect civil war to be less likely in states in more hierarchical relationships with the United States.

I use the security hierarchy index to proxy dissident expectations about the likelihood that the United States will intervene in a potential civil war. I do not use the economic hierarchy index (although I have run the analyses with it and present the results in the supplementary material).[38] I anticipate dissidents will form expectations about the likelihood of US intervention on behalf of the government in a potential civil war primarily based on the degree of security hierarchy rather than on the country's exchange-rate regime and trade dependence. Additionally, exchange-rate policy and trade dependence are affected by a variety of things other than hierarchy and so can be measuring other factors as well.

Measuring a variable like hierarchy, which is not directly observable, is challenging, and one could quibble with any specific operationalization. But examining the security hierarchy index shows that the states that are generally considered to be more closely tied to the United States receive higher measures. The security hierarchy index has a range from 0 to 5.7. Countries at the higher end of the index include Kuwait, Panama, South Korea during the Cold War, the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War, and West Germany. A very large number of states, meanwhile, are coded as 0 because they had no US troops on their soil and shared no alliances with the United States.

To illustrate the global distribution of hierarchy and variation across time, Figure 1 presents maps depicting the distribution of countries' values on the security hierarchy index for 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000.[39] The maps show where countries fall in the four quartiles of the hierarchy scores (quartiles do not vary by decade; they apply to all the data), with darker values representing greater degrees of hierarchy.

[38] Cunningham 2016.

[39] Maps were created in Stata 12.1 with spmap. Country shapes files were obtained from CShapes. Weidmann, Kuse, and Gleditsch 2010.

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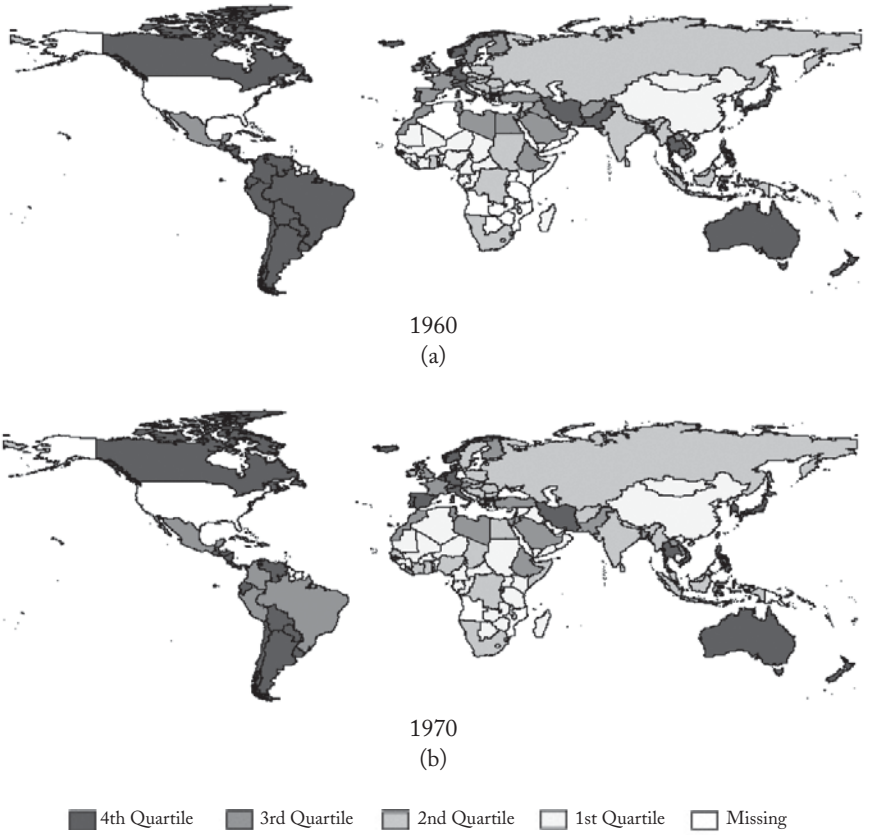


FIGURE 1
GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION OF US SECURITY HIERARCHY, 1960–2000

The maps show that generally, the degree of US hierarchy has increased over time. Additionally, they show that the greatest degrees of hierarchy are clustered in certain regions—Latin America, Western Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia—although there are important exceptions within each region.

Lake focuses on the United States because he can get systematic data over a long period only for it.[40] Additionally, it has been the most powerful state throughout the post–World War II period and has built the most extensive network of hierarchical relationships. But the United

[40] Lake 2009.

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Figure 1 *cont.*



1980
(c)



1990
(d)



2000
(e)

States is not the only powerful state that engages in these sort of relationships with subordinate states, so if I include only a measure of US hierarchy, I am undermeasuring the variable.

To analyze the effect of hierarchical arrangements beyond the US case, I include a dichotomous variable measuring whether the country

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was a member of the Warsaw Pact.[41] The Warsaw Pact was established in 1954 by the Soviet Union to coordinate security among its allies in Eastern and Central Europe and to assure its influence over those countries. The Soviet Union was clearly willing to deploy military forces to subordinate members of the Warsaw Pact, as in the Prague Spring in 1968.

The *Warsaw Pact* variable is considerably less nuanced than the *US security hierarchy* variable because it is dichotomous and does not indicate the extent of the relationship between the country and the Soviet Union. Additionally, it is more limited in that the Soviet Union had relationships with a larger set of states than those in the Warsaw Pact and was likely to intervene to support governments in the event of civil war in some of those states (such as Afghanistan). But the *Warsaw Pact* variable should indicate an additional set of cases in which dissidents anticipate large-scale intervention on behalf of the government, and those instances can provide a test of the theory beyond the US case.

In the analyses below, I examine how these variables affect the likelihood of civil war, repression, and other forms of dissent.[42] I treat the variable *US security hierarchy* as the primary one because it is available for the largest number of states and time periods (most countries cannot be a member of the Warsaw Pact) and because it is continuous, allowing for variation in the degree to which a state is in a hierarchical relationship.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables comprise seven measures of four outcomes—civil war, state repression, and two other strategies of dissent—*nonviolent campaigns* and *terrorist attacks*. In all cases, the unit of analysis is the country-year. To code civil wars, I use the Uppsala Conflict Data Project Intrastate Conflict Onset Dataset, which is based on the UCDP/Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) Armed Conflict Dataset (ACD).[43] The ACD identifies civil war as violent conflict over the control of a government or some piece of territory that takes place primarily within one

[41] Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania are coded as members of the Warsaw Pact from 1954 to 1991, and Albania until 1968.

[42] This empirical approach to examining the effect of potential intervention is different from Cetinyan 2002 and Thyne 2009. Cetinyan uses case studies to analyze the implications of his argument. Thyne focuses on country-level indicators of hostility or support to a government without regard to which states are hostile or supportive. Here I focus on powerful states (the United States and the Soviet Union) with the potential to intervene in a variety of circumstances, and I examine indicators that proxy the likelihood of this intervention.

[43] Gleditsch et al. 2002; Themnér and Wallensteen 2014.

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state, involves the government and at least one organized rebel group, and results in at least twenty-five battle deaths in a calendar year. A country can have multiple civil wars in the ACD if rebel groups are contesting the state over different territories. As such, I code years of ongoing war as 0 on the dependent variable unless a new civil war begins that year. I create two onset variables. The first, *internal armed conflicts*, includes all conflicts that generated at least twenty-five battle deaths. The second, *one-thousand-battle-death civil wars*, includes only civil wars that generated at least one thousand total battle deaths. Because the ACD requires a conflict to have twenty-five deaths to be included in a given year, conflicts can drop out and reenter the data set due to brief breaks in intensity. I code a new onset only if the conflict drops below twenty-five battle deaths for two consecutive calendar years.

To measure repression, I use three variables drawn from two data sets. The Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset includes data on government protections of physical integrity rights.[44] I use a composite measure (the Physical Integrity Rights Index) ranging from 0 to 8, with higher values indicating states respect physical integrity rights and lower values indicating less respect for these rights.[45] The CIRI data begin in 1981.

The Political Terror Scale (PTS) is a measure of state repressiveness, and ranges from 0 to 5, with higher values indicating more repression. The PTS is coded from two sources—Amnesty International yearly country reports and US State Department *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*. As such, two variables represent the PTS, and I include each as a dependent variable. The PTS data begin in 1976.[46]

To measure other strategies of dissent, I include two additional dependent variables. The first is the number of terrorist attacks in the country in the year. Terrorism, like civil war, is a form of violent dissent, but it requires significantly less organizational capacity. Additionally, except in very rare cases, terrorism is unlikely to lead to large-scale international intervention, so the theoretical mechanism examined here would not have the same effect. To measure *terrorist attacks*, I use data from Walter Enders, Todd Sandler, and Khusrav Gaibulloev.[47] Their data are based on the Global Terrorism Database, with adjustments

[44] Cingranelli and Richards 1999.

[45] The Physical Integrity Rights Index combines four components that indicate whether the government engaged in disappearances, torture, political imprisonment, and extrajudicial killings.

[46] For a discussion of the PTS and a comparison to the CIRI data, see Wood and Gibney 2010.

[47] Enders, Sandler, and Gaibulloev define terrorism as "the premeditated use or threat to use violence by individuals or subnational groups against noncombatants in order to obtain a political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of the immediate victims." See Enders, Sandler, and Gaibulloev 2011, 321.

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to allow for greater comparison on a cross-national basis. They differentiate between three types of terrorism that occur on a state's territory—domestic, transnational, and unknown. The *terrorist attacks* variable includes all three, but in additional analyses, I examine each type separately. These data begin in 1970.

The second measure of dissent strategies is the onset of a nonviolent campaign, with data taken from the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) Data Project 2.0 data set.[48] Nonviolent campaigns are large-scale movements that require significant mobilization, and the NAVCO data define them as "series of observable, continuous, purposive mass tactics or events in pursuit of a political objective."[49] Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan compare the success rates of violent and nonviolent campaigns,[50] but there is little work that examines the choice between these strategies. I examine whether the likelihood of large-scale intervention on behalf of the government in the event of a civil war makes a nonviolent campaign more likely. The NAVCO 2.0 data include yearly information on campaigns, and I use these data to generate a variable measuring the onset of a new campaign. These data are available for the full period for which the hierarchy data are available (1950–2005).

These seven dependent variables—*internal armed conflicts, one-thousand-battle-death civil wars, Physical Integrity Rights Index*, *PTS Amnesty International, PTS State Department, terrorist attacks*, and *nonviolent campaigns*—capture different elements of dissident behavior and the state's response. The data reveal significant variation in these outcomes. From 1950 to 2005, there were 250 internal armed conflicts and 106 one-thousand-battle-death civil wars. During the same period, there were 75 nonviolent campaigns. For the repression variables, the mean is typically in the middle of the scale (5 for the Physical Integrity Rights Index, and 3 and 2 for the two PTS indices, respectively), and approximately 10 percent of country-years are coded as either least or most repressive. *Terrorist attacks* shows a significant skew to the left, with more than 50 percent of country-years having no terrorist attacks. The mean number of attacks is 8.9, the maximum is 606. Descriptive statistics for these and the other variables in the analysis below are provided in Table 1.

Because these variables are measured in different ways, I use different statistical models to analyze them. The variables *internal armed conflicts, one-thousand-battle-death civil wars*, and *nonviolent campaigns*

[48] Chenoweth and Lewis 2013.
[49] Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 416.
[50] Chenoweth and Stephan 2011.

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TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Variable	*Observations*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	*Min.*	*Max.*
Internal armed conflicts	7,751	0.03	0.18	0	1
One-thousand-battle-death civil wars	7,751	0.01	0.12	0	1
Physical Integrity Rights Index	3,756	4.90	2.37	0	8
PTS Amnesty International	3,859	2.74	1.09	1	5
PTS State Department	4,693	2.35	1.16	1	5
Nonviolent campaigns	10,688	0.01	0.08	0	1
Terrorist attacks	6,905	8.90	38.62	0	606
US security hierarchy	8,269	0.20	0.38	0	5.87
Warsaw Pact	10,688	0.02	0.15	0	1
Log GDP per capita	7,412	7.47	1.28	3.87	10.80
Log population	8,330	8.53	2.02	2.77	14.08
Democracy	7,218	0.32	0.47	0	1
Autocracy	7,218	0.36	0.48	0	1
Internal armed conflict incidence	7,751	0.15	0.36	0	1

are dichotomous, so I conduct logistic regressions. The measures of state repression are indices, and I use ordinary least squares regressions (OLS).[51] *Terrorist attacks* is a count variable, and I use negative binomial regression because the variable is overdispersed.

MODEL SPECIFICATION

Analyzing the effect of hierarchy on four outcomes—civil war, state repression, terrorist attacks, and nonviolent campaigns—opens up the possibility of a large number of control variables since each outcome is affected by a wide range of factors. I limit inclusion to factors that should theoretically affect the likelihood of progovernment intervention and the above outcomes. I have conducted other analyses incorporating additional controls, which I describe briefly below and present in the supplementary material.[52]

I control for five factors in the main regressions. In all analyses, I control for the country's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and population, both log transformed.[53] Both could be associated with hierarchy—regimes in poorer states with smaller populations may feel more threatened and therefore be more willing to give up sovereignty in return for protection. Additionally, economic development and population

[51] I use OLS because that is the norm for these measures, but it is unlikely that every one-unit change in these measures of repression is equivalent. I reran the repression models as ordered logit regressions and the results were virtually identical to the OLS models.

[52] Cunningham 2016.

[53] These measures are from Gleditsch 2002, whose data have been expanded to 2011.

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are common control variables in studies of terrorism and have been shown to be two of the strongest predictors of civil war.[54]

In all models, I also include a control for the type of government of the country, which is taken from the Polity IV Project. The United States may be more willing to enter into hierarchical relationships with democracies, so regime type could influence US hierarchy. Additionally, until 1989, none of the Warsaw Pact countries was a democracy. Regime type is also likely to influence each of the outcomes. While the effect of regime type on civil war is disputed, the general finding is that "semi-democracies," or "anocracies," are more prone to civil war than full democracies or autocracies.[55] A similar curvilinear relationship could be expected with *nonviolent campaigns* because democracies and full autocracies may be better at preventing such campaigns. In contrast, I would expect *democracy* to have a linear effect on state repression (with democracies being less repressive). There is an established finding in the literature that democracies are more prone to terrorism,[56] although the cause of that relationship is disputed. In the analyses below, I include a dichotomous indicator of whether a country is a *democracy* or an *autocracy* (with anocracy as the baseline) in the tests of *internal armed conflicts, one-thousand-battle-death civil wars,* and *nonviolent campaigns,* but only the dichotomous indicator of *democracy* in the models of state repression and terrorism.[57]

In the civil war models, I also include a measure of the number of years since civil war and its square and cube to control for duration dependence.[58] In the tests of repression, *nonviolent campaigns*, and *terrorist attacks*, I include the variable *internal armed conflict incidence* since violence could affect all of these outcomes.[59]

Because the independent variables could potentially be influenced by the dependent variables, I lag each by one year. The one exception is the *Warsaw Pact* variable, because it should not be affected by the outcomes. Table 2 shows the results of the regressions, including the two measures of hierarchy and the control variables, on the seven variables measuring these four outcomes. [60] I include both measures of hierarchy together

[54] Hegre and Sambanis 2006.

[55] Vreeland 2008, however, demonstrates that the relationship between anocracy and civil war is, to some degree, an artifact of the Polity Project's coding.

[56] Chenoweth 2010.

[57] This is based on the variable *Polity2* from the Polity IV Project. Democracies are countries with a score higher than 6; autocracies have a score lower than −6.

[58] As recommended by Carter and Signorino 2010.

[59] This measures whether the country had a minor armed conflict resulting in at least twenty-five battle-related deaths in the year.

[60] Because there is likely some correlation in errors across time within the same country, I use robust standard errors, clustered on country in all models.

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because, in each case, the set of countries not included in the hierarchy is heterogeneous. Among countries that are not in the US hierarchy, some, but not all, are in the Warsaw Pact. These other countries should differ in the likelihood of intervention that leads to extreme asymmetry based on whether they are in the other hierarchy, and I include both measures to deal with this heterogeneity. I have run additional tests, presented in the supplementary material, that include each hierarchy measure separately, producing results very similar to those in Table 2.[61]

In the case of US hierarchy, Table 2 shows strong support for my argument that the potential for large-scale intervention on behalf of the government causes dissidents not to rebel violently, making civil war less likely. This, in turn, leads states to be more repressive, causing dissidents to pursue other strategies of dissent. Consistent with this argument, the statistical tests show that civil wars (by both measures) are significantly less likely when states are in more hierarchical relationships with the United States, but at the same time, states are more repressive when they are in more hierarchical relationships. This effect is significant using two of the three measures—the *Physical Integrity Rights Index* and *PTS Amnesty International*. *PTS State Department* is the one analysis where *US security hierarchy* is not a statistically significant predictor of state repression. It is possible these reports show some bias in favor of states that are in more hierarchical relationships with the United States. Even so, the sign on the coefficient shows that states in more hierarchical relationships are on average more repressive, but we cannot be 90 percent certain that this result is not due to statistical chance. Finally, while US hierarchy deters violent rebellion, it has the opposite effect on the two other strategies of dissent: nonviolent campaigns are more likely in states in more hierarchical relationships with the United States, and these countries experience more terrorist attacks on average.[62] If, as I argue, Lake's security hierarchy index is a proxy for the likelihood of US intervention in the event of a potential civil war, then these results strongly support the argument that the potential for this intervention reduces the threat of civil war to states, in turn allowing them a freer hand to repress their population, which then encourages dissidents to pursue means other than violent rebellion to press for political change.

[61] Cunningham 2016.

[62] The measure of terrorism in Table 2 includes all terrorist attacks on a country's soil—domestic, transnational, and unknown. In additional analyses presented in Cunningham 2016, I included the measures separately. The analyses were very similar to those presented here, and the *US security hierarchy* and *Warsaw Pact* variables had the same sign and significance in all four models.

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TABLE 2
STATISTICAL ANALYSES

Variable	*Internal Armed Conflicts*	*One-Thousand-Battle-Death Civil Wars*	*Physical Integrity Rights Index*	*PTS Amnesty International*	*PTS State Department*	*Nonviolent Campaigns*	*Terrorist Attacks*
US security hierarchy $_{t-1}$	−0.949**	−1.226*	−0.713*	0.570**	0.231	0.861**	2.519**
	(0.358)	(0.567)	(0.324)	(0.188)	(0.150)	(0.265)	(0.581)
Warsaw Pact	−2.004*		0.254	0.033	0.084	0.615+	−2.032**
	(0.889)		(0.479)	(0.133)	(0.137)	(0.328)	(0.479)
Log GDP per capita $_{t-1}$	−0.140+	−0.261**	0.407**	−0.189**	−0.167**	0.214+	0.644**
	(0.079)	(0.084)	(0.091)	(0.040)	(0.036)	(0.119)	(0.109)
Log population $_{t-1}$	0.317**	0.370**	−0.424**	0.132**	0.160**	0.391**	0.531**
	(0.067)	(0.064)	(0.053)	(0.026)	(0.023)	(0.066)	(0.084)
Democracy $_{t-1}$	−0.585*	−0.550*	1.554**	−0.684**	−0.821**	−2.250**	−0.255
	(0.243)	(0.269)	(0.191)	(0.094)	(0.080)	(0.591)	(0.273)
Autocracy $_{t-1}$	−0.555**	−0.550*				0.017	
	(0.187)	(0.247)				(0.315)	
Peace years	−0.066	−0.081					
	(0.048)	(0.062)					
Peace years^2	0.003	0.005					
	(0.003)	(0.004)					
Peace years^3	−0.000	−0.000					
	(0.000)	(0.000)					
Internal armed conflict incidence $_{t-1}$			−2.288**	1.077**	1.186**	−0.023	2.044**
			(0.231)	(0.111)	(0.114)	(0.343)	(0.180)
Constant	−4.492**	−5.046**	5.380**	2.937**	2.296**	−9.809**	−9.123**
	(0.895)	(0.828)	(0.835)	(0.387)	(0.355)	(1.110)	(1.174)
Number observations	6,377	6,145	2,830	3,007	3,497	6,375	4,514
Alpha							4.199
Alpha SE							0.365
R-square			0.495	0.408	0.483		

+ p<0.1,* p<0.05,** p<0.01, two-tailed; robust standard errors, clustered on country, in parentheses

Although more mixed, the results from the *Warsaw Pact* variable also support my argument. Membership in the Warsaw Pact has a strongly negative effect on civil war onset; in fact, there are no one-thousand-battle-death civil wars in Warsaw Pact countries, meaning in that model that variable leads to complete separation and no coefficient is generated. The only armed conflict identified in any of these states in the ACD is the "popular revolution" that occurred in Romania in 1989 as the Iron Curtain was crumbling. The hierarchy that the Soviet Union had established had eroded by this point, and so dissidents in Romania probably did not expect large-scale Soviet intervention.

The results from the analyses of state repression are not consistent with the predictions of my argument because the *Warsaw Pact* variable is insignificant in all models of state repression, but the repression data are available only for the latter part of the Soviet era and may not take into account the periods when these states were most repressive. The satellites of the former Soviet Union, such as East Germany, are considered to have been some of the most repressive states in the world, and all were nondemocracies. It is likely that in the period for which data are unavailable, Warsaw Pact countries were more repressive than other similar states.

Being a member of the Warsaw Pact had differential effects on *nonviolent campaigns* and *terrorist attacks*. Consistent with the predictions of the theory, nonviolent campaigns were significantly (at the 0.1 level) more likely in Warsaw Pact countries. Terrorism, meanwhile, was less likely, although this result may be driven by timing; the Warsaw Pact ended in 1991 and terrorism has become more common since then.

The control variables reveal patterns generally consistent with existing work. Logged population is significant in all tests and increases the occurrence of all events—civil wars, nonviolent campaigns, terrorist attacks—and there are higher levels of state repression in more populous states. Countries with higher average incomes are less prone to civil war, less repressive, more prone to nonviolent campaigns, and experience more terrorist attacks. Democracies and autocracies are less likely to experience civil wars than anocracies, and democracies are significantly less repressive than other states. I find that nonviolent campaigns are less common in democracies (likely due to the prevalence of nonviolent campaigns targeting democratization) and, interestingly, do not find that terrorist attacks are more common in democracies. The variable *internal armed conflict incidence* shows that states are more repressive and terrorist attacks more common during ongoing civil wars, but that there is no effect on nonviolent campaigns. The variables *peace years/*

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peace years^2/*peace years*^{3} show the expected negative/positive/negative relationship with civil war, but are not statistically significant.

The results in Table 2 show that the effect of US hierarchy is exactly that predicted by the theoretical argument I developed above. The results for the Warsaw Pact also suggest that this pattern holds outside of the US case, particularly in regard to civil war.

US security hierarchy is the best measure of the concept developed here because it is available for a larger number of states and it captures the concept as a continuous, rather than a dichotomous, measure. Its consistency with the predictions of the theory across different variables measuring four outcomes—civil war, state repression, nonviolent campaigns, and terrorist attacks—is strong evidence for the theoretical argument. Additionally, examining the substantive effect of hierarchy shows that it has a large impact on these outcomes.[63] When the other continuous variables are held constant at their mean, and discrete variables at their mode, states at the 10th percentile on the security hierarchy index have a 1.7 percent chance of experiencing the onset of a one-thousand-battle-death civil war in a given year. Those at the 90th percentile have a 0.95 percent chance, a decline in the probability of civil war of almost 50 percent. At the same time, states at the 10th percentile on the hierarchy index have a 0.9 percent chance of experiencing a nonviolent campaign, while those at the 90th percentile have a 1.4 percent chance, an increase of more than 50 percent. For terrorism, the effects are even larger—states at the 10th percentile on the hierarchy index are predicted to experience 3.3 terrorist attacks in a given year, whereas those at the 90th percentile are predicted to experience 11.2, an increase of more than 300 percent. I provide a more detailed discussion of the substantive effects of these variables in the supplementary material.[64]

Additional Analyses

I further explore the relationship between US hierarchy and these outcomes by conducting five additional sets of analyses: (1) further exploration of the measurement of hierarchy, (2) instrumental variable regressions to address the potential for endogeneity, (3) models that test whether it is the level or mere presence of hierarchy that matters, (4) the inclusion of other control variables, and (5) tests of whether the effect

[63] Substantive effects are estimated using CLARIFY. King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000; Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003.

[64] Cunningham 2016.

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of hierarchy is general or limited to specific contexts. In this section, I discuss each of these analyses briefly. I present and describe the statistical tests in the supplementary material.[65]

The first set of analyses further examines the measurement of hierarchy. In Table 2, I use the security hierarchy index, but also run those analyses with the economic hierarchy measure.[66] The sign on the economic hierarchy measure is the same as that for *US security hierarchy* for all models, but *US economic hierarchy* is statistically significant only for one outcome—state repression (in two of the three models of repression). These differences suggest that economic hierarchy has a less consistent effect than security hierarchy.

To analyze the effect of the measurement of hierarchy further, I rerun the analyses from Table 2 including the component measures of the security hierarchy index—the number of US troops on a country's soil per capita and the similarity in alliance portfolio between the country and the United States. The sign on the coefficient of the *alliance similarity* variable is the same as that on *US security hierarchy* in Table 2 and is statistically significant in all seven of the regressions. These results are important because the other element of the security hierarchy index, the number of US troops on a country's soil, could be related to each of the outcomes in other ways than identified here. For example, US troops on a country's soil could have a deterrent effect on civil war beyond signaling to potential rebels the likelihood of a large-scale US intervention. The similarity of alliance portfolios is unaffected by this problem, and its significance suggests that hierarchy has the deterrent effect identified here.

This discussion raises the critical issue of endogeneity. In my analysis, I treat the level of hierarchy as an exogenous factor that determines the propensity of a country for civil war, nonviolent campaigns, repression, and terrorism by affecting state and dissident expectations about the likelihood of US intervention in the event of a civil war. The likelihood of these outcomes could also affect the relationship between these countries and the United States. For example, the latter may deploy more troops to countries that are less prone to civil war. I deal with this potential endogeneity by controlling for factors that could affect both hierarchy and these outcomes, lagging the measure of hierarchy by one year and examining component measures, such as *alliance similarity*, which are unlikely to be driven by reverse causality. To further address

[65] Cunningham 2016.
[66] See Lake 2009.

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endogeneity, I conduct instrumental variable analyses using the natural log of the distance between each country's capital and Washington, DC, as an instrument for security hierarchy.[67]

The United States is the most powerful state in the international system and has the ability to project power across the globe, but it projects more power to and has a greater interest in countries closer to it. With important exceptions (such as Cuba and Japan), hierarchy is significantly correlated with geographic distance. The correlation between the distance-between-capitals measure and the *US security hierarchy* is –0.40, and between the former and the *US economic hierarchy* it is –0.49. At the same time, the distance a country's capital is from Washington, DC, should have no effect on the likelihood of civil war, repression, and dissent, aside from relations between that country and the United States. As such, the distance between capitals is an exogenous measure that could affect the likelihood of these outcomes but cannot be caused by them.

These two-stage models are presented in Tables F1 and F2 of the supplementary material and provide strong evidence that the correlations identified in Table 2 are not driven by endogeneity.[68] Hierarchy continues to exert a statistically significant effect, with a coefficient with the same sign, in the models of civil war, repression (and in fact is significant with all three measures of repression), and terrorism when I use log capital distance as an instrument. The only difference in its effect is that it is no longer statistically significant for the variable *nonviolent campaigns*—in the two-stage models, hierarchy is positive but insignificant.

The third set of analyses examines more directly whether the degree of hierarchy, as opposed to the mere existence of it, matters. There are a large number of zeros on the security hierarchy index, and so to some extent the results in Table 2 could be revealing differences between states that are and are not in the US hierarchy. I rerun models in Table 2 with a dichotomous variable indicating whether the security hierarchy measure was greater than zero and with the continuous measure of the hierarchy index. In all cases, the variable *US security hierarchy* has the same sign and significance as in Table 2, indicating that it is the degree, not just the presence, of hierarchy that affects civil war, repression, nonviolent campaign, and terrorism.

[67] These data are obtained from Kristian Gleditsch's Web site at http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/data-5.html, accessed November 5, 2015; the measurement approach is described in Gleditsch and Ward 2001.

[68] Cunningham 2016.

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The fourth set of analyses examines whether these results are robust to controlling for additional factors. In the analyses in Table 2, I included control variables that were likely to be associated with both the degree of hierarchy and these outcomes, but those models exclude some factors shown to influence these outcomes. I run additional models controlling for a country's ethnic relations, terrain, and regional context. The *US security hierarchy* variable remains statistically significant with the same sign in the six regressions in which it was significant in Table 2, and actually becomes significant in the seventh. The *Warsaw Pact* variable performs nearly identically with the additional controls.

Finally, the regressions presented in Table 2 examine the effect of hierarchy on civil war, repression, *nonviolent campaigns*, and *terrorist attacks* across all country-years for which data are available from 1950 to 2005. In doing so, I lump together a range of different types of countries that may be dissimilar in these effects. I conduct a series of additional regressions in which I divide the sample to see if hierarchy has different effects in different contexts. I focus on three contexts—democracies versus nondemocracies, the periods during and after the Cold War, and countries that either are or are not members of NATO. I find that *US security hierarchy* has similar effects during and after the Cold War, but there are two important differences in the other contexts. When the sample is limited to democracies, the effect of hierarchy is insignificant in all cases except for *terrorist attacks*, although the signs on the coefficients are all the same. The decrease in significance is due to a combination of somewhat smaller coefficients and much larger standard errors, suggesting that the insignificance is mostly, but not entirely, driven by the reduction in the sample size.

The most interesting difference is in the context of NATO states. There, increasing hierarchy has different effects from those identified in Table 2. States with higher scores on that index continue to be less prone to civil war but also have lower average repression scores, are less prone to nonviolent campaigns, and experience fewer terrorist attacks (the analyses of *one-thousand-battle-death civil wars* and PTS *Amnesty International* are statistically significant). These differences suggest that while hierarchy does deter civil war within NATO states, it does not have the corollary effects of making them more repressive and prone to other forms of dissent. This may be because the United States takes a more active role in the domestic politics of NATO members than of non-NATO states in its hierarchy, a point I return to in the conclusion.

These additional analyses comprise a very large number of regres-

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sions, which are presented and described in the supplementary material.[69] Taken together, they generally reveal that the effect of US hierarchy on the likelihood of civil war and nonviolent campaigns, the level of state repression, and the number of terrorist attacks is not driven by the measurement of hierarchy, model specification, or endogeneity, and is not related to a relationship present only in certain contexts.

Conclusion

Civil wars occur when dissidents decide to use violent rebellion to resolve political disagreements. When they do, dissidents have a motivation for rebellion, have some anticipation of achieving success through violence targeted against the state, and are unable to reach compromise settlements with governments to avoid civil war. In recent years, substantial theoretical and empirical work has contributed to our understanding of the determinants of the motivation for rebellion and the ability to reach compromise settlements.

In contrast, relatively little attention has been paid to the conditions under which dissidents anticipate achieving success through violence. This deficit is problematic. In this article, I have shown theoretically that in many cases civil wars are essentially impossible because the dissidents' probability of victory is so low that they have no credible threat for rebellion. Bargaining models take bargaining as a given and analyze when bargaining succeeds or fails. But for bargaining to occur, potential rebels must be strong enough to credibly threaten the state so that it has some reason to offer concessions to them. Without that threat, violent rebellion is not an option and conflicts do not happen—not because bargaining is successful but because there is no bargaining to break down.

This logic helps explain one of the most robust findings in the civil war literature—that strong states rarely experience civil wars. Dissidents in strong states have no credible threat of rebellion and thus cannot force states to the bargaining table. Weaker states can also achieve this deterrence when states that are more powerful guarantee their protection from internal threats. My analysis helps explain why some poor, nondemocratic states with terrain favorable to dissent, such as Nepal, experience civil wars, whereas others, such as Bolivia, do not. Bolivia was in the US hierarchy and Nepal was not. Dissidents in Bolivia had to consider the potential for US intervention when deciding whether to initiate violent rebellion. Dissidents in Nepal did not.

[69] Cunningham 2016.

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This external protection from violent rebellion can generate perverse incentives for states. The empirical analyses show that states that receive US protection are more repressive toward their populations. This repression, in turn, makes these states prone to other forms of dissent—such as nonviolent campaigns and terrorism—that are less likely to provoke US intervention. The potential implications of external deterrence of civil war can be bleak.

They do not have to be. The negative effects of US security links within democracies are smaller, and among NATO states they are reversed—NATO members in more hierarchical relationships with the United States are less repressive, have fewer terrorist attacks, and are less likely to experience nonviolent campaigns. There are two explanations for these differences. First, within democracies and particularly in NATO, the population generally has preferences more closely aligned with those of the United States, meaning that US hierarchy does not lead to regimes having different policies than their populations.[70] Second, the United States takes a more active role in the affairs of democracies and NATO member states and thus encourages better behavior by these states toward their populations despite the guarantees of protection.

These differences have important implications for states, such as the United States, when establishing hierarchical relations with other states. Since providing protection to states (particularly nondemocratic ones) that frees them from internal and external threats can lead to bad behavior, dominant states should consider carefully with whom they establish these relations. Providing security to governments that generally have good relations with their populations is less likely to lead to normatively bad outcomes than working with governments that do not. Additionally, dominant states can have more leverage in these relations than is recognized and can counteract these negative effects by placing greater demands on and becoming more involved in subordinate states. By picking partners carefully and using the leverage they have, dominant states can protect states from external and internal threats and, at the same time, compel them to behave better toward their populations.

Supplementary Material

Supplementary material for this article can be found at http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0043887115000404.

[70] Lake 2013 makes this argument about the differential effect of US hierarchy on domestic politics in different regions.

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