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Source: *World Politics*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (Jul., 1991), pp. 479-512
Published by: Cambridge University Press
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2010534
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PUBLIC OPINION, DOMESTIC STRUCTURE, AND FOREIGN POLICY IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

By THOMAS RISSE-KAPPEN*

INTRODUCTION

HOW is it to be explained that similarly powerful states more often than not respond differently to the same international conditions and constraints? Efforts to answer this question lead inevitably to the study of the domestic sources of foreign policy and international politics. One issue, though, is rarely addressed by the available literature: Who is in charge of the foreign policy–making process in liberal democratic states? Elites or masses? Who influences whom? What is the policy impact of societal actors and public opinion? Are public attitudes on foreign affairs manipulated by the elites? Finally, if public attitudes follow similar patterns, what accounts for differences between various countries in the policy impact of public opinion?

This paper tries to shed light on the relationship between public opinion and the foreign policy of liberal democracies.[1] I will argue that the policy impact of public opinion does not depend so much on the specific

* Drafts of this paper were presented at the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR) Workshop on "Public Opinion, Foreign Policy, and the Democratic Process," Bochum, West Germany, April 2–7, 1990, and at the Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Washington D.C., April 10–14, 1990. For very valuable comments I thank Richard Eichenberg, Matthew Evangelista, Philip Everts, Kjell Goldmann, Paul Joseph, Claudia Kappen, Peter Katzenstein, Richard N. Lebow, David Meyer, Nobuo Okawara, Hans Rattinger, Bruce Russett, and the participants in the ECPR workshop. For their help and advice regarding public opinion data I thank Lisa Brandes and Richard Eichenberg.

[1] The paper is part of a growing body of literature. See, for example, Michael Barnett, "High Politics Is Low Politics: The Domestic and Systemic Sources of Israeli Security Policy, 1967–1977," *World Politics* 42 (July 1990), 529–62; Richard Eichenberg, *Public Opinion and National Security in Western Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989); Matthew Evangelista, *Innovation and the Arms Race* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988); Gert Krell, *Rüstungsdynamik und Rüstungskontrolle: Die gesellschaftlichen Auseinandersetzungen um SALT in den USA 1969–1975* (Frankfurt am Main: Haag und Herchen, 1976); Richard N. Lebow, *Between Peace and War* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981); Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Politics and War," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (Spring 1988), 653–73; Erwin Müller, *Rüstungspolitik und Rüstungskontrolle: Fall USA* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1985); Bruce Russett, *Controlling the Sword: The Democratic Governance of National Security* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); and Eugene Wittkopf, *Faces of Internationalism: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990).

World Politics 43 (July 1991), 479–512

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issues involved or on the particular pattern of public attitudes as on the *domestic structure* and the *coalition-building processes* in the respective country. The paper analyzes the impact of public opinion on the foreign policy–making process in four liberal democracies with distinct domestic structures: the United States, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Japan. I will show that differences in political institutions, policy networks, and societal structures account for different foreign policy outcomes when the impact of the international environment is controlled for and public attitudes follow similar patterns across countries. Thus, the four countries responded differently to Soviet policies during the 1980s despite more or less comparable trends in mass public opinion. The analysis of the interaction between public opinion and elite coalition-building processes in the four countries reveals that the policy outcomes differ according to variances in domestic structures and not in the international status of the states.

Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Theoretical Concepts and Methodological Problems

Who Follows Whom? Elites and Masses

Most of the available literature on the interaction between mass public opinion and elites in the foreign policy–making process of liberal democracies can be categorized according to two broad concepts.[2] In accordance with the pluralist theory of democracy, a "bottom-up" approach assumes that the general public has a measurable and distinct impact on the foreign policy–making process.[3] In sum, leaders follow masses. However, the bottom-up concept is difficult to reconcile with the following empirical counterevidence:

—In Western Europe, the U.S., and Japan, elites and masses show similar support for basic foreign policy goals and institutions. Prevailing political, religious, and ideological cleavages structure elite as well as mass public opinion.[4]

[2] For excellent reviews of the debate, see Philip Everts and Arthur Faber, "Public Opinion, Foreign Policy, and Democracy" (Paper presented at the ECPR Workshop "Public Opinion, Foreign Policy, and the Democratic Process," Bochum, April 2–7, 1990); and Russett (fn. 1).

[3] See, e.g., Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Effects of Public Opinion on Policy," *American Political Science Review* 77, no. 1 (1983), 175–90.

[4] For Western Europe, see Eichenberg (fn. 1), pt. 5. For the U.S., see Ole R. Holsti and James N. Rosenau, "The Domestic and Foreign Policy Beliefs of American Leaders," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32 (June 1988), 248–94; and Wittkopf (fn. 1). For Japan, see Davis Bobrow, "Japan in the World: Opinion from Defeat to Success," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 33 (December 1989), 571–603.

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—There are many cases in which crucial foreign policy decisions have been taken in the absence of mass public consensus. Examples are the U.S. decisions in favor of an active international role in the postwar world and of becoming permanently involved in European security affairs; the West German decisions to rearm and join NATO in the early 1950s and to pursue an active *Ostpolitik* in the late 1960s; the French decisions to build an independent nuclear force in the 1950s and to leave NATO's military institutions in the mid-1960s.

Therefore, a second approach representing the conventional wisdom in the literature suggests a "top-down" process, according to which popular consensus is a function of the elite consensus and elite cleavages trickle down to mass public opinion. This viewpoint concurs with either a "power elite" (C. Wright Mills) or a state-centered and realist approach to foreign policy. It is assumed that the public is easily manipulated by political leaders, because of (1) the low salience, or significance, of foreign and security policy issues as compared with economic policies, (2) the low degree of knowledge about the issues involved, and (3) the volatility of public opinion.[5]

Again, empirical evidence suggests that these assumptions are questionable:

—While only a minority can be regarded as politically active, large portions of the public seem regularly to follow news about foreign policy in the media.[6] While domestic problems usually outweigh foreign and security issues in public salience, data reveal that substantial minorities consider foreign affairs among the most important problems facing their respective countries. On the average, 20–30 percent of the public indicate serious concern about foreign affairs.[7]

[5] See, e.g., Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, *Manufacturing Consent* (New York: Pantheon, 1988); Benjamin Ginsberg, *The Captive Public: How Mass Opinion Promotes State Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); Barry Hughes, *The Domestic Context of American Foreign Policy* (San Francisco: Freeman, 1979); Michael Margolis and Gary Mauser, eds., *Manipulating Public Opinion: Essays on Public Opinion as a Dependent Variable* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1989); and James N. Rosenau, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1961).

[6] During election campaigns in the U.S., for example, the majority of the public was aware of the different foreign policy choices under debate and could identify the positions of the presidential candidates. See John H. Aldrich et al., "Foreign Affairs and Issue Voting: Do Presidential Candidates 'Waltz before a Blind Audience'?" *American Political Science Review* 83, no. 1 (1989), 123–41; Hans Rattinger, "Foreign Policy and Security Issues as Determinants of Voting Behavior in the 1988 U.S. Presidential Election" (Paper presented at the ECPR Workshop "Public Opinion, Foreign Policy, and the Democratic Process," Bochum, April 2–7, 1990). See also Thomas Graham, "The Pattern and Importance of Public Knowledge in the Nuclear Age," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32, no. 2 (1988), 319–34.

[7] For the U.S., see Tom W. Smith, "The Polls: America's Most Important Problem, Part I: National and International," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (1985), 264–74; for France, West Germany, and Japan, see Hastings and Hastings, eds., *Index to International Public Opinion, 1982–1983* (New York: Greenwood, 1984), 563; *and 1983–1984*, 689.

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—Public attitudes, at least on basic foreign policy issues, seem to be more stable than is usually assumed. A large percentage of the public does not change attitudes frequently. In sum, the public seems to be more rational and less open to elite manipulation than the top-down thesis asserts.[8]

—That leaders try to manipulate masses and that governments launch sophisticated propaganda campaigns only suggest that the elites take the power of the uneducated masses seriously and feel vulnerable to it. The very existence of state propaganda and efforts at "spin control" belies the "power elite" hypothesis.

In addition to these empirical problems, the bottom-up and the top-down models both suffer from conceptual shortcomings. First, they treat masses and elites as unitary actors. While certain segments of the public may be manipulated by government propaganda, others may resist efforts to influence them.[9] One should at least distinguish between (1) *mass public opinion*, (2) the *attentive public*, which has a general interest in politics, and (3) *issue publics*, which are particularly attentive to specific questions. Moreover, elites are themselves frequently divided, and different segments of the elite try to convince the general public of their respective viewpoints.[10]

Second, a simplistic view of either bottom-up or top-down processes tends to ignore that public opinion and societal groups may influence the policy-making process in several ways and at different stages. They can directly affect the choices of top decision makers by changing policy goals or how those goals are prioritized, by narrowing the range of options and/or means to implement goals, or by winning symbolic concessions in the sense of changed rhetoric rather than policy reforms. Moreover, the public may also indirectly affect policies by influencing the coalition-building processes among the elites. It can strengthen or weaken the positions of bureaucracies or single actors within the government. Public

[8] Robert Shapiro and Benjamin I. Page, "Foreign Policy and the Rational Public," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32, no. 2 (1988), 211–47. For data, see Eichenberg (fn. 1); Gregory Flynn and Hans Rattinger, eds., *The Public and Atlantic Defense* (London: Croom Helm, 1985); Thomas Graham, *American Public Opinion on NATO, Extended Deterrence, and Use of Nuclear Weapons* (Cambridge: Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, 1989); and Russett (fn. 1), chap. 4.

[9] For example, the well-documented "rally around the flag" effect, according to which presidents can use military interventions to raise their popular support, applies only to a minority of the U.S. population and does not last very long. See Russett (fn. 1), 34–51. For the original study on the effect, see John Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (New York: Wiley, 1973). For a general argument regarding elite-public interactions, see Paul Joseph, *Realizing the Peace Dividend: The End of the Cold War and the Emergence of Progressive Politics* (forthcoming), chap. 4.

[10] For a discussion of the cleavages in U.S. public and elite opinion, see Michael Mandelbaum and William Schneider, "The New Internationalism: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy," in Kenneth Oye et al., eds., *Eagle Entangled: U.S. Foreign Policy in a Complex World* (New York: Longman, 1979), 34–90; and Wittkopf (fn. 1).

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opinion and the activities of public interest groups may lead to changes and/or realignments within or between political organizations such as parties. These indirect effects on policy are difficult to trace and are therefore easily overlooked. However, their impact may be as important as the above-mentioned direct influences.

Finally, it cannot be assumed that public and elite opinion interact with each other and are transformed into policy decisions in the same way across different countries. In other words, similarities in public attitudes across various countries do not necessarily lead to similar policies. Public attitudes and policies toward nuclear weapons provide a good example. The patterns of mass public opinion in the U.S., Western Europe, and Japan are more or less similar. Nuclear weapons are mostly tolerated for their deterrent value, provided that arms control efforts are underway. Attitudes become increasingly hostile if nuclear use in wartime situations is contemplated. Throughout the cold war, "first use" of nuclear weapons had only minority support in the U.S., France, West Germany, and Japan.[11]

However, for all these similarities in public attitudes, the nuclear policies of the four countries have differed from one another. Japan has had the strongest antinuclear policy in place since the late 1960s. The Federal Republic of Germany changed from an outspoken supporter of U.S. extended deterrence and "coupling" to a strong advocate of nuclear arms control. The United States emphasized arms control in the 1970s, turned to a massive arms buildup during Ronald Reagan's first term, and returned to arms control from the mid-1980s on. Finally, France has pursued the most pronuclear policy of the four countries and has refused so far to take part in nuclear arms control.

The variations in policies are in part a result of different positions and capabilities in the international environment (for example, the nuclear status of France and the U.S. as compared with that of Japan and Germany). However, while the frequent changes in United States arms-control policies might be considered to be reactions to changes in the "threat environment" (Soviet arms buildup in the 1970s; Soviet intervention in Afghanistan; the "Gorbachev revolution"), French policy seems to remain largely unaffected by either external or internal factors. The change in West German policies even runs counter to what one would expect from looking solely at the "threat environment" such as the Soviet

[11] For data regarding the U.S., see Graham (fn. 8); and Russett (fn. 1), 57–65; regarding Western Europe, see Eichenberg (fn. 1), chap. 4; and Stephen Szabo, "West European Public Perceptions of Security Issues" (Manuscript, prepared for the USIA, July 1988); for Japan, see Bobrow (fn. 4).

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arms buildup of the late 1970s. The stability of Japanese nuclear policies, while in line with public attitudes, is also not explicable in terms of changes in the country's international environment.

The Missing Link: Domestic Structures and Coalition-building Processes

If, first, public attitudes as such cannot account for differences in policies and, second, variations in the international environment do not explain them either, what is the missing link between mass public opinion and elite decisions in foreign and security policy? It is suggested here that one has to look at *domestic structures* and *coalition-building processes* to understand the impact of public opinion on the foreign policy of liberal democracies.[12]

Domestic structure approaches deal with the nature of the political institutions (the "state"), basic features of the society, and the institutional and organizational arrangements linking state and society and channeling societal demands into the political system. In other words, domestic structures determine how political systems respond to societal demands. Social movement research talks about "political opportunity structures."[13]

Several approaches can be distinguished. The first focuses on *state institutions* and has found its most prominent expression in the concept of "strong" and "weak" states. It emphasizes the degree of centralization of state institutions and the ability of political systems to control society and to overcome domestic resistance.[14] Weak states have fragmented political institutions and are open to pressures by societal interest groups and political parties. Their ability to impose policies on society and to extract resources from it is fairly limited. Strong states, by contrast, con-

[12] For a similar argument focusing on the effects of party systems and electoral rules, see Eichenberg (fn. 1), 235–41.

[13] See, for example, Herbert P. Kitschelt, "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* 16 (January 1986), 57–85; and Sidney Tarrow, *Struggle, Politics, and Reform: Collective Action, Social Movements, and Cycles of Protest* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Center for International Studies, Cornell University, 1989). For an overview, see David Meyer, "Peace Movements and National Security Policy: An Agenda for Study" (Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Atlanta, Ga., August 31–September 3, 1989).

[14] The concept was originally developed by Peter Katzenstein, "International Relations and Domestic Structures: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States," *International Organization* 30 (Winter 1976), 1–45; Stephen Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials, Investments, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). For more recent discussions, see Michael Mastanduno et al., "Toward a Realist Theory of State Action," *International Studies Quarterly* 33 (December 1989), 457–74; and G. John Ikenberry, "Conclusion: An Institutional Approach to American Foreign Economic Policy," *International Organization* 42 (Winter 1988), 219–43.

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sist of centralized political institutions with strong bureaucracies; they are able to resist public demands and to preserve a high degree of autonomy vis-à-vis society.

However, the "strong versus weak states" distinction, while parsimonious, is too simplistic to account for the variations between domestic structures. Weak states like the U.S. are sometimes able to conduct highly efficient policies, whereas strong systems might not always pursue forceful and energetic foreign policies.[15] Moreover, institutionalist approaches have been challenged as apolitical and therefore unable to explain specific policy outcomes. Rather than emphasizing state structures, one should analyze the *coalition-building processes* within societies and political systems.[16] These approaches focus on the "policy networks," that is, the mechanisms and processes of interest representation by political parties and interest groups that link the societal environment to the political systems. This concept emphasizes the ability of political actors to build consensus among the relevant elite groups in support of their policies.[17]

Simply to set off the coalition argument against the institutionalist approach seems to be inappropriate, though. On the one hand, state structures do not determine the specific content or direction of policies. On the other hand, coalition building takes place in the framework of political and societal institutions. The structures of the society and the political system determine the size and strength of policy coalitions needed to create the support basis for specific policies. Domestic structures also seem to account for general features of foreign policies, the degree of stability as well as the level of activity and commitment.[18]

In sum, a "mixed" approach encompassing both institutional structures and coalition-building processes seems to be more appropriate. In

[15] See, for example, G. John Ikenberry, "The Irony of State Strength: Comparative Responses to the Oil Shocks in the 1970s," *International Organization* 40 (Winter 1986), 105–37. See also the special edition of *International Organization* 42 (Winter 1988), "Approaches to Explaining American Foreign Economic Policy."

[16] Peter Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics," *International Organization* 32 (Autumn 1978), 881–911, at 904.

[17] For coalition-building approaches, see, e.g., Ernst-Otto Czempiel, *Amerikanische Außenpolitik* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1979); Joe D. Hagan, "Regimes, Political Oppositions, and the Comparative Analysis of Foreign Policy," in C. F. Hermann et al., eds., *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 339–65; Helen Milner, *Resisting Protectionism: Global Industries and the Politics of International Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Die Krise der Sicherheitspolitik: Neuorientierungen und Entscheidungsprozesse im politischen System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1977–1984* (Mainz-Munich: Grünewald-Kaiser, 1988); and Ronald Rogowski, *Commerce and Coalitions: How Trade Affects Domestic Political Alignments* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

[18] See Hagan (fn. 17).

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their later works Peter Gourevitch and Peter Katzenstein, who had previously argued about the respective merits of institutionalist versus coalition-building concepts, both moved toward combined approaches that basically emphasized three factors:[19]

1. The nature of the *political institutions* and the degree of their centralization: Is executive power concentrated in the hands of one decision maker (president, prime minister, chancellor) who controls the bureaucratic infighting among governmental agencies? To what extent can the government control the legislative process?
2. The *structure of society* regarding its polarization, the strength of social organization, and the degree to which societal pressure can be mobilized: How heterogeneous is the society in terms of ideological and/or class cleavages? How well developed are social coalitions and organizations in their ability to express grievances and raise demands?
3. Finally, the nature of the coalition-building processes in the *policy networks* linking state and society:
   a. In countries with centralized political institutions but polarized societies and rather weak social organizations, the policy network is likely to be *state-dominated*. The policy-relevant coalition building would then be restricted to the political elites and would more or less exclude societal actors and/or public opinion.
   b. By contrast, *societal control* of the policy network is to be expected in countries with comparatively homogeneous societies and a high degree of societal mobilization but weak state structures. The policy-relevant coalition building would take place among societal actors; accordingly, public opinion would play a major role.
   c. Countries with political institutions and social organizations of comparable strength are likely to have a policy network characterized by *democratic corporatism*. Political and societal actors would be engaged in continuous bargaining processes in search of policy compromises in an environment of give-and-take.[20] As a result, some sorts of middle-of-the-road-policies are to be expected, reflecting the common denominator of public opinion.

The Impact of Public Opinion in Four Liberal Democracies

The United States, France, Germany, and Japan are characterized by distinct domestic structures. I argue that these differences largely account

[19] See Peter Gourevitch, *Politics in Hard Times* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986); Peter Katzenstein, "Introduction" and "Conclusion," in Katzenstein, ed., *Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 3–22, 295–336; and idem, *Small States in World Markets* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985).

[20] For the concept of "democratic corporatism," see Peter Katzenstein, *Corporatism and Change* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984); and Katzenstein (fn. 19, 1985). See also Philippe Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch, eds., *Trends towards Corporatist Intermediation* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1979).

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for the variations in the impact of public opinion on foreign and security policy. And I test this proposition by discussing the various responses to changes in Soviet foreign policy from the late 1970s to the late 1980s (from Brezhnev to Gorbachev).

The Domestic Structures of the United States, France, Japan, and the Federal Republic of Germany

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

The U.S. undoubtedly has the most decentralized foreign and security policy-making structure of the four countries. The built-in tensions within the executive between the Pentagon, the State Department, and the National Security Council, which lead to continuous infighting over defense and arms-control policies, are well documented. Moreover, Congress has more authority over the conduct of foreign policy than do most other Western parliaments due to (1) the weakness of the American party system, which severely limits the power of the executive over congressional decisions and (2) institutional provisions such as the two-thirds majority requirement for the ratification of international treaties.

The very different French political structure consists of the strongest state institutions of the four countries. The Fifth Republic institutionalized a centralized political system that all presidents since de Gaulle have reinforced. The power of the French bureaucracy enhances the strength of the executive.[21] This general feature of the French political system is particularly relevant for foreign and defense policy-making, the *domaine réservée* of the president.[22] Furthermore, the French Parliament—in striking contrast to the U.S. Congress—plays an almost negligible role in foreign policy. In sum, the centralization of the French decision-making apparatus seems to be even greater in foreign policy than in other issue-areas.

Japan resembles the French case insofar as its political system is usually described as a strong state. Indeed, the power of the state bureaucracy extends into foreign affairs. However, the Foreign Ministry, which dominates Japanese foreign and security policy and outweighs the De-

[21] See Vincent Wright, *The Government and Politics of France* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978). On the role of the bureaucracy in French foreign policy, see Mark B. Hayne, "The *Quai d'Orsay* and the Formation of French Foreign Policy in Historical Context," in Robert Aldrich and John Connell, eds., *France in World Politics* (London: Routledge, 1989), 194–218.

[22] See Alfred Grosser, *Affaires extérieures: La politique de la France, 1944–1984* (Paris: Flammarion, 1984), 151–54. For a critical analysis of the institutions of French foreign policy, see Samy Cohen, *La monarchie nucléaire: Les coulisses de la politique étrangère sous la Ve République* (Paris: Hachette, 1986).

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fense Agency, usually cannot compete internally with the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) or the Ministry of Finance.[23] The distribution of power within the government thus reflects the predominance of economic over defense issues in Japanese foreign policy. While the Japanese parliament, the Diet, plays only a minor role in foreign affairs, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which has controlled the government since 1955, is among the most important actors in Japanese foreign policy.[24]

In the Federal Republic of Germany executive control over foreign and defense policy is generally stronger than in the U.S.[25] With the exception of the 1972 ratification process concerning the treaties with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (*Ostpolitik*), the role of Parliament has been fairly limited. This weakness, however, does not simply result in strengthening executive power as in France. Rather, the political parties constrain both the legislative *and* the executive branches. Partly as a result of peculiar election procedures,[26] the party system is smaller and less polarized than in France. The ruling parties in coalition governments must engage in constant consensus building on major foreign policy decisions. "Party democracy" permeates the government bureaucracy insofar as internal divisions since the mid-1960s are usually related to the party affiliation of the respective minister rather than to traditional bureaucratic roles.[27]

STRUCTURE OF THE SOCIETY

In sharp contrast to its centralized political system, French society is usually described as fragmented along ideological, religious, and class lines.[28]

[23] See Reinhold Drifte, *Japan's Foreign Policy* (London: Chatham House Papers, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1990), 21–24; Haruhiro Fukui, "Policy-making in the Japanese Foreign Ministry," in R. A. Scalapino, ed., *The Foreign Policy of Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 3–35; and Gaston J. Sigur, "Power, Politics, and Defense," in J. H. Buck, ed., *The Modern Japanese Military System* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1975), 181–95.

[24] For details, see Hans Baerwald, "The Diet and Foreign Policy," in Scalapino (fn. 23), 37–54; and John Welfield, *An Empire in Eclipse: Japan in the Postwar American Alliance System* (London: Athlone Press, 1988).

[25] See Helga Haftendorn, ed., *Verwaltete Außenpolitik* (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1978); and Barry Blechman et al., *The Silent Partner: West Germany and Arms Control* (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger, 1988), 27–60. On the German domestic structure in general, see Peter Katzenstein, *Policy and Politics in West Germany* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

[26] In particular, the proportionate vote combined with the provision that a party has to gain at least 5% of the votes nationwide in order to be represented in the Parliament.

[27] Thus, unlike the U.S. case, where hawks and doves are usually represented along bureaucratic roles, the party affiliation of the minister determines the policy direction of the Foreign Office as compared with that of the Ministry of Defense.

[28] After all, the strong state institutions of the Fifth Republic were intended to counterbal-

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While this polarization has declined considerably over the past ten years (partly as a result of the French Left taking over the presidency),[29] the weakness and fragmentation of the French social organizations is still striking. (Compare, for example, the ideological divisions between the numerous French trade unions with the unified strength of the German Federation of Trade Unions [*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*].) This general description extends into the foreign policy area.

French mass public opinion is more divided on security policy than is that of most other Western European nations. The divisions are strongest along party lines, which in turn reflect ideological cleavages between the Left and the Right. Concerning attitudes on defense spending, for example, supporters of the French Socialist Party (PSF) have been more than 20 percentage points apart from adherents of the Gaullist Party (RPR), whereas the respective gap between supporters of the German Social Democrats (SPD) and of the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) was only 10–15 points.[30] Moreover, the opposition to the French defense policy was never able to mobilize much societal support. Although a majority of the French public rejected the independent nuclear force well into the 1970s, this opposition never manifested itself in strong peace movements, as has frequently been the case in the U.S., West Germany, and Japan.[31]

Compared with France, Japan seems to be an almost homogeneous society in which the achievement of social consensus ranks among the highest cultural values. Accordingly, mass public opinion on foreign policy is among the most stable and most consistent of all industrialized democracies.[32] Moreover, Japanese society, in particular the business community, is highly organized. In the security policy area, for example, the defense industry can marshal strong institutions to further its interests. On the other side of the spectrum, the Japanese peace movements have also been well organized, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s, and have maintained strong links to trade unions and left-wing opposition parties.[33] In 1960, for example, the renewal of the Mutual Security

ance the divisions of French society. See Douglas E. Ashford, *Policy and Politics in France: Living with Uncertainty* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982).

[29] See Paul Godt, ed., *Policy-making in France: From de Gaulle to Mitterrand* (London: Pinter, 1989).

[30] Data for 1979–83 are in Eichenberg (fn. 1), 186–87. For further evidence, see Eichenberg, 68, 141, 147, 189.

[31] See Jolyon Howorth, *France: The Politics of Peace* (London: Merlin Press, 1984).

[32] For data, see Bobrow (fn. 4); and James A. A. Stockwin, "Japanese Public Opinion and Policies on Security and Defence," in Ronald Dore and Radha Sinha, eds., *Japan and World Depression* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 111–34.

[33] For details, see Reinhold Drifte, *Arms Production in Japan* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview

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Treaty with the U.S. led to the most serious political crisis in postwar Japan, as peace movements, opposition parties, and trade unions launched a massive campaign against the treaty, including the largest strikes in Japanese history.

In general, American society resembles French society more than Japanese society in terms of class divisions and ideological cleavages. Again, this has repercussions in foreign and security policy. As Eugene Wittkopf and others have shown, the bifurcation of the American people into "militant internationalists" and "cooperative internationalists" is strongly correlated with ideological divisions between conservatives and liberals and, to a lesser extent, with partisanship; the cleavages have increased since the 1970s.[34] Nevertheless, the ability of societal actors to mobilize support for their demands and to organize themselves seems to be greater in the U.S. than in France. One only has to mention the significant power of the American defense industry, as well as the importance of countervailing public interest groups lobbying for arms control and disarmament.[35]

German society seems to be less fragmented than either U.S. or French society in terms of ideological and class cleavages. Moreover, the country enjoys comparatively strong social organizations and a high level of participation in those associations. The three most important and centralized social organizations—business, trade unions, and churches—never hesitate to speak out on foreign and security issues, usually on the dovish side of the debate. The peace movements of both the 1950s and the 1980s were able to overcome their internal divisions and create strong coordinating mechanisms.[36]

POLICY NETWORKS

Concerning the policy networks, the American system seems to come closest to the society-dominated type. Constant building and rebuilding of coalitions among societal actors and political elites is fairly common

Press, 1986), 21–29; Kai Fabig, *Japan: Wirtschaftsriese—Rüstungszwerg* (Bochum: Studienverlag Brockmeyer, 1984); and Welfield (fn. 24), 434–41.

[34] Wittkopf (fn. 1), 34–36, 44–49. In fact, the ideological cleavages are deeper than those in the sociodemographic realm. See also Rattinger (fn. 6).

[35] On the U.S. armaments industry, see, e.g., Gordon Adams, *The Politics of Defense Contracting: The Iron Triangle* (New York: Council on Economic Priorities, 1981); Fen O. Hampson, *Un-guided Missiles: How America Buys Its Weapons* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1989); on the U.S. peace movements, see David S. Meyer, *A Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1990); and Frances B. McCrea and Gerald E. Markle, *Minutes to Midnight: Nuclear Weapons Protest in America* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1989).

[36] For the 1980s, see Risse-Kappen (fn. 17). For the 1950s, see Marc Cioc, *Pax Atomica: The Nuclear Defense Debate in West Germany during the Adenauer Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

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even in foreign and security policy. The openness of the political system provides the society with comparatively easy access to the decision-making process. Accordingly, corporatist structures such as the military-industrial complex linking business, military, and political interests have only a limited impact on foreign policy decisions beyond the weapons-procurement process and demands for a certain level of defense spending.[37]

The policy network in France, by contrast, seems to be almost completely dominated by the state and, above all, the presidency, particularly concerning foreign and defense policy. Even when Socialist President Mitterrand was forced into "cohabitation" with a Conservative government from 1986 to 1988, he continued to control the foreign policy–making process.[38] State dominance in the policy network is facilitated by the famous French "defense consensus" among the elites and all political parties in support of French independence in world politics and of the *force de dissuasion*. As a result, the French foreign policy–making process has been described as that of a "nuclear monarchy."[39]

Differing from the French and U.S. cases, the situation of the Germans and Japanese resembles the corporatist model. In the Federal Republic the party system not only permeates the state institutions, but it also forms the most important link between society and the political system. The two major parties—the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD)—are essentially catchall organizations that integrate rather divergent societal demands. Sometimes intraparty divisions are greater than the cleavages between parties, as was the case with the CDU and *Ostpolitik* during the 1970s and with the SPD and deterrence during the 1980s. Additionally, institutional arrangements as well as the political culture emphasize consensus building and the mutually beneficial reconciliation of diverging societal interests (*Interessenausgleich*). There is a clear analogy between the domestic emphasis on social partnership and a foreign policy trying to achieve its goals by security partnership with Germany's neighbors.[40]

Consensus building is of similar and probably even greater importance

[37] This, at least, is the finding of various studies. See, for example, Stephen Rosen, ed., *Testing the Theory of the Military Industrial Complex* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973); Krell (fn. 1); and Müller (fn. 1). On the military procurement process, see Hampson (fn. 35).

[38] See Phillippe G. LePrestre, "Lessons of Cohabitation," in LePrestre, ed., *French Security Policy in a Disarming World* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1989), 15–47.

[38] See Philippe G. LePrestre, "Lessons of Cohabitation," in LePrestre, ed., *French Security* Howorth and Patricia Chilton, eds., *Defence and Dissent in Contemporary France* (London: Croom Helm, 1984).

[40] A content analysis of party and government documents for 1977–84 showed that "international cooperation" was by far the most frequently mentioned foreign policy objective. See Risse-Kappen (fn. 17).

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in Japan. The need to bring almost every relevant player into the decision-making process and to strike a balance between different views is frequently cited as a major reason that Japanese foreign policy seems so slow moving and low-key.[41] However, to portray the Japanese policy network as "corporatism without labor"—that is, having strong and intimate linkages between the state bureaucracy, the LDP, and big business[42]—does not seem to make as much sense in security policy. A military-industrial complex that includes the Defense Agency and the weapons industry, while having increased its role during the defense buildup of the 1980s,[43] by no means dominates Japanese security policy. Even more than in the West German case, the legacy of World War II prevented the rise of a new Japanese militarism. A firm national consensus including all relevant elite factions, the opposition, and society insures that Japanese security policy has been first and foremost a matter of foreign economic policy. As a result, military policy seems to be one issue-area in Japanese politics that does not systematically exclude labor and the Left from the policy-making process, at least not since the 1960 Security Treaty crisis.

Table 1 summarizes the similarities and differences in the domestic structures of the four liberal democracies under consideration here.

TABLE 1
DOMESTIC STRUCTURES

	U.S.A.	*W. Germany*	*Japan*	*France*
Political system	decentralized	intermediate level of centralization	intermediate level of centralization	centralized
Society	heterogeneous, weak organizations	heterogeneous, strong organizations	homogeneous, strong organizations	heterogeneous, weak organizations
Policy network	society-dominated	democratic, corporatist	quasi-corporatist	state-dominated

[41] On the importance of consensus building in Japanese politics and particularly in foreign policy, see Takeshi Ishida, *Japanese Political Culture* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1983), 3–22; Douglas Mendel, "Public Views of the Japanese Defense System," in Buck (fn. 23), 150; and Scalapino (fn. 23), xv–xviii.

[42] See, for example, T. J. Pempel, *Politics and Policy in Japan: Creative Conservatism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982). For a critique of this analysis evaluating public policy in Japan as a more open process, see Kent Calder, *Crisis and Compensation: Public Policy and Political Stability in Japan, 1949–1986* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[43] See Drifte (fn. 33).

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The comparison leads to several assumptions about the impact of public opinion on foreign policy in the four countries. The comparatively open and decentralized American political system and its society-dominated policy network should provide public opinion with ample opportunity to affect policy outcomes. In short, the interaction of public opinion and elites in the decision-making process is expected to come comparatively close to the bottom-up model. In contrast to the U.S. case, French public opinion is likely to play only a marginal role in the foreign policy–making process. The Fifth Republic's centralized political system and a fragmented societal structure make it difficult to build a public consensus on policy issues and would be expected to limit the public impact on foreign and security policy. The German domestic structure, in which comparatively strong state institutions deal with well-organized societal actors in a democratic corporatist network, suggests that public opinion influences foreign policy mainly through the party system and that interactive patterns prevail between elites and masses. Finally, the Japanese case is expected to resemble Germany insofar as both countries possess strong political institutions and corporatist policy networks. There is a difference, however; Japanese society is more homogeneous than German society, and the public has been less divided on foreign and security policy issues.

Withering Threat: Public Opinion Reactions to Soviet Foreign Policy, 1980–90

To isolate the role of domestic structures as the intervening variable between public opinion and policy decisions requires a case in which the influence of the international environment appears constant for the four countries and in which under ideal conditions public attitudes are also more or less similar. From the late 1970s to the late 1980s the four countries were exposed to a drastically changing Soviet policy. Moscow's conventional and nuclear arms buildup of the 1970s was followed by the intervention in Afghanistan and the stalemate in superpower arms control during the early 1980s. From 1985–86 on the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, initiated the politics of *perestroika*, which resulted in a turnaround of Soviet security policy toward "common security." Moscow accepted the zero option for intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF), withdrew its troops from Afghanistan, announced unilateral troop cuts in Europe, and finally revoked the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty for Eastern Europe, thereby triggering the democratic revolutions of 1989. How did mass public

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opinion in the four countries perceive these drastic changes in Soviet foreign policy?[44]

Figure 1 reveals that, with the exception of Japan, the public perception of a Soviet threat declined from unusually high levels in the early 1980s to its virtual disappearance in the late 1980s. The initial public reaction to Soviet actions in the late 1970s and early 1980s, particularly the intervention in Afghanistan, was unanimously hostile and negative. While the most dramatic change from a very high degree of threat perception occurred in the U.S., the West Germans were the first to react positively to the turnaround of Soviet foreign policy. In 1986, that is, during the very first year of Gorbachev's "peace offensive" and one year *before* the INF treaty (which particularly affected German security) was concluded, a majority became convinced that the Soviet threat had disappeared. The threat as perceived by the French declined in 1987–88, whereas it was only in late 1988 that more than 50 percent of Americans thought that the Soviet threat had withered away. Finally, the "Gorbachev revolution" apparently did not affect Japanese public opinion. Not only did comparatively more Japanese perceive a Soviet threat throughout the 1980s, but the percentage remained high even in 1987–88.

This evaluation is confirmed by an opinion poll taken immediately after the Washington summit in December 1987 at which the INF treaty was signed. Seventy-three percent of the Germans, 55 percent of the Americans, 54 percent of the French, but only 34 percent of the Japanese thought that the Soviet Union was becoming a more trustworthy nation as a result of the reforms initiated by Gorbachev.[45] Thus, the Germans appeared to be the most enthusiastic supporters of Gorbachev, while the Japanese remained unaffected by the new Soviet foreign policy, and the Americans and the French were in between.

How did the changes in threat perceptions translate into attitudes on how to deal with the Soviet Union? The data reveal a major difference between public opinion trends in the United States as compared with those in France, Germany, and Japan. Only in the U.S. did the negative reaction to Moscow's policies during the late Brezhnev era result in in-

[44] The following data are taken from a variety of opinion polls. Although I have tried to use as many comparable data as possible, the wording of questions sometimes differed considerably from country to country. As a result, a note of caution is appropriate regarding the interpretation of these data. For example, I will refrain from analyzing minor changes in percentage. Also, I can only present here data on the aggregate level of overall mass public opinion. For comprehensive studies with breakdowns according to age, education, and political orientation, see Eichenberg (fn. 1); and Wittkopf (fn. 1).

[45] Data in Hastings and Hastings, eds., *Index to International Public Opinion, 1987–1988* (New York: Greenwood, 1989), 574.

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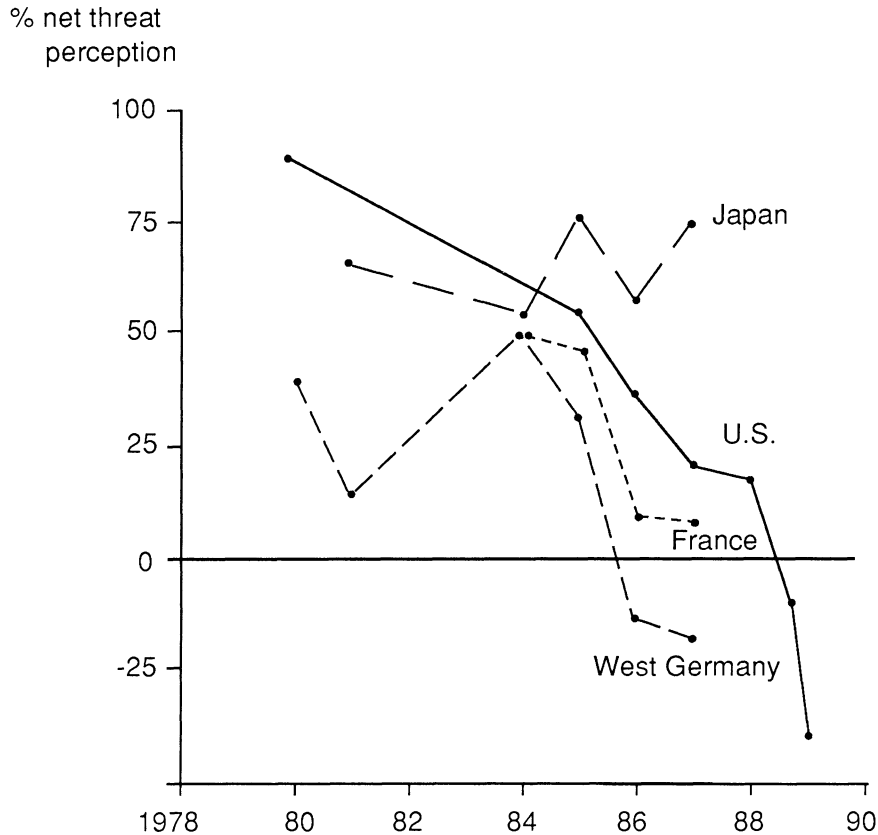

FIGURE 1
NET THREAT PERCEPTION OF THE USSR[a]

SOURCES: U.S.: *Americans Talk Security*, no. 12 (1989), 58; CBS/*New York Times* polls; France: USIA polls; Michel Girard, "L'opinion publique et la politique extérieure," *Pouvoirs*, no. 51 (1989); Szabo (fn. 11); West Germany: Hans Rattinger, "The INF Agreement and Public Opinion in West Germany" (Manuscript, March 1988); Gebhard Schweigler, *Grundlagen der aussenpolitischen Orientierung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1985), 183; Szabo (fn. 11); Japan: Hastings and Hastings, *Index to International Public Opinion, 1981–1982ff.* (New York: Greenwood, 1983ff.).

[a] "Net threat perception" is defined as the percentage of those perceiving *a Soviet threat* minus the percentage of those perceiving *no threat*.

creasing support for hawkish policies. From late 1979 to early 1981 a majority of Americans favored increases in defense spending (see Figure 2) and opposed the ratification of the SALT II treaty. However, the support for a tougher stance disappeared as quickly as it had emerged. By mid-1981, 65 percent of Americans favored the resumption of nuclear arms talks. By 1982 support for increased defense spending was back at the

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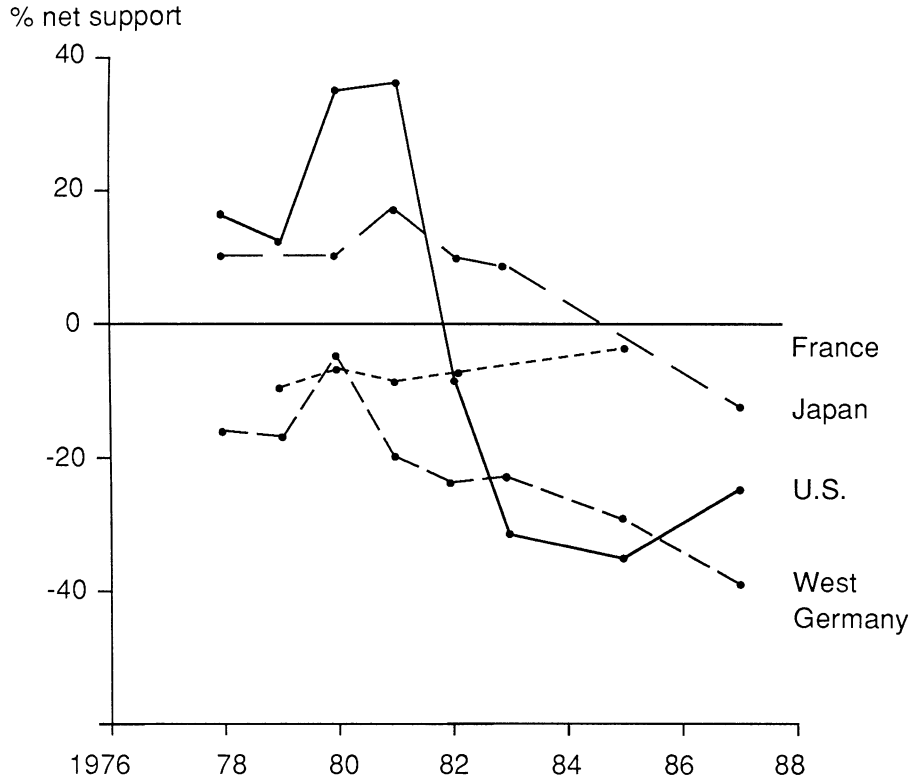

FIGURE 2
NET SUPPORT FOR DEFENSE SPENDING[a]

SOURCES: U.S.: CBS/*New York Times* polls; Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "Lulling and Stimulating Effects of Arms Control," in A. Carnesale and R. Hass, eds., *Superpower Arms Control* (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger, 1987), 237; France and West Germany: Eichenberg (fn. 1), 161–62; Japan: Hastings and Hastings, *Index to International Public Opinion, 1979–1980ff.* (New York: Greenwood, 1981ff.).

[a] "Net support for defense spending" is defined as the percentage of those favoring *increases* in defense spending minus the percentage of those supporting defense *reductions*. The graph plots change rather than continuity, since it does not include those who favored "leaving the defense budget as it is."

1978 level; at the same time, a near consensus emerged in the U.S. mass public regarding a bilateral freeze of the superpowers' nuclear arsenals.[46] It should be noted that these attitude changes occurred *before* Gorbachev assumed power. They might be explicable by the "politics of opposites" as described by Miroslav Nincic, who suggested that U.S. policies that

[46] Data on support for nuclear arms control are taken from various U.S. polls on file at the Yale Public Opinion Research Project, New Haven.

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are either too dovish or too hawkish toward the Soviet Union would be opposed by the public mainstream.[47]

Compared with the shifts in U.S. public opinion, French, German, and Japanese public opinion has been far more stable in support of or in opposition to specific policies. This is most obvious in the attitudes toward defense spending, which remained largely unaffected by the changes in Soviet policy (see Figure 2). From the late 1970s to the mid-1980s a majority of Germans preferred a stable defense budget; the number favoring reductions increased in the late 1980s. The same applies roughly for the French and the Japanese, although comparatively more Japanese than Germans advocated an increased defense budget. In sum, however, the perceived Soviet threat prior to Gorbachev did not result in demands for a military buildup in the three countries.

If anything, the Japanese were more hawkish than the French and the Germans during the early 1980s. In 1981, 31 percent maintained that a military balance was the most important source of security, while only 12 percent and 8 percent believed in détente and arms control, respectively. Two years later, however, Japanese public opinion was back in line with the French and West Germans, who had always thought that détente and/or arms control were more important than maintaining a military balance with the Soviet Union.[48] A particularly interesting finding is revealed by a 1984 Japanese poll. Fifty-nine percent of those who perceived the USSR as a threat nevertheless favored the improvement of peaceful diplomatic relations between the two countries, as compared with only 21 percent who wanted to strengthen military security.[49] In sum, the public consensus in Japan on basic foreign policy problems emphasizing economic strength as well as peaceful diplomacy remained largely intact throughout the 1980s.

West German public opinion came out as the most dovish throughout the decade. In sharp contrast to the Americans, 74 percent of the Germans continued to support détente and *Ostpolitik* in the midst of the Afghanistan crisis in early 1980. Nuclear-arms-control efforts such as the zero option for INF enjoyed near consensus in the 70–90 percent range.[50]

[47] See Nincic, "The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Politics of Opposites," *World Politics* 40 (July 1988), 452–75; and idem, "U.S. Soviet Policy and the Electoral Connection," *World Politics* 42 (April 1990), 370–96. However, the "politics of opposites" seems to be a unique U.S. phenomenon. A similar cycle is not observable in the three other countries.

[48] See data in Gregory Flynn, *Public Images of Western Security* (Paris: Atlantic Institute for International Affairs, 1985), 65.

[49] Data in Hastings and Hastings, eds., *Index to International Public Opinion, 1984–1985* (New York: Greenwood, 1986), 237.

[50] For data on *Ostpolitik*, see Elisabeth Noelle-Neuman and Edgar Piel, eds., *Allensbacher*

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Moreover, an increasing number of Germans favored unilateral Western arms reductions to encourage Soviet disarmament; by 1987 more than 50 percent supported such a strategy of reassurance.[51]

A March 1985 international opinion poll asking for people's preferred Western strategy toward the new Soviet leadership confirms the overall pattern (see Figure 3). Once again, there is a striking contrast between German, French, and Japanese public opinion on the one hand and that of the U.S. on the other. Whereas only a minority in each of the four countries supports hawkish policies emphasizing military strength, a plurality of Americans seems to be more cautious than the dovish Europeans, favoring instead an "owlish" approach (that is, combining military strength with the preparedness to compromise). Again, West German public opinion is most supportive of arms control and détente.

While it is not the purpose of this paper to explain the patterns of public opinion, a note is offered on the developments in public opinion in the U.S. as compared with developments in France, Germany, and Japan. The data are consistent with an explanation according to which in Western Europe (and probably in Japan, too) negative feelings toward the Soviet Union did not determine the preferences for specific security policies; rather, the fear of war and of the arms race in general as well as the perception of U.S. policies were of at least equal significance.[52] Indeed, during the early 1980s a plurality of West Germans and French perceived U.S. policies as risking war rather than promoting peace, and the general fear of war reached unusual highs.[53] In sum, even before the cold war was actually over, large segments of Western European—and, maybe, Japanese—public opinion subscribed to a "post–cold war" international environment in which the Soviet threat no longer dominated the agenda.[54]

To conclude, the data reveal similarities as well as differences in the public attitudes of the four countries toward the Soviet Union. While the

Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 1978–1983 (Munich: Saur, 1983), 637; on nuclear arms control, see various USIA polls, quoted in Szabo (fn. 11).

[51] Data in Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, "Wenn das Gefühl der Bedrohung schwindet," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 22, 1988. In comparison, about 80 percent of the American public rejected such unilateral steps during the 1980s; data according to Roper and other U.S. polls, on file at the Yale Public Opinion Research Project, New Haven.

[52] For this explanation, see Don Munton, "NATO up against the Wall: Changing Security Attitudes in Germany, Britain, and Canada" (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the *International Studies Association*, Washington, D.C., April 1990).

[53] For data regarding the perception of U.S. policies, see Szabo (fn. 11).

[54] This consideration would also explain why Nincic's "politics of opposites" (fn. 47, 1988) was not observable in Western Europe and Japan. The model is based on a pattern of attitudes in which the perception of Soviet foreign policy still dominates the preferences for specific security policies.

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Question: *In view of the change in Soviet leadership, in which one of the ways listed below should the West proceed in its negotiation with the Soviet Union in order to reach an agreement on arms control?*

—"tough/no compromise + military buildup" (Hawks)
—"more moderate + maintain current military strength" (Owls)
—"offer compromise to encourage the Soviets" (Doves)

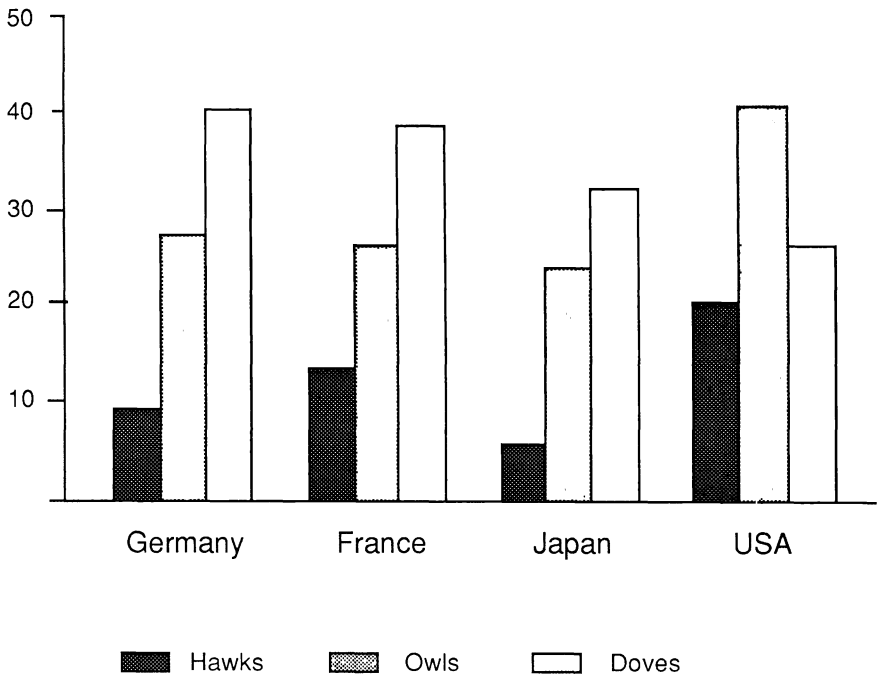

FIGURE 3
POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION

SOURCE: Hastings and Hastings, *Index to International Public Opinion, 1985–1986* (New York: Greenwood, 1987), 591.

change in the perception of threat occurred at a different time for each, by 1988 the Soviet threat had withered away everywhere except Japan. Moreover, West Germans, French, and Japanese continuously preferred détente and arms control policies to a military buildup, albeit to different degrees. The deviant case was public opinion in the U.S., which favored rather hawkish policies during the early 1980s. But even there arms control was supported again as early as 1982–83. Thus, there have been discernible differences in public attitudes across the four countries. But the similarities seem to be substantial enough to merit a comparative study of their policy impact.

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The Public Impact on Foreign Policy toward the Soviet Union during the 1980s

A comparison of the above data on policy preferences toward the Soviet Union (see Figure 3) with the actual policies of the four countries indicates some preliminary results. On the one hand, Reagan's initial, owlish policy toward Gorbachev as well as the West German embrace of the new Soviet foreign policy right from the beginning—"Genscherism"—seem to be roughly in line with the public opinion trends in the two countries. On the other hand, both the French and the Japanese conducted rather cautious and sometimes even hostile policies toward Gorbachev, policies that seem to have been out of touch with public opinion, particularly in the case of France. This pattern—of a match of public opinion and policy in the cases of the U.S. and the Federal Republic of Germany, less of a match in Japan, and no match in France—is exactly what one would expect using the domestic structure approach. However, detailed process tracing is required to confirm the proposition.

Two Sides of Openness: The United States

Given the domestic structure of the United States, the interaction of public opinion, societal forces, and political elites in the foreign policy process would be expected to resemble the bottom-up model. Indeed, a longitudinal analysis of public opinion and policy changes from 1935 to 1979 revealed a congruence between public opinion changes and policy shifts, especially in cases of high issue salience and drastic changes in public attitudes. Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro found essentially no difference between domestic and foreign policy issues. More important, in at least half of the cases the policy changes *followed* the shifts in public opinion.[55]

U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union from the late 1970s to the late 1980s reveals the general validity of the hypothesis. Right after the conclusion of the SALT I treaties, the American security elite became increasingly split on the virtues of arms control and détente. During the late 1970s the U.S. public was presented with two different approaches for dealing with the Soviet Union: the views of the traditional arms-control establishment represented in the Carter administration and an outlook

[55] See Page and Shapiro (fn. 3). Note, however, that the study does not prove the bottom-up model. It correlates public opinion data with policy outcomes and does not control for the impact of elite opinion. It would be consistent with the data to assume, for example, that elite opinion changed first and then affected the general public, which in turn led to policy changes.

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most prominently expressed by the Committee on the Present Danger.[56] As the data presented above reveal, the change in public opinion toward "peace through strength" policies took place in late 1979/early 1980. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and not just the conservative part of the U.S. elites tipped the balance in favor of the antidétente mood among the public. This contributed to the election victory of Ronald Reagan, and, as a result, to the anti-SALT coalition.[57] In other words, while the events of the late 1970s and early 1980s do not confirm a simplistic version of the bottom-up model, they nevertheless show that U.S. public opinion played a role in bringing the anti-SALT coalition to power.

A similar process can be observed in 1982–84. Reagan's military buildup and his cold war rhetoric quickly eroded the public support for his defense policy. The "politics of opposites" (Nincic) worked (see data above). This change as well as the stable public consensus against the first use of nuclear weapons provided issue publics such as the freeze campaign with a window of opportunity. The nuclear protest was a bottom-up movement that originated outside of Washington's arms-control elite.[58] It quickly gained ground, penetrated the more skeptical arms-control community, and found support among numerous social organizations such as the Catholic church. Given the openness of the U.S. political system, the movement found easy access to the political elites. In 1983 the House of Representatives adopted a freeze resolution. Congress became increasingly active on issues of nuclear arms control.

As a result of these coalition-building processes in the policy network, the power balance in the Reagan administration between hardliners in the Pentagon and more pragmatic conservatives in the State Department slowly shifted in favor of the latter.[59] By 1984 and continuing throughout 1985, that is, *before* Mikhail Gorbachev entered upon the scene, Ronald Reagan had softened his rhetoric and adopted a more compromising stance on arms control. The superpower relationship improved, nuclear-

[56] On the latter, see Max Kampelmann, ed., *Alerting America: The Papers of the Committee on the Present Danger* (Washington, D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984); and Jerry W. Sanders, *Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger* (Boston: South End Press, 1983).

[57] For details, see Bernd W. Kubbig, *Amerikanische Rüstungskontrollpolitik: Die innergesellschaftlichen Kräfteverhältnisse in der ersten Amtszeit Reagans (1981–1985)* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1988); and Barry Posen and Stephen Van Evera, "Defense Policy and the Reagan Administration: Departure from Containment," *International Security* 8 (Summer 1983), 3–45. The best account of U.S. nuclear arms control policy during Reagan's first term is Strobe Talbot, *Deadly Gambits* (New York: Knopf, 1984).

[58] The most comprehensive account of the freeze movement is Meyer (fn. 35).

[59] For details, see Strobe Talbot, *The Master of the Game: Paul Nitze and the Nuclear Arms Race* (New York: Knopf, 1988). See also Ernst-Otto Czempiel, "U.S. Policy towards the Soviet Union under Carter, Reagan, and Bush" (Paper presented to the Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Washington, D.C., April 10–14, 1990); and Joseph (fn. 9), chap. 5.

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arms-control talks resumed in early 1985, and the U.S. defense budget began to decline by 1986. However, the freeze campaign failed to achieve its immediate goals, and the shift in Reagan's policy did not produce substantial arms-control results until the late 1980s (INF Treaty 1987). But public opinion clearly affected the ability of the issue public and interest groups to promote their cause and thereby influence the coalition-building process among the elites, which in turn produced tangible, albeit limited, results in U.S. policies.

The impact of public opinion on the conduct of U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union was also noticeable in the spring of 1989. When the Bush administration came into power, government officials conducted a comprehensive review of Reagan's policies and apparently concluded that a more cautious approach should be adopted toward Moscow. However, as discussed above, by that time the Soviet threat had already withered away for the American public, so much so that the public reacted negatively to Bush's early foreign policy statements. The administration quickly adjusted to the public mood, however, and in June 1989 the president assured the public and the allies that the U.S. was firmly supportive of Gorbachev and the politics of perestroika.[60]

While public opinion did not determine U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union during the 1980s, it nevertheless left a discernible mark on the decision-making process. The analysis confirms that the U.S. domestic structure is a comparatively open system that allows societal actors to mobilize support and to affect the balance of forces within the policy network. Nevertheless, the fragmentation and decentralization of the political system work against the stabilization and institutionalization of policies. Policymakers were able to decrease the salience of the issues in question by symbolically adjusting to the public mood, as was the case in 1984–85. The public impact was more limited regarding the substance of policies, mainly because the domestic structure does not provide institutional support for lasting consensus among the elites (as, for example, a strong party system would). In sum, the very openness of the U.S. system to societal pressures also limits their impact.

WEAKNESSES OF A "NUCLEAR MONARCHY": FRANCE

The French domestic structure, as compared with that of the U.S., provides public opinion with only limited influence on foreign policy deci-

[60] This account is based largely on newspaper articles. See, e.g., "Cheney Remarks on Soviet Future Ruffle the White House's Feathers," *New York Times*, May 1, 1989; "Bush Asks an End to Divided Europe," *New York Times*, June 1, 1989; and "Bush Policy Makers Reach Uneasy Balance on an Approach to the Soviets," *New York Times*, July 2, 1989.

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sions. With the possible exception of the ending of the Algerian war,[61] there is indeed not much evidence that any of the major foreign policy decisions by the presidents of the Fifth Republic were taken in response to public opinion. This holds true for the building of an independent nuclear force, the withdrawal from NATO's military command, the policy of détente toward the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s, and the gradual shift toward more pro-European attitudes under de Gaulle's successors. In most cases public opinion was deeply split on the issues. Moreover, the French presidents were usually able to create a public consensus supporting their foreign policies *after* the event.[62]

A similar pattern prevailed during the 1980s. As shown above, French public opinion did not develop in a markedly more hawkish way than did public opinion in Germany or Japan. Nevertheless, the new Socialist president, Mitterrand, adopted a more hostile approach toward the Soviet Union than that held by his predecessors, who had basically continued the legacy of de Gaulle's independent policy of détente. While Mitterrand's policy change did not reflect trends in mass public opinion, it was in line with parts of the issue public and the political elites. French left-wing intellectuals who had been fairly pro-Soviet during the 1950s and 1960s "discovered" repression in the USSR in the early 1970s and turned overwhelmingly anticommunist as a result. When President Giscard D'Estaing tried to continue détente in the aftermath of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, he was chastised by the intellectuals and the media. His successor, Mitterrand, changed the policy, not least of all for domestic reasons, in an effort to isolate and marginalize the French Communist Party (PCF) on the Left.[63]

The limited role of French society and public opinion in influencing policy decisions was also apparent during the early 1980s when France was the only major Western European country that did *not* face a significant public security debate and protest movements against nuclear weapons. This may be explained in part by the fact that the new U.S. INF missiles were not about to be deployed in France. Still, the French favored nuclear arms control and were as opposed to Reagan's policy as was any other European public. However, the French peace movement never developed into a mass movement; on the contrary, it was not only

[61] See Grosser (fn. 22), 161–72.

[62] For details, see Cohen (fn. 22); Grosser (fn. 22); Howorth (fn. 31); and Aldrich and Connell (fn. 21).

[63] For details, see Cohen (fn. 22); Julius W. Friend, *Seven Years in France* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1989), 75–81; and Michel Tatu, "Valéry Giscard d'Estaing et la détente," in Samy Cohen and Marie Claude Smouts, eds., *La politique extérieure de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing* (Paris: Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1985), 196–217.

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marginalized by the mass media but also internally split along ideological lines from the very beginning. In that sense, it reflected the fragmentation of French society.[64]

While the French centralized political institutions and the state-dominated policy network seem to constrain the public impact on foreign policy, there are a few instances in which public opinion apparently did play a role. One recent example was Mitterrand's decision in 1987 to endorse the INF treaty, despite the objections of his conservative foreign and defense ministers and of the majority of the French security community, who thought that the zero option was detrimental to Western deterrence policy. One year before the presidential elections, Mitterrand was apparently aware that French public attitudes overwhelmingly endorsed the U.S.-Soviet agreement. The decision is an example of presidential dominance in foreign policy matters even in times of "cohabitation"; it also suggests that public opinion sometimes affects French foreign policy directly, through presidential decisions rather than through coalition-building processes among the elites.[65]

While French public opinion only marginally influenced foreign policy decisions during the 1980s, the process did not resemble the top-down model. The French public did not just follow the policies of the elites or of Mitterrand. A comparison between public opinion and elite opinion shows that the attitude gap between elites and masses in France is one of the largest in Europe.[66] French public opinion seems simply to be disconnected from the policy-making process.

The limited role of French society in the country's foreign policy–making process does not, however, result in a highly active policy unhampered by domestic constraints and able to concentrate solely on external factors, as the concept of "state strength" would assume. The powerful, centralized state institutions of the Fifth Republic were designed to integrate a heavily divided and fragmented society. The foreign policy of de Gaulle and, albeit to a lesser extent, of his successors was intimately linked to the efforts to strengthen the societal support basis for the insti-

[64] In addition, there were historical reasons for the isolation of the French peace movement. The notion of pacifism was identified with the politics of appeasement in the 1930s, and the largest French peace movement, the Mouvement de la Paix, was never able to distance itself convincingly from the Communist Party. For details, see Howorth and Chilton (fn. 39).

[65] In this particular case, Mitterrand was apparently influenced by public opinion not only in France but also in West Germany and by the fear that rejection of zero INF would lead to German neutralism. Cf. Jolyon Howorth, "Consensus and Mythology: Security Alternatives in Post-Gaullist France," in Aldrich and Connell (fn. 21), 16–34; and LePrestre (fn. 38).

[66] See Eichenberg (fn. 1), 222–24.

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tutions of the Fifth Republic.[67] To this day the official ideology emphasizes French unity, *grandeur*, and independence from external influences and alliances, notions that cut across ideological cleavages.[68] As a result, the famous French consensus on foreign and defense affairs remains fragile. The French state pays a price for excluding society from the foreign policy–making process. Rather than being able to pursue an autonomous and active policy. French decision makers seem to be constantly concerned with stabilizing a vulnerable elite consensus.

FROM TOP-DOWN TO BOTTOM-UP: THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

A review of West German foreign policy reveals that the impact of public opinion increased over time and that the decision-making process became more democratic. In the 1950s, when Chancellor Adenauer integrated the Federal Republic into the Western alliance and the European Community, general public opinion was as deeply divided on the issue as were the political elites and the parties. However, Adenauer went ahead, and by about 1960 the public as well as the opposition had accepted his security policies.[69]

This top-down pattern gradually changed over the next two decades. In 1968–70, when Chancellor Brandt began his *Ostpolitik* and concluded the treaties with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, public opinion as well as the political elites were again divided on the policy. The Christian Democratic opposition (CDU) launched a vehement campaign against *Ostpolitik* and was even successful in depriving the government of its majority in Parliament. This time, however, and unlike the 1950s, the populace decided the issue: Brandt won the 1972 national elections primarily on the basis of *Ostpolitik*.[70] Throughout the 1970s the public consensus in favor of détente stabilized, and by 1980, despite the Soviet arms

[67] See Philip G. Cerny, "Gaullism, Nuclear Weapons, and the State," in Howorth and Chilton (fn. 39), 46–74; and David Hanley, "The Parties and the Nuclear Consensus," ibid., 75–93. On the institutional uncertainty of the French system as a dominant feature of the country's policy network, see Ashford (fn. 28).

[68] "Independence," for example, was understood in an anti-Soviet sense by the French conservatives, in an anti-American way by the Left, and in a neutralist sense by nationalists at both ends of the political spectrum.

[69] For details, see Arnulf Baring, *Am Anfang war Adenauer: Die Entstehung der Kanzlerdemokratie* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1971); Cioc (fn. 36); and Hans-Karl Rupp, *Außerparlamentarische Opposition in der Ära Adenauer* (Cologne: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1970).

[70] For details, see Helga Haftendorn, *Sicherheit und Entspannung: Zur Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1955–1982* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1983); Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America, Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 170–219; Clay Clemens, *Reluctant Realists: The Christian Democrats and West German Ostpolitik* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1989); and Christian Hacke, *Die Ost- und Deutschlandpolitik der CDU/CSU* (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1975).

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buildup and the intervention in Afghanistan, it was firmly in place, as shown in the data above.

The opposition Christian Democrats, although internally divided, continued to oppose détente and in 1980 conducted another anti-*Ostpolitik* election campaign, hoping it would succeed because of the deterioration in East-West relations. Unlike the anti-SALT coalition in the U.S., however, they failed. In November 1980, that is, two years before he became chancellor, Helmut Kohl finally declared the battle over, and the CDU accepted *Ostpolitik*.[71] In sum, general public opinion was crucial in affecting the coalition-building process within the party system and, thus, in bringing about the German détente consensus. Unlike the French case, the domestic structure of the Federal Republic not only proved to be more open to societal influences, but it also institutionalized the consensus in the policy network, thus allowing for a highly active *Ostpolitik*.

General public opinion and societal actors also made a difference during the nuclear debate of the 1980s.[72] The nuclear controversy originally began at the elite level—mainly within the SPD—in 1977–78, in the debate over the neutron bomb. NATO's INF decision of 1979, the new "cold war" between the U.S. and the USSR, and the election of Ronald Reagan then triggered mass opposition. New peace movements launched their protests against the deployment of INF missiles. As with the freeze campaign in the U.S., the protesters in Germany relied on general public opinion as a support basis regarding two issues: (1) opposition to a belligerent U.S. policy and (2) opposition to nuclear weapons as instruments of war fighting and to their deployment on German soil.

While the peace movements failed to prevent the INF deployment in 1983, they had a profound impact on the coalition-building process among the elites. First, support for vigorous arms-control efforts increased within all parties, in particular within the CDU. Second, the "disarmers" entered the party system. Since 1983 policy decisions within the SPD elite have resulted from policy compromises between disarmers and the traditional arms-control establishment, but excluding members of the right wing of the party, such as former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. Moreover, a disarmament party, the Greens, entered the political scene. Third, the nuclear elite consensus broke down as a result. By

[71] For details, see Risse-Kappen (fn. 17), pt. B.

[72] For the following, see details ibid. On the peace movements in particular, see Josef Janning et al., eds., *Friedensbewegungen* (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1987); and Thomas Rochon, *The Politics of the Peace Movement in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

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1984 the SPD had adopted an antinuclear stance. In sum, the coalitions within the policy network gradually moved to the Left—in line with trends in general public opinion and in response to the protests of the issue publics.

The consequences of both the détente debate and the antinuclear protests were seen in the mid- to late 1980s. Germans were the first to embrace Gorbachev's new policy, because it responded favorably to what had previously emerged as a consensus on *Ostpolitik* and common security. Moreover, the opposition to new nuclear weapons increasingly included the CDU, the consequences of which became apparent during NATO's debate on the modernization of battlefield nuclear weapons in the spring of 1989. There was a coincidence of public opinion, left-wing antinuclearism, and conservative fears that short-range systems would "singularize" Germany in the aftermath of the INF treaty. As a result, Chancellor Kohl had no choice but to resist a modernization decision by NATO.

To conclude, the role of public opinion in West German security policy changed over time and moved closer to the bottom-up model during the 1980s. The general and the issue publics decisively affected the coalition-building processes within the party system, which in turn considerably narrowed the range of options available to policymakers. However, the change has nothing to do with public opinion as such. For example, the public had been as ambiguous about the deployment of nuclear weapons in West Germany in the 1950s as it was in the 1980s, although the policy impact was markedly different in the latter case. Rather, the difference in influence seems to reflect a change in the domestic structure that opened up German politics to societal pressures. Adenauer's "chancellor democracy" changed into a "party democracy" during the 1960s, thereby establishing a democratic corporatist policy network. On top of that, new social movements—from the student protests of the late 1960s to the environmentalists of the 1970s and the peace groups of the 1980s—affected the political culture and were crucial in opening the party system to societal influences.[73] In contrast to France the domestic structure of the Federal Republic was open enough to allow for such changes in the first place. And unlike the United States, the strength of the party system in the policy network allowed for the institutionalization of the societal consensus.

[73] For analyses of these changes, see Kendall Baker et al., *Germany Transformed: Political Culture and the New Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); Samuel Barnes et al., *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1979); Karl-Werner Brand et al., *Aufbruch in eine andere Gesellschaft: Neue soziale Bewegungen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1983); and Richard Stöss, ed., *Parteien-Handbuch*, 2 vols. (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1983–84).

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CONSERVATIVE LEADERS VERSUS PUBLIC OPINION: JAPAN

Given the Japanese domestic structure and the stability of Japanese public opinion, the case is expected to resemble Germany. If one considers the low-key approach of Japanese military security policy over the last forty years, the self-imposed arms-control measures such as the non-nuclear principles and the limits on defense spending, and the reluctance to play a more global role in world politics, Japanese public opinion and foreign policy seem to be more or less in line. Indeed, almost every analysis of Japanese defense policy points to the constraining forces of public opinion on the margins of maneuver of the policymakers.[74]

At first glance, Japanese foreign policy during the 1980s seems to confirm the analysis. Prime Minister Nakasone met with firm domestic opposition when he talked about making Japan an "unsinkable aircraft carrier"[75] and tried to move Japanese security policy toward a more pro-defense stance and to initiate a major military buildup program. While all Japanese governments of the 1980s declared that they wanted to abandon the principle of not exceeding 1 percent of the GNP for defense expenditures, they were only able to do so from 1986 to 1989. The principle was reinstated in December 1989. Finally, Japanese policy toward the Soviet Union remained in line with the comparatively high degree of public threat perception (see data above). Japan was reluctant to react to Gorbachev's peace initiatives and to the changes in Soviet foreign policy. In contrast to the Federal Republic of Germany, Tokyo only grudgingly accepted the INF treaty after having insisted that the Asian-based Soviet SS-20s be included in the zero option.[76]

However, this description gives only half of the picture. The very fact that Nakasone and his successors were able to change Japanese defense posture as well as to implement a more globally oriented foreign policy belies the notion that Japanese policy-making is dominated by trends in public opinion. Moreover, the 1 percent GNP limit on defense procure-

[74] See, for example, J. W. M. Chapman, R. Drifte, and I. T. M. Gow, *Japan's Quest for Comprehensive Security* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982); Scalapino (fn. 23); and Welfield (fn. 24).

[75] In March 1983, 72% of Japanese were worried about Nakasone's defense policy; 48% disagreed with his remarks about the "unsinkable aircraft carrier." While public opposition to Nakasone's policies declined somewhat over the years, he was nevertheless unable to change the prevailing trends. For data, see Hastings and Hastings, eds., *Index to International Public Opinion, 1982–1983* (New York: Greenwood, 1984), 316. For analyses of Japanese foreign policies during the 1980s, see, e.g., Drifte (fn. 23); idem, *Japan's Rise to International Responsibilities* (London: Athlone Press, 1990); and Malcolm McIntosh, *Japan Re-Armed* (London: Frances Pinter, 1986).

[76] See details in Drifte (fn. 75, 1990), 48–58.

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ment seems to be largely symbolic and primarily meant for domestic consumption. If one uses NATO criteria to measure military expenditures, Japan had the third highest military budget worldwide in 1988. Finally, Tokyo's tough-minded policy vis-à-vis Gorbachev's Soviet Union reflected public opinion on only a superficial level. As the above-quoted data suggest, most Japanese would have been perfectly willing to support a policy that tried to resolve the grievances with the USSR—particularly the dispute over the northern territories—by means of diplomacy.

The contradictory evidence is explainable: simply put, the LDP's conservative leaders did not share the general public's outlook on Japan's role in the world and moreover felt under constant U.S. pressure to build up the military. In essence, security policy seems to have remained the one issue-area in Japanese politics in which the beliefs of the leaders of the conservative coalition did not accord with public attitudes. As a result, Nakasone and his successors had to conduct their defense policy against the prevailing trends in public opinion; unable to change it and given Japan's domestic structure, however, they had to acquiesce to it. They thus muddled through while stretching public tolerance to its limits. If one accepts the notion that the Japanese governments indeed felt vulnerable to public opinion, the strange coincidence of low-key rhetoric (except for Nakasone's early years) and considerably more active security policies becomes explicable.

Thus, in the 1980s Japanese public opinion placed broad, but nevertheless effective, constraints on the actions of policymakers. The impact of the public was reinforced by the peculiarities of the Japanese domestic structure, in particular, the emphasis on consensus building in the policy network. Unlike France and more comparable to Germany's corporatist process, issue publics and societal actors were able to affect the coalition-building processes within the LDP by forcing it to take account of the viewpoints of the opposition parties. As a long-term consequence of the 1960 crisis, the conservative coalition tried to include the opposition parties in major decisions concerning foreign and security policy. The institutionalization within the LDP of "policy tribes" corresponding to the particular ministries and Diet committees also enhanced the consensus-building capacity within the LDP and reduced the impact of factionalism.[77]

[77] I thank Nobuo Okawara for pointing this out to me. See also Calder (fn. 42), 463. The most recent domestic turmoil in Japan on how to deal with the crisis and the war in the Persian Gulf confirms the analysis that mass public opinion severely contrains the country's ruling conservative coalition.

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Conclusions

The study leads to three major conclusions. First, *mass public opinion mattered* in each of the four countries, albeit to very different degrees. Policymakers in liberal democracies do not decide against an overwhelming public consensus. In most cases, mass public opinion set broad and unspecified limits to the foreign policy choices. In the U.S. and—more recently—Germany it also defined the range of options available for implementing policy goals. Additionally, general issue salience seems to be of minor importance, once there is a clear majority in favor of certain policies. In the Japanese case the issue salience of foreign policy was comparatively low; decision makers nevertheless felt the pressure of mass public opinion. In sum, public consensus may substitute for a lack of issue salience, whereas highly mobilized societal actors may be able to influence policies even in the absence of such consensus. Neither was the case in France.

However, there are discernible limits to the impact of the general public on foreign and security policies. Rarely does general public opinion directly affect policy decisions or the implementation of specific policies. In sum, the bottom-up and the top-down models are too simplistic to fit the reality in the four countries.

Second, most of the previous research on the policy impact of public opinion treats the domestic decision-making process as a black box and directly compares opinion polls with policy outcomes. This study suggests, however, that the *indirect effects of public opinion* are far more important. To the extent that the empirical material was available,[78] it could be shown that the main role of the public in liberal democracies is to influence the coalition-building processes among elite groups. In the U.S. and the Federal Republic of Germany public opinion had a crucial impact on elites as they reconfigured their coalitions; groups in line with public preferences were able to carry the day. In Japan the public forced the ruling conservative coalition to integrate the opposition into the decision-making process, at least to some extent.

Moreover, support by mass public opinion seems to be essential for issue publics, public interest groups, and other societal actors to influence policy decisions. This accounts for the partial success of the peace movements in Germany and the U.S. and of the otherwise marginalized opposition parties in Japan in affecting the debates in the policy network.

[78] This proved to be a major limitation of this study, particularly in the French case. The prevailing realist paradigm in international relations and the focus of most studies on elites do not encourage scholars to trace the impact of public opinion and societal actors on decisions in detail.

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For both the political elites and societal actors, mass public opinion proves to be a resource for strengthening one's position in the coalition-building process.

The third conclusion concerns the usefulness of the *domestic structure approach*. Domestic structures seem indeed to account for the differences between the four countries. The degree of mass public consensus on foreign policy correlates strongly with the degree of *societal fragmentation*, in particular, the ideological divisions between Left/liberals and Right/conservatives. Japan as the most homogeneous society of the four countries also enjoys the most stable public foreign policy consensus. By contrast, the divisions in French public opinion on security policy reflect the country's ideological and class cleavages. The U.S. and Germany are cases in between.

Furthermore, there is strong empirical evidence that domestic structures are the intervening variable between public opinion and foreign policy. Under given international conditions and despite relatively similar public attitudes across countries, variances in the interaction between the general public and elites in the foreign policy–making process can be explained by differences in domestic structures. The degree to which political institutions are centralized and the degree to which the state dominates the policy networks seem to be the determining factors. In both categories, France and the U.S. are located at opposite ends of the spectrum. The two countries also form the two cases in which public opinion seems to have the greatest (U.S.) and the least (France) impact on policy decisions. The Federal Republic of Germany changed over time from top-down to a more interactive or even bottom-up process, which in turn seems to reflect changes in the overall domestic structure. In the Japanese case the stable public consensus in favor of a nonmilitary security policy severely constrained a political elite that tried to pursue a more active foreign policy. Moreover, societal protest such as was experienced during the 1960 crisis left a discernible mark on the consensus-building process in the conservative coalition and, as a result, on Japanese foreign policy.

At first glance, the empirical findings appear to confirm the distinction between strong and weak states. The stronger the state institutions and the greater their control of the policy networks, the less access the public has to the policy-making process. However, while the strong versus weak state distinction seems to make sense regarding the *input* side of the political system, it is flawed if one considers the relationship between societal demands and *policy outcomes*. The strong French state and corporatist Japan both pursued comparatively low-key and noncommittal

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policies with respect to the Western alliance system, arms control, and the Soviet Union during the 1980s, but for very different reasons. French foreign policy reflected not so much state strength as the fragility of an elite consensus and a general lack of policy legitimacy in the absence of societal input into the decision-making process. But Japanese foreign policy was constrained by the institutionalization of the domestic consensus—elite and public—in the policy network.

The comparison between the weak U.S. state and corporatist Germany is also revealing. Both countries pursued comparatively active and highly visible foreign policies (Germany at least in the East-West context). But there are important differences that reflect the respective domestic structures. The frequent volatility and unpredictability of American policies seems to result from constantly shifting coalitions in Washington's domestic process. In comparison, the Federal Republic has pursued a more stable foreign policy over the last twenty years. In contrast to the U.S., but similar to Japan, the German policy network and the political structure emphasize consensus building and the institutionalization of coalitions in support of specific policies. As a result, the Germans have less direct input into the policy-making process than the Americans have, but their impact on policy outcomes seems to last longer.

I am aware that this paper suffers from a number of limitations and that further comparative research is indicated. First, while this article more or less covers the spectrum of domestic structures in liberal democracies, it deals neither with authoritarian regimes nor with one-party systems. Does the empirical evidence confirm the conventional wisdom that public opinion does not count in those countries, or do systems that are not democratic in the Western sense provide the masses with different ways to influence policies? Second, the role of cultural factors to facilitate or to complicate the public's impact on foreign policy has to be examined systematically. The emphasis on consensus building as a social value in both Japan and Germany suggests, for example, that the domestic structure approach as presented here might have to be expanded. Finally, this paper does not deal with the role of the media, though it is fair to assume that the media play a critical role both in the process of opinion formation and in conveying public attitudes to the policymakers.

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