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COALITION OF THE ENDING: WHY STATES WITHDRAW FROM INTERNATIONAL MILITARY COALITIONS

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COALITION OF THE ENDING: WHY STATES WITHDRAW FROM INTERNATIONAL MILITARY COALITIONS

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

COALITION OF THE ENDING: WHY STATES WITHDRAW FROM INTERNATIONAL MILITARY COALITIONS

This dissertation examines the causes and conditions motivating states to discontinue supporting an ongoing military coalition operation and prematurely abandon their partners. In exploring coalition defection through a three-article dissertation, I advance three separate theoretical arguments focusing on three levels of analysis.

The first article contributes to the literature by investigating the effects of political regime types on coalition abandonment during interstate wars. I argue that anocracies are dependable wartime partners and will not abandon coalition warfare earlier than autocracies and democracies. I advance two arguments for the theory of anocratic reliability. First, leaders of mixed regimes expect severe post-defeat punishment both from the opposition and regime elites, which disincentivizes premature withdrawal. Second, anocratic leaders rely on a combination of repression and the provision of public and private goods to remain in power, which incurs substantial costs. The expected gains from victory and side payments from coalition partners motivate leaders in mixed regimes to persist in the coalition war effort. An empirical analysis of interstate wars from 1816 to 2003 lends support to the central argument that mixed regimes exhibit greater reliability as wartime partners compared to their fully autocratic and democratic counterparts.

The second article considers the link between leadership insecurity and coalition defection. Prior research focuses on domestic politics, intra-coalition challenges, and battlefield circumstances to explain defection. I build on this work by arguing that domestically insecure leaders are constrained in their capabilities to maintain military engagement overseas and are highly likely to defect from coalitions. Rebellion and coups are serious domestic threats to political leaders' survival. Therefore, coups and severe civil wars will cause state leaders to prematurely withdraw from coalition operations to bolster their security at home. An empirical analysis of coalition defections from 1950 to 2001 lends support to the expectation that vulnerable leaders are more likely to discontinue their contribution to coalition operations and redirect capabilities inward to consolidate their hold on power. This research contributes to the

literature by linking domestic conflict and leadership insecurity to coalition defection and has important policy implications. Understanding factors driving defection helps policymakers gauge their allies' degrees of reliability.

The third article contributes to the literature by bringing together two lines of research on coalitions and alliances and has important policy implications. I argue that states unsatisfied with their current levels of security and political embeddedness with a coalition leader will not defect from ongoing coalition operations. A state's sustained engagement in coalition operations serves as a costly signal of reliability and commitment as well as a desire for improved relations with the coalition leader that is not yet realized despite greater alignment of its security interests with the coalition leader. Using newly compiled data on cases of defection from the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq from 2003 to 2008, I demonstrate that states are less likely to defect in the face of growing costs and domestic pressures when their potential for an alliance with the United States is not fulfilled. My dissertation makes key theoretical and empirical contributions to the literature on coalitions and alliances and has important policy implications.

KEYWORDS: Military Coalitions, Defection, Political Regime Type, Coups, Civil War, Alliance Potential

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May 2, 2023

COALITION OF THE ENDING: WHY STATES WITHDRAW FROM INTERNATIONAL MILITARY COALITIONS

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DEDICATION

To my daughter Orzala, wife Kaylee, sisters Mina and Tahmina, mother Asma, and all the Afghan women deprived of education under the Taliban regime.

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that pre-teen time were objectively deep and still have an impact on me and my research today. Our joint love of books and listening to the BBC, VOA, and Radio Free Europe until late into the night furthered our intellectual journeys by introducing us to novel ideas and critical thinking skills. Sometimes, I grow nostalgic for our upbringing in that remote village in Dehadi where life was simple and electricity a rare commodity. I'm also thankful to my other brothers and sisters, Parwaiz, Tahmina, Hadis, Edris, and Mina, for their love and support. I'm grateful for their encouragement and belief in me throughout my time in Afghanistan and the United States. I would not be who I am today without their encouragement and belief in me.

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CHAPTER 1.
Introduction

1.1 Background and research question

> One country may support another's cause, but will never take it seriously as it takes its own. A moderately-sized force will be sent to its help; but if things go wrong the operation is pretty well written off, and one tries to withdraw at the smallest possible cost.(Von Clausewitz, 1984 [1832], p.603)

This classic Clausewitzian dictum still rings true nearly two centuries later providing two insights into the nature of multinational military operations. First, states prefer to fight alongside coalition partners, a policy preference that extends back to at least the Peloponnesian War several millennia ago, as observed by Thucydides (2019; 1997). Second, although coalitions tend to win the wars they fight (Morey 2016), forming, maintaining, and sustaining them present significant challenges, the most important of which is ensuring partners remain committed until the end.

Military coalitions are a critical and recurring practice of international politics throughout history dating back to ancient times. Major historical and contemporary conflicts such as the Peloponnesian War, the Napoleonic Wars, World War I and II, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the international interventions against Gaddafi in Libya, the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen, and the fight against Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, have all involved coalitions. Major powers have heavily relied on coalitions in the 20^{th} century. For instance, about 75% of U.S. military interventions in the post–Cold War period have been conducted in coalitions (Kavanagh et al. 2021). States prefer to fight as a coalition because on average coalitions enhance victory, reduce costs, and confer international legitimacy to the military campaigns (Belinski 1997; Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Morey 2016).

Conducting military campaigns as a coalition involves many strategic and political challenges. Scholars have varyingly explored some of the persistent challenges associ-

ated with the management of coalitions (Mello and Saideman 2019). However, despite its frequent occurrence and the enormous obstacles it creates for coalition partners, the existing literature has overlooked the early withdrawal or defection of states from military coalitions (McInnis 2019). Defection can have negative repercussions for the cohesion, credibility, burden-sharing, legitimacy, and success of the coalition war effort (Massie 2016). For instance, the premature withdrawal of Canadian, Dutch, and French troops from Afghanistan between 2009 and 2012 contributed to the resurgence of the Taliban in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan. The early withdrawals allowed the Taliban to regroup and expand their control (Chellaney 2020; Taylor 2012; McNally and Bucala 2015).

Similar instances of coalition defection occurred in the Iraq War. Several long-standing U.S. allies including Spain, Italy, Japan, and South Korea prematurely withdrew from the "Coalition of the Willing" in Iraq due to domestic political pressures. Although the U.S. appealed for an extension of their mission, the states proceeded to exit the coalition unilaterally (McInnis 2019, 117). We see similar cases of defection from other non-U.S.-led coalitions. In 1960 Malaysia and Indonesia committed to supporting the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping coalition mission in the Congo. Facing an intensified civil war at home, Indonesia defected in 1960 while Malaysia remained to honor its commitment to the UN mission (Bunnell 1966; Hossain 1997; Nzongola-Ntalaja 2004; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015). Elsewhere in Africa, after surviving a coup attempt in 1977, Sudanese President Gaafar Al Nimeiry drastically changed his domestic and foreign policy including withdrawal from the Arab Deterrence Force coalition in Lebanon (Howard 1977; State Department 1978).

The anecdotal evidence presented here points to the inherent fragility of military coalitions in general and the unreliability of states' commitments to multinational military missions. Canada, France, and Netherlands jeopardized their reputational credibility and progress on the ground by withdrawing from Afghanistan well before

the conclusion of the coalition mission. Meanwhile, Indonesia and Sudan failed to honor their coalition commitments altogether. These cases highlight a theoretical puzzle: Why do countries defect from military coalitions, and what factors and causes contribute to coalition abandonment and the various patterns of defection?

Early departures of states, contrary to the wishes of their coalition partners, can have significant operational, strategic, and political repercussions. Yet, surprisingly, while a bourgeoning body of literature explores the origin and formation of coalitions and their conduct during conflicts (Kreps 2011; Morey 2016, 2017, 2020; Tago 2007, 2014; Weitsman 2013; Wolford 2015; Wolford and Ritter 2016), the existing research lacks adequate systematic theorizing and empirical evidence to advance our understanding of coalition defection. This project aims to address this literature limitation by offering novel theoretical arguments that consider factors rooted in domestic politics, operational dynamics on the battlefield, interstate security partnerships, and broader international politics.

1.2 What is a military coalition?

For this project, I define a military coalition as an ad hoc transitory grouping of two or more states that dissolves after the completion of a specific multinational military mission. Military alliance and military coalitions are two distinct concepts that should not be used interchangeably as they represent different forms of military cooperation and have different implications for international relations (Bensahel 1999, 6). Alliances are formal, institutionalized interstate security arrangements between two or more nations to provide mutual defense in the event of an attack on any member state, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). On the other hand, military coalitions are formed for a specific purpose in response to impending or ongoing crises (Belinski 1997; Bensahel 1999; Kober 2002; McInnis 2020; Morey 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017; Weitsman 1997, 2010), such as the International

Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. NATO is a military alliance that has a permanent structure and a clear mandate to protect its member states, while ISAF was a temporary coalition formed specifically to address security concerns in Afghanistan within a limited timeframe.

It is important to consider that while coalitions have existed for thousands of years, the dynamics of conflict and military missions have drastically changed over time, especially in the last few centuries. Therefore, my definition encompasses both war-fighting missions such as the Korean War and invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq as well as groupings of states mandated to execute non-combative missions such as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and disarmament. These distinctions also illuminate that theoretical arguments explaining defection should vary spatiotemporally. For this reason, the empirical analyses in chapter two focus on coalitions formed to fight interstate wars while chapters three and four examine coalitions formed for both war-fighting and non-combat missions such as peacekeeping and maintaining maritime security.

1.3 What do we know about military coalitions?

Much of the existing research on coalitions focused on the origins and conduct of military coalitions, exploring why and when they are formed (Tago 2005, 2007; Kreps 2011; Morey 2016; Pilster 2011; Wolford 2014b,a; Henke 2017, 2020; Weitsman 2013). This body of research broadly examines the factors that influence the formation of coalitions such as interstate politics, pre-war bargaining, and domestic politics (Henke 2017; Kreps 2011; Tago 2005; Wolford 2015; Wolford and Ritter 2016). Another strand of research focuses on the performance and effectiveness of coalitions during conflicts. The broad consensus of this line of scholarship is that better organized, unified, and integrated command structures, combined with pre-war cooperation experience and high-quality troops, improve the efficient use of aggregated power and

increase the likelihood of victory (Cappella Zielinski and Grauer 2020; Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Grauer 2016; Morey 2016, 2020).

A third line of research explores when and why states abandon coalition partners. Although scholars rely on different datasets and comparative case studies, the consensus is that collective action problems, burden-sharing challenges within alliances and coalitions, national elections and leadership turnover, battlefield circumstances, international legitimacy of coalition missions, and other areas of domestic politics such as security, economics, and social unrest contribute to the premature withdrawal from ongoing coalition operations.(Choi 2012; Kober 2002; Leeds 2003; McInnis 2019, 2020; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015; Schmitt 2019; Tago 2009; Weisiger 2016a; Wells 2016). This dissertation aims to contribute to this third line of research seeking to explain why states fail to fulfill their coalition commitments.

1.4 Dissertation findings and outline

Following a three-article format, this dissertation aims to identify the causes and conditions motivating states to discontinue supporting an ongoing military coalition operation and prematurely abandon their partners. In exploring coalition defection, I advance three separate theoretical arguments focusing on three levels of analysis. Chapter two examines the relationship between regime type and coalition defection. Previous studies on the relationship between regime type and states' compliance with international security commitments have produced inconclusive results. One line of research shows that democracies are less reliable and more likely to defect (Cantir 2011; Gartzke and Gleditsch 2004; Mello 2020; Tago 2009). A second line argues that democracies honor their commitments and are more dependable partners compared to nondemocracies (Choi 2012; Leeds 2003; Pilster 2011). A major dearth of the literature is the lack of attention to disaggregating regimes in the middle of the autocracy-democracy continuum.

To my knowledge, there are no studies that specifically examine the impact of various nondemocratic regime types on coalition defection. Studies have shown that variations among non-democracies (e.g., single-party regimes, military, personalistic, monarchies, etc.) influence states' foreign policy (Weeks 2012). To fill this gap, I investigate the effect of political regime type on early withdrawal from wartime coalitions. I argue that anocracies are more dependable partners than autocracies and democracies. The theory of anocratic reliability is premised on two underlying factors. First, leaders of mixed regimes face the prospect of severe post-defeat punishment from both opposition and regime elites, which acts as a disincentive for premature withdrawal from coalition warfare. Second, the maintenance of power in mixed regimes necessitates a balance of repression and provision of public and private goods, which incurs significant costs. These costs, in turn, motivate leaders in mixed regimes to persist in the coalition war effort, driven by the potential gains from victory and incentives offered by coalition partners. An empirical examination of interstate wars between 1816 and 2003 supports the central expectation that mixed regimes show greater reliability as wartime partners compared to fully autocratic and democratic counterparts.

Chapter three of this project seeks to understand the impact of leadership insecurity on defection from contemporary coalitions. Past research has established a positive association between leadership turnover and early withdrawal from coalition operations (Mello 2020; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015; Tago 2009). However, these studies are limited to democracies and regular and peaceful leadership turnover. Although researchers control for regime type and leadership turnover, irregular leadership changes (i.e., natural death, forceful removal, military coup) should have different impacts on instances of defection. For instance, Wolford and Ritter (2016) show that insecure leaders are not only more likely to join and form coalitions but also less selective in seeking coalition partners. I contribute to addressing this limitation

by examining the effects of leadership insecurity borne by coups and civil wars on early withdrawal from coalitions. Building on rationalist approaches to leadership survival and international conflict, I argue that major episodes of civil discontent like severe civil wars and coups cause leaders to defect from international coalitions to bolster their security at home. Domestically vulnerable leaders redirect attention and resources inward to consolidate their hold on power rather than foreign policy engagements that could have negligible impact on their survivability. An empirical analysis of coalitions between 1950 to 2001 supports the expectation that leaders are more likely to defect from coalition operations after both successful and failed coups and when faced with intensified civil wars.

The fourth chapter of this dissertation considers the relationship between alliance potential and early withdrawal from ongoing military coalitions. Prior research has linked coalition contributions to the pursuit of prestige, soft power, and stronger security partnership with pivotal states in coalitions as a means of access to political and policy gain (Gannon and Kent 2020; Henriksen and Ringsmose 2012; Jakobsen, Ringsmose, and Saxi 2018). Building on past research, I argue and find support that states with higher levels of unfulfilled alliance potential with a coalition leader will not defect from an ongoing coalition operation. Because continued engagement in coalition operations serves as a costly signal of reliability and commitment by states unsatisfied with their current level of security and political embeddedness with a coalition leader. The fifth chapter provides a general conclusion and looks forward to future research questions. I identify interesting theoretical frameworks for understanding coalitions in general and premature withdrawal in particular. Overall, my hope is that this project helps advance our understanding of coalition dynamics by making novel theoretical explanations and empirical contributions.

CHAPTER 2.

Loyalty in the Middle: The Effect of Political Regime On Coalition Defection

2.1 Introduction

In April 2004, the newly elected Prime Minister of Spain announced the termination of all Spanish military operations and responsibilities in Iraq as part of the U.S.-led military coalition. Spain was not the sole state to disengage from the coalition in Iraq, as South Korea, Japan, and Italy also independently withdrew prior to the completion of the stated coalition mission (McInnis 2019). Conversely, states that did not meet the threshold of a Polity score of seven or greater, such as Bosnia, Armenia, Georgia, and Tonga, upheld their obligation to the coalition and concluded their missions to the satisfaction of the US as the coalition leader (Tago 2009, 226-27). This observed divergence in exiting coalition operations raises the question of why do states withdraw from military coalitions, and what explains the variation across different regime types.

Existing literature on defection focuses on collective action problems, burden-sharing challenges within alliances and coalitions, national elections and leadership turnover, battlefield circumstances, international legitimacy of coalition missions, and other areas of domestic politics including economic recession and social unrest (Choi 2012; Kober 2002; Leeds, Ritter, Mitchell, and Long 2002; McInnis 2019, 2020; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015; Tago 2009; Schmitt 2019; Weisiger 2016a; Wells 2016).

Previous research on regime type and wartime partnerships produced inconclusive results because it often focuses on the reliability of democracies compared to non-democracies, without adequately examining the different types of regimes that fall between autocracies and democracies along the political spectrum (Pilster, Böhmelt,

and Tago 2015; Tago 2009; Weisiger 2016a). To fill this gap, I investigate the effect of political regime type on early withdrawal from wartime coalitions. I argue that anocracies are more dependable partners than autocracies and democracies. The theory of anocratic reliability is premised on two underlying factors. First, leaders of mixed regimes face the prospect of severe post-defeat punishment from both opposition and regime elites. This serves as a disincentive for such leaders to withdraw prematurely from coalition warfare. Second, the maintenance of power in mixed regimes requires a balance of repression and provision of public and private goods. Material and political gains from coalition warfare can be useful in perpetuating leaders' time in office. This provides motivation for mixed regime leaders to persist in coalition warfare, driven by the potential gains from victory and incentives offered by coalition partners. An empirical examination of interstate wars between 1816 and 2003 supports the central expectation that mixed regimes show greater reliability as wartime partners compared to fully autocratic and democratic counterparts.

This research has important policy implications. Coalition defection affects conflict outcome, duration, and terms of settlements. For instance, the early withdrawal of Canadian, Dutch, and French forces from Afghanistan created an operational vacuum, which Afghanistan and the United States struggled to fill. Following these withdrawals, the Taliban-led insurgency consolidated its grip in the southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan between 2006 to 2010 (Brunnstrom 2010; Jockel 2014; McInnis 2020). This research shows that policymakers need to pay close attention to regime type when choosing their war partners. The unreliability of partners and their precarious commitments jeopardize coalition effectiveness. This can be avoided with careful assessment during the coalition recruitment process. The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. First, I review the existing literature on the defection of states from international coalitions. Second, drawing on existing scholarship I present a theoretical framework explaining coalition abandonment across regime

types. Third, the research design describes the methods and data used for the empirical analysis. The final section entails the conclusion and future research avenues.

2.2 Prior research on military coalition defection

While there is bourgeoning literature exploring the formation, structure, and effectiveness of international military coalitions (Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Kreps 2011; Morey 2016, 2020; Pilster 2011; Tago 2007, 2014; Weitsman 2011), scholarship exploring conditions under which coalition defection occurs is relatively limited. One of the earliest works on defection showed that a country's (self-perceived) power, the structure of the international system (i.e., multipolarity and bipolarity), coalition cohesion, and national leaders' perceptions of success explained coalition defections (Kober 2002, 186).

The subsequent research into coalition defection has proceeded along two main lines. One group of studies locates diminishing state commitments and defections in the dynamics of coalition warfare, the circumstances of the battlefield, and the strategic location and environment of the coalition deployment. Coalition abandonment is more likely when states fight away from partners on separate fronts and when the probability of victory trends downhill (Weisiger 2016a). Similarly, coalition defection occurs when casualties start increasing from a coalition war that is not going well or has continued for a long time (Wells 2016).

A second line of research explores the influence of state-level characteristics and domestic politics and their interaction with international factors. Cantir's analysis of defections from the "Coalition of the Willing" in Iraq reveals that factors grounded in domestic politics account for withdrawal decisions. Cantir maintains that differences in institutional decision-making mechanisms regarding military interventions abroad, domestic security challenges, and lack of consensus among policymakers contributed to unilateral military withdrawals from Iraq (Cantir 2011).

Public support for continued engagement in coalition operations erodes as costs of foreign military campaigns increase, especially prolonged and inconclusive military campaigns (Kober 2002; Massie 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017; Wells 2016). Differences in perceptions about alliance value and threats to national interest among governments, opposition parties, and the public contributed to withdrawal decisions from U.S.-led interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq by Australia, Italy, and the Netherlands (Davidson 2014). These differences give rise to three causal paths. First, defection occurred when the public and opposition favored it. Second, the public's demands for withdrawal materialized absent bipartisan consensus, and when policymakers believed national interests were not threatened, the negative repercussions of defection were minimal, and that coalition operation would not succeed. Third, withdrawal did not occur when there was a bipartisan consensus that continued engagement was necessary to impede threats to national interests and to uphold the alliance with the coalition leader. In a similar vein, (Massie 2016) shows that an interplay between elite consensus, public opinion, electoral calculations, and alliance pressure accounted for the withdrawal of Canadian and Dutch troops from the U.S.-led intervention in Afghanistan.

Multiple studies show that as the number of casualties and material costs from international campaigns increases, support for future military interventions conducted alone or as part of a military coalition declines. This directly motivates leaders to leave coalitions to curtail the domestic opposition from the public and elites. This effect is present across all regime types though more readily observed in democracies through voting choices in elections and public opinion surveys (Aldrich et al. 2006; Boettcher 2004; Fordham 2016; Geys 2010).

Several studies emphasize regime types, variation in institutional constraints, and leadership turnover as factors of coalition defection (McInnis 2019; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015). Previous findings regarding the impact of regime type and domes-

tic politics on coalition defection are inconclusive. One set of findings shows that democracies are more dependable coalition partners and are less likely to defect from coalition warfare. This is attributed to the multiple veto players and institutionalized decision policymaking processes in democracies (Choi 2012; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015). However, some scholars consider democracies to be unreliable. For example, Tago (2009) showed that numerous factors in democracies (e.g., election cycles, leadership turnover, the number of veto players, and constitutional designs) contributed to cases of defection from Iraq between 2003 to 2006. Moreover, democracies are considered less dependable partners due to their structural weaknesses (i.e., the disproportionate influence of interest groups on foreign policy decisions, public accountability of leaders, and the cyclical turnover of leaders and governments). The institutional restrictions make democracies less effective in making a credible commitment to coalitions (Gartzke and Gleditsch 2004)[1]. Moreover, there is a rich debate within the alliance literature, which explores the reliability of democracies and other regime types. However, since these studies focus on variation of commitment across regime types within alliances, they are of limited use in evaluating wartime coalition defection (Mello 2020).

Scholarship has moved from a mere focus on regime-type differences to when leaders become unreliable coalition partners. New leaders have dissimilar preferences, evaluate information about military interventions differently, and are unwilling to get entrapped in the interventionist policies of their predecessors. Pilster et al.(2015) show that early withdrawal from international military coalition increases during election cycles in democracies more than in non-democracies. Their analysis reveals strong support for earlier findings that leadership turnovers matter across all regimes (e.g., Downs and Rocke 1992), especially democracies for a drastic change in foreign

[1]Coalition findings contradict work in the alliance literature that finds democracies honor their alliance commitments more than nondemocracies and major powers. This is attributed to the ability of nondemocratic states to renegade their international commitments with lower audience costs compared to their democratic counterparts (Choi 2012; Leeds et al. 2002)

policy, including withdrawal from wartime coalition.

Leadership changes, when accompanied by leftist partisanship and in the absence of imminent elections as well as a rise in coalition casualties, lead to coalition defection even by leaders who originally joined the coalition in the first place (Mello 2020). In a similar vein, Pelletier and Massie (2017) show that Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, due to his left-leaning political affiliation, withdrew the Canadian air force from airstrikes against the Islamic State while at the same time increasing the number of Canadian troops training Iraqi security forces. This shift in policy is indicative of Trudeau's support for international norms favoring cooperation and good citizenship rather than honoring alliance commitments involving belligerent interventions. Moreover, when operational and political risks of coalition operation are high, state leaders find it harder to marshal domestic support for continued participation. Therefore, coalition members either completely withdraw or seek less risky ways to stay engaged in coalition operations (McInnis 2019, 2020).

Prior research on coalition defection enhances our understanding because they examine important state-level characteristics, national politics, international factors, and the interplay between them. However, there are a few important limitations that warrant further research. First, except for Pilster et al. (2015) and Weisiger (2016a), most studies focus on a select number of cases to explain defection (Massie 2016; McInnis 2020; Pelletier and Massie 2017). While these studies improve our understanding of specific conditions under which a few states defected, they conceal substantial variation across time and space. These limitations may weaken the generalizability of their findings.

Second, prior studies reached inconclusive conclusions about the reliability of democracies as wartime partners. Moreover, previous scholars examined regimes by focusing only on democracies versus nondemocracies (e.g., Pilster et al. 2015; Tago 2009; Weisiger 2016a). Scholars control for regime type using either a dummy

variable measuring democracies versus nondemocracies and or use raw average annual democracy scores from the Polity Project that ranges between -10 to +10. The conflict literature has explored the role of different authoritarian regime types on initiation, duration, and termination of international conflict in addition to varieties of democracies (Bak 2017; Bueno De Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith 2004; Lai and Slater 2006; Weeks 2012). Therefore, these differences matter for coalition defection as well. To fill this gap in the literature, I offer systematic theorizing that will improve our understanding of how regime differences contribute to premature withdrawals from wartime military coalitions.

2.3 The effect of political regime on coalition defection

2.3.1 Political regime types

I begin my argument by noting the key differences between regime types. Recent scholarship has expanded the classification of political regimes beyond the binary categories of democracies and non-democracies both theoretically and empirically resulting in several global datasets each measuring different variables (Alvarez et al. 1996; Boix et al. 2013; Cheibub et al. 2010; Coppedge et al. 2021; Geddes et al. 2014; Hadenius and Teorell 2007; Marshall et al. 2014). Not all databases extend further back in time. To spatiotemporally broaden the generalizability of my theoretical argument, I rely on the categorization of regimes on the basis of distinctive institutional and normative characteristics, which includes autocracies, anocracies or mixed regimes, and democracies (Bueno De Mesquita et al. 1999; Marshall et al. 2009; Schultz 1999).

For this research, I rely on regime classification by the Polity Project that assigns each country a Polity Score on annual basis using a five-component index. This Polity Score ranges from – 10, fully institutionalized autocracy, to +10 fully institutionalized democracy (Marshall et al. 2009). Autocracies include states receiving a score between

– 7 and – 10 such as Bahrain, North Korea, and Saudi Arabia. In autocracies, citizens' participation in the political process is severely restricted; there are almost no checks on chief executives from the judicial, legislative, military, and civil society institutions (Marshall and Elzinga-Marshall 2017). Democracies receive a score of between +6 and +10 such as Canada, Denmark, and New Zealand. Democracies have open, competitive, and deliberative political participation processes for citizens; chief executives are elected through competitive elections who work under substantial checks and balances from other branches of the state and are accountable to the public (Marshall and Elzinga-Marshall 2017).

Anocracies score between – 5 and +5 that mix democratic and autocratic features (Fearon and Laitin 2003). Anocracies, also described as "semi-democracies" (Hegre et al. 2001) or "mixed regimes" (Goemans 2000), are partly open yet repressive that allow some means of citizen participation but that has incomplete development of the mechanisms to redress grievances (Sternberg and Fischer 2022). The basic idea is that anocracies are neither autocracies nor democracies but have a mix of institutional characteristics, some democratic and others distinctively authoritarian (Vreeland 2008). These regimes due to their inherent instability and ineffective elites and institutions are vulnerable to the onset of new political instability including civil wars, unexpected changes in leadership, or adverse regime changes including military coups (Marshall and Elzinga-Marshall 2017). Therefore, for this research, I use Polity's conceptualization of regimes as autocracy, anocracy or mixed regimes, and democracy.

2.3.2 The reliability of anocracies

This paper attempts to answer the question of why states leave wartime coalitions. While the existing literature has advanced several explanations that elucidate states' abandonment of military coalitions, this paper focuses on regime types in answering

the research question. I argue that mixed political regimes or anocracies are more dependable coalition partners compared to autocracies and democracies. I advance three separate causal mechanisms for the reliability of anocracies as wartime coalition partners.

I begin my theory of anocratic reliability with the basic assumption that leaders are primarily motivated to gain political power and retain their office; they act to stay in power (Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2003; Bueno De Mesquita and Siverson 1995; Downs and Rocke 1994; Morrow et al. 2008). According to the Archigos Dataset of Political Leaders, 80% of leaders from 1920 to 2003 who lost office irregularly (i.e., coups, rebellion, civil wars, and revolutions) suffered additional punishments including imprisonment, exile, or death while only 8% of regularly removed leaders suffered additional post-exit punishment (Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009). Therefore, leaders have strong incentives to prioritize policies that increase their time in office and minimize the adverse consequences of losing office in an irregular manner (Debs and Goemans 2010).

Drawing on the literature examining the impact of the outcome of international conflict on the irregular removal of leaders, I expect anocracies will not abandon wartime coalition partners earlier than autocracies and democracies. This argument is based on the level of repression employed by the leadership and the exclusion of the population from political participation across regimes. The institutional and normative characteristics of democracies allow for the highest political participation of the population where repression is not used by the leadership to remain in power (Davenport 2007). However, autocracies are highly repressive and exclude a large portion of the population from participation in the public policy-making process while leaders in anocracies use moderate levels of repression, exclusion of significant proportion of the population, and occasionally bribe the excluded groups to stay in power (Goemans 2015; Kaiser 1990; Snyder 1991).

The outcome of the international conflict dramatically influences the dynamics of the cost-benefit calculus of irregularly removing the incumbent leader by the opposition and regime elites. A moderate or disastrous defeat in international conflict has severe consequences for leaders in anocracies. A loss of war signals that the current leader is incompetent and that his or her repression apparatus is severely degraded (Goemans 2008). Military defeat provides the repressed and excluded opposition the confidence and opportunity to better coordinate their attempts to remove a repressive leader from office (Downs and Rocke 1994; Kuran 1991). Moreover, defeat in war will alter the cost-benefit calculus of elites within the current winning coalition. To avoid losing power and post-exit additional punishment, regime elites have strong incentives to help the opposition remove the current leader (Goemans 2008, 2015; Kuran 1991). Though this line of argument is not specific to coalition warfare, the logic should carry over for two reasons. First, my theory of anocratic reliability explains coalitions that meet the Correlates of War definitional requirements of interstate wars including sustained combat, involving organized armed forces, resulting in a minimum of 1,000 battle-related combatant fatalities within a twelve-month period (Sarkees and Wayman 2010). Second, coalition abandonment occurs after the withdrawal of forces by a state from coalition warfare contrary to the wishes of partners that continue to fight the war even after abandonment occurs (Weisiger 2016a). Therefore, defection from a coalition will have a similar impact on the tenure of leaders as would defeat in a dyadic or multilateral interstate war. Therefore, concerned about their survival and post-defeat fate, leaders of mixed regimes will have to avoid defection while the coalition is waging a war.

Victory and defeat in international conflict will also have divergent effects on leadership in democracies and autocracies. Defeat in international conflict can increase the hazard of regular removal of democratic leaders while victory enhances their chances of electoral victory (Williams et al. 2010). Democratic leaders will not

suffer additional punishment beyond regular removal because democratic regimes allow widespread participation in the public policy-making process unless democratic leaders suffer disastrously and receive punishment from their enemies (Goemans 2015; Przeworski 1991).

Leaders in institutionalized dictatorships rely on their effective repressive apparatus and exclude a large number of people from political participation. Only a disastrous defeat in international conflict is likely to degrade autocratic leaders' monopoly over security institutions, which will embolden opposition to irregularly remove leaders (Goemans 2008, 2000). Moreover, autocratic leaders engage in reorganization of their militaries such as coup-proofing (Powell 2014; Quinlivan 1999) which has significant implications for the careers and prospects of generals and officers (Reiter and Meek 1999). Literature also shows that enacting coup-proofing efforts increase the risk of a coup where generals act preemptively and stage a coup (Sudduth 2017). Therefore, autocratic leadership has a strong incentive to withdraw from coalition warfare earlier than democracies and anocracies not only to extend their time in office but also to avoid post-exit additional punishments.

The second part of my theory connects the provision of public and private goods to defection from coalition warfare across regime types. I begin my argument with insights from the "selectorate theory," which identifies two institutional factors as instrumental both to the leadership survival and pursuit of domestic and foreign policies: selectorate size (the set of people who have the right to participate in the selection of the leader); and winning coalition size (the number of individuals whose approval is necessary for the leader to claim office). Democratic regimes have large selectorate and large coalitions followed by anocracies and autocracies, respectively (Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2003; Hanson and Gallagher 2012; Kennedy 2009, 696). When winning coalitions are large (i.e., democracies) leaders rely on the provision of public goods, such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, political freedoms, and

liberal values and norms to stay in power. However, leaders with small winning coalitions (i.e., autocracies) mostly provide private goods such as luxury items and business licenses and engage in political repression and theft to maintain power.

I link the war aims of different regimes to withdrawal from ongoing coalition warfare as a function of the size of the winning coalition. Democratic leaders gravitate toward coalition goals that promote public goods for their domestic audience such as national security and enforcement of international norms while autocratic leaders preferably seek private benefits including control of territory and resources (Graham, Gartzke, and Fariss 2017). It follows that leaders in anocracies rely on the provision of public and private goods to stay in power (Goemans 2000). States abandon coalition warfare when the costs outweigh the expected utility especially when the probability of victory becomes less likely (Weisiger 2016a). The institutionalized and shared decision-making processes in democracies allow leaders to pull out of coalition warfare with minimal domestic backlash. Autocratic leaders, with a small winning coalition, will have an easier time adjusting their war aims in light of growing costs. However, leaders of mixed regimes will not leave before their autocratic and democratic counterparts in hopes of securing a larger share of private and public goods. The coalition size gets smaller as autocratic and democratic states withdraw. This should further disincentivize anocracies from withdrawing earlier because a smaller coalition size means less dilution of spoils of victory.

Formation and maintenance of a military coalition is a complex process. Often times coalition leaders provide side payments and political deals to states in exchange for their joining coalition warfare (Henke 2017). Junior partners, especially those lacking clear national security interest in the mission, demand side payments and other nonmonetary gains in return for joining a military coalition (Henke 2017; Kreps 2011). For instance, Turkey's participation in the Korean War was explicitly linked to its desire to be admitted to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO) (Brown 2008). Around 70% of states that joined the U.S.-led "Coalition of the Willing" in Iraq, mostly poor with no obvious geopolitical stake in the war with anocratic regimes, received substantial economic, military, and political side deals from the United States in exchange for joining (Newnham 2008, 186). Other examples include the United States making side payments to Pakistan for its participation in the U.S.-led collation war against the Taliban regime. The U.S. also made side payments to Uzbekistan, Afghanistan's northern neighbor, for allowing the U.S.-led coalition to use its airfields for the war in Afghanistan. All these countries, except Uzbekistan, generally fall within the anocratic category of regimes that rely on the provision of private goods to the domestic winning coalition and other key regime elites in addition to some democratic practices such as elections to stay in power (Mansfield and Snyder 2002; Newnham 2008; Morrow, De Mesquita, Siverson, and Smith 2008). It follows that mixed regimes should be incentivized to stay in coalitions longer compared to dictatorships and democracies. Because defection from the coalition will dry up the external line of credit for leaders of mixed regimes. Moreover, leaders in mixed regimes can use membership in the military coalition as a source of international legitimacy to boost their internal legitimacy and thereby balance against domestic political opposition. Taken together, the above discussion of the three major explanations leads me to hypothesize the following:

H2.1: Anocracies (mixed regimes) are less likely to defect from coalition warfare compared to autocracies and democracies, on average.

2.4 Data and methods

The theory of anocratic reliability predicts that the prospects of post-exit punishment and reliance on potential foreign support disincentivize anocratic leaders to defect from coalition warfare earlier than autocracies and democracies. To evaluate this

expectation, I analyze coalition defection from all interstate wars identified by the Correlates of War project from 1816 to 2003 (Sarkees and Wayman 2010). The unit of analysis is country-day. I operationally define coalition as two or more countries fighting a common enemy in a coordinated manner (Morey 2016; Weisiger 2016a; Weitsman 2010). Per this definition, there are 202 wartime coalitions between 1816 and 2003. Coalition defection is captured following Weisiger (2016a, 754), who defines it as the cessation of fighting and complete withdrawal of forces from the battlefield by a state contrary to the wishes of the coalition partners that prefer the departing partner to continue the fight.

2.4.1 Dependent variables

For the empirical analysis, I use the Cox-proportional hazard model, which is a generalized form of survival analysis (Deo, Deo, and Sundaram 2021). According to the model specification, the event of interest or the failure variable is *Defection*, coded 1 when a partner stops fighting and fully withdraws from the battlefield. The time variable is duration, which is the number of days between when a state joins coalition warfare until the day of withdrawal. Thus, *Duration* is operationalized as the number of days it takes a coalition member to abandon the coalition partners during the war, and or simply the duration of engagement in the coalition warfare. Data for both of these variables come from Weisiger (2016a).

The expectation is that anocracies will have the longest engagement in coalition warfare. In line with my argument, I expect dictatorships and democracies to defect sooner than mixed regimes. As a robustness check, I use logistic regression to evaluate the dichotomous measure of defection (Lenth and Dobler 2005). I cluster standard errors by coalitions in both duration analysis and logistic regression models to capture possible intra-group error correlations (Long 1997). I also include time, time-squared, and time-cubed to the logistic regression models to account for time-series auto-

correlation of the outcome variable (Beck, Katz, and Tucker 1998).

2.4.2 Primary independent variables

The main independent variable in this paper is the regime. To spatiotemporally broaden the generalizability of my theoretical argument, I rely on the categorization of regimes on the basis of distinctive institutional and normative characteristics, which includes autocracies, anocracies or mixed regimes, and democracies (Bueno De Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith 1999; Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr 2009; Russett 1993; Schultz 1999). I use the Polity Project average annual democracy scores for each coalition member country. The Polity scores range from –10 to +10. States that score between – 10 to – 6 with are classified as *autocracies* or dictatorships, regimes scoring from – 5 to +5 are categorized as *anocracies* or mixed regimes, and states with an annual score of 6 to 10 are *democracies* (Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr 2009). Using this typology I create three dummy variables – *Autocracy, Anocracy, Democracy* – coded dichotomously to measure the effects of regime type on the probability of defection from wartime coalition. I estimate the effects of each regime type compared to autocracies and or autocracies as the excluded category.

2.4.3 Control variables

To isolate the impact of the primary independent variables, I include several control variables based on previous research on early withdrawal from military coalitions. The size of the domestic winning coalition heavily affects leaders' calculation of the initiation of international conflicts and their duration (Weeks 2012). The main causal mechanism for this relationship rests on leaders' ability to offset domestic opposition to their foreign policies. The larger the winning coalition the more likely leaders will be restrained via institutional constraints and electoral punishment while the smaller size of the winning coalition will have the opposite or weaker effect (Bueno

De Mesquita et al. 2004; Goemans 2000). Thus, the *Winning Coalition* controls the size of the group of regime insiders whose support is necessary to sustain the leader in office. I expect the probability will decrease as the size of the winning coalition increases. I use the recently updated data from Bueno De Mesquita and Smith (2022).

Fighting independently from the main coalition front or on multiple fronts at the same time, and increased number of battle-related casualties positively correlate with coalition abandonment and duration of interstate conflicts (Gartner and Segura 1998; Bueno De Mesquita et al. 1992; Weisiger 2016a; Wells 2016). Therefore, I include two variables, *Battle Deaths* (logged) and *Battle Deaths/pop* (logged), to control for total and population-adjusted battle deaths to account for the effect of the growing human cost of war on defection. Moreover, I include a binary measure, *Common Front*, to gauge whether a country fights alongside other coalition forces or independently. Data for these variables come from Weisiger (2016a; 2016b). My expectation is that increased battle deaths should induce defection while fighting on the same front will lower early withdrawal due to the reduced success of wedge strategies by the enemy.

The literature also shows that militarily and economically weaker states are less likely to fulfill their international security commitments (Leeds 2003; Olson and Zeckhauser 1966). It is reasonable to expect that weaker states are more likely to abandon coalition compared to stronger ones, especially as material and human costs of war increase (Newnham 2008; Schmitt 2019). Moreover, powerful states are better able to use military force abroad and less concerned about adverse consequences of crisis initiation. Thus, I include *Power (CINC)* to control for each state's material capabilities in a given year measured by Composite Indexes of National Capabilities Score. The reduced probability of coalition victory incentivized states to withdraw earlier (Altfeld and Bueno De Mesquita 1979; Choi 2012). To capture this effect, I include *Expected Victory* which is the share of military capabilities of a coalition relative to the adversary measured by dividing the Composite Indexes of National Capabilities

of a coalition by that of the enemy. Data for these variables come from the Correlates of War's Composite Indexes of National Capabilities (.6.0), 1816 - 2016 dataset (Singer et al. 1972).

Prewar history of military cooperation and alliances enhances states' chances of working together as effective coalition partners(Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Weitsman 2013). Moreover, integrated and unified command structures within the coalition improve operational effectiveness (Grauer 2016; Morey 2020). Therefore, formal alliance, a history of coalition, and alliance commitments requiring the establishment of integrated command structures during the war should disincentivize coalition abandonment. Thus, using Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions dataset (Leeds et al. 2002), I include three dichotomous control variables: *Alliance* coded 1 if a state has a formal pre-war alliance with any of the coalition partners, *Coalition History* takes a value of 1 for states with previous experience of fighting as a coalition, and *Integrated Command* takes a value of 1 if a state has a pre-war treaty obligation at least with one coalition partner to establish joint military command during the war.

Past research finds that leadership turnover is positively associated with changes in foreign policy including withdrawal from coalitions and alliances (Bennett 1997; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015; Tago 2009). I thus, using the Archiogos dataset on political leaders (Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009), include *Leader Change* which is a binary measure taking a value of 1 if a state leader who joined the coalition is replaced before the state exits. It is likely that a recent exit by a member influences another state's defection decision. Thus, *Recent Defection* measures a recent exit by another coalition member. I use the data and operationalization by Weisiger (2016a, 761) where it is coded 1 the "day following a coalition partner's defection and then decreases at a constant rate over the following three months until it returns to zero."

Larger coalitions ensure increased aggregation of power but also create intra-coalitions burden-sharing challenges including coordination of military and political

activities (Kreps 2011; Weitsman 2013). Moreover, states with larger troop contributions are less likely to defect. However, these are context-specific and based on the type and level of threats and coalition warfare dynamics (Barrett 1992; Bensahel 1999; Kreps 2011; Poast 2019; Weitsman 2013). Therefore, I control for coalition size and the number of troops contributed by each coalition partner. *Coalition Size* measures the number of states in the coalition while *Troops* equals total soldiers contributed by a state divided by total forces of the coalition (Weisiger 2016b). Table 2.1 provides descriptive statistics of all variables included in the model.

Table 2.1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	**Mean**	**SD**	**Min**	**Max**
Duration	97393	717.2	621.2	1	2913
Defection	97393	0	0.02	0	1
Autocracy	97393	0.23	0.42	0	1
Anocracy	97393	0.4	0.5	0	1
Democracy	97393	0.4	0.5	0	1
Winning Coalition	94092	0.61	0.20	.04	.97
Battle Deaths (log)	96850	8.13	3.5	0	15.7
Battle Deaths/Pop(log)	96850	-1.7	3.24	-12.54	3.65
Common Front	97393	0.57	0.43	0	1
Power(CINC Score)	96850	0.05	0.07	.0001	.39
Expected Victory	96850	0.7	0.26	.02	.99
Alliance	95278	0.7	0.5	0	1
Coalition History	97393	0.62	0.30	0	1
Integrated Command	95051	0.07	0.26	0	1
Leader Change	97393	0.10	0.31	0	1
Recent Defection	97393	0.03	0.13	0	1
Coalition Size	97393	10.54	6.54	2	22
Troops	97393	0.18	0.26	.0002	.99
Time	97393	717.2	621.2	1	2913
Time^2	97393	900239.852	1387490.831	1	8485569
Time^3	97393	1.453e+09	3.262e+09	1	2.47e+10

2.5 Results

Table 2.2 displays the results of the Cox proportional hazard model and logistic regression. The table entries are coefficients in all models (1 – 6). In lieu of hazard ratios, I report coefficients for the Cox proportional hazard model analysis (models 1 – 3), which are the expected log of the relative hazard for defection. Because, unlike hazard ratios, coefficients readily indicate the direction of impact due to the positive or negative signs. The negative coefficients are associated with the reduced probability that a coalition partner withdraws and thus increased duration until such withdrawal.

The results in Table 2.2 provide strong support for the central claim that anocracies or mixed regimes are less likely to abandon coalition partners compared to autocracies and democracies. Models 1 and 4 include no control variables while models 2 and 6 include a whole array of battlefield factors that can influence states' withdrawal decisions. Models 3 and 5 are the full models with controls for battlefield circumstances and regime-related institutional characteristics of coalition partners.

The coefficient for *anocracy* is consistently negative and statistically significant across all 6 models. In models 3 and 5 we observe a negative and significant ($P < 0.01$) relationship between mixed regimes and defection, meaning that compared to dictatorships the probability of defection for a mixed regime is substantially lower, on average. According to model 3, on average, there is a 1.57 unit decrease in the expected log of the relative hazard of withdrawal for each one-day increase in duration, holding all other variables constant. In other words, anocracies are approximately 79% less likely to withdraw compared to autocracies for a day increase in the duration of coalition warfare, on average. Moving on to *democracy,* on average we observe a 0.681 unit decrease in the expected log of the relative hazard of withdrawal for each one-day increase in duration, holding all other variables constant. Put another way, democracies are approximately 49% less likely to defect compared to autocracies for

each day increase in the duration of the coalition conflict, on average.

I find similarly consistent results from the logistic regression models. Based on model 5, there is a 1.475 decrease in the probability of defection for *anocracies* compared to *autocracies* for each unit increase in time to defection, on average. The coefficient for *democracies* reaches statistical significance in all models except 5 and has a negative sign. Based on model 5, on average there is a .783 decrease in the probability of defection for democracies compared to autocracies for each day increase in the duration of coalition war.

The coefficient estimates do not fully explain the effects of political regimes on withdrawal from coalition warfare. I thus perform post-estimation analysis to show the substantive effects of each regime type on the probability of defection. Figure 2.1 graphs the predicted survival curves for all three regime types based on model 3. The x-axis in Figure 1 is time measured in 6-month intervals. All unlisted covariates are held at their means (continuous) and modes (dichotomous). The predicted survival pattern for anocracies indicated by the dotted line remains above 90% for the first 48 months of coalition warfare. Six months into coalition warfare, about 10% of autocracies withdraw and abandon the battlefield while less than 2% of anocracies and 5% of democracies defect.

The substantive results from Figure 2.2 substantiate the general trends in Figure 1 even with lower precision than the former. As visualized in Figure 1, the probability that a dictatorship unilaterally abandons a coalition partner prior to mission completion is at 0.08%, which is the highest among the three regime types holding all other variables constant. The probability of defection drops to 0.02 for the mixed regimes and increases to 0.04 for democratic regimes. Though the marginal predictive probabilities are small in size, results lend support to the argument that anocracies are less likely to defect. They are more reliable coalition partners and better at delivering their security commitments compared to autocracies and democracies.

Next moving on to the controls, I find a few interesting findings. The coefficient for the *Winning Coalition* is negative but does not reach statistical significance. The results affirm past findings that larger domestic winning coalitions restrict leaders' ability to initiate international conflict and bear the costs as wars continue. The findings support the expectation that leaders with larger winning coalitions are more likely to defect sooner and at a higher rate (Goemans 2000; Bueno De Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith 2004).

The coefficients for *Battle Death* and *Battle/Pop* are not statistically significant. Consistent with expectation total battled-related deaths have a positive impact on withdrawal from coalition war but not deaths adjusted to the total population. Thus, I find partial support for the past findings on the effects of battle deaths and ending international conflict (Gartner and Segura 1998; Bueno De Mesquita et al. 1992; Wells 2016). The coefficient for *Common Front* has a negative sign and consistently reaches statistical significance across all six models. These results strongly substantiate previous findings that coalition members fighting alone are more likely to defect compared to those fighting together with other partners in a common front due to the reduced success of wedge strategies by the enemy (Weisiger 2016a).

The coefficient for *Power (CINC)* and *Troops* are negative signs despite not reaching statistical significance. This is consistent with previous findings that economically and militarily weaker states have a lower threshold for material and human costs of war (Newnham 2008; Schmitt 2019). Weaker states are unable to maintain their security commitments relative to militarily powerful and economically prosperous states (Leeds 2003; Olson and Zeckhauser 1966). The coefficient for *Expected Victory* is not statistically significant. However, contrary to my expectation it has a positive sign. My results do not substantiate previous findings that a higher probability of victory disincentivizes abandonment (Choi 2012; Weisiger 2016a). This inconsistent result could be attributed to the different operationalization of this variable. Choi

Table 2.2: Effect of Political Regime on Wartime Coalition Defection, 1816-2003.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Anocracy	-1.061**	-1.610***	-1.570***	-1.064**	-1.475***	-1.521***
	(0.480)	(0.428)	(0.435)	(0.517)	(0.483)	(0.400)
Democracy	-1.496***	-1.046*	-0.681	-1.463***	-0.783	-1.119**
	(0.451)	(0.547)	(0.558)	(0.400)	(0.709)	(0.548)
Winning Coalition			-0.532		-1.108	
			(1.659)		(1.637)	
Battle Deaths		0.183	0.015		0.081	0.202
		(0.225)	(0.218)		(0.258)	(0.256)
Battle Deaths/Pop		-0.098	0.008		-0.069	-0.121
		(0.218)	(0.197)		(0.255)	(0.245)
Common Front		-2.488**	-2.574**		-2.975**	-2.716**
		(1.264)	(1.231)		(1.363)	(1.341)
Power(CINC)		-5.917	-3.514		-4.391	-4.799
		(6.238)	(5.076)		(5.802)	(6.059)
Expected Victory		0.470	0.493		0.371	0.364
		(0.929)	(0.944)		(1.406)	(1.137)
Alliance		-1.131***	-0.898***		-0.906***	-1.211***
		(0.300)	(0.294)		(0.322)	(0.370)
Coalition History		0.416	0.849		0.807	0.134
		(0.591)	(0.685)		(0.799)	(0.619)
Integrated Com.		0.445	0.321		0.592	0.810
		(1.479)	(1.381)		(1.427)	(1.593)
Leadership Change			1.353**		1.940*	
			(0.644)		(1.062)	
Recent Defection		2.583***	2.801***		2.598***	2.434***
		(0.581)	(0.640)		(0.647)	(0.631)
Coalition Size		-0.078*	-0.098**		-0.116*	-0.090
		(0.043)	(0.047)		(0.068)	(0.056)
Troops		-1.046	-0.689		-1.288	-0.964
		(0.860)	(1.018)		(1.464)	(0.869)
Time					-0.003	-0.005
					(0.003)	(0.003)
Time^2					0.000	0.000*
					(0.000)	(0.000)
Time^3					-0.000	-0.000
					(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant				-7.020***	-4.711**	-5.707***
				(0.244)	(2.000)	(1.738)
N	97393	94508	91207	97393	91207	94508
Pseudo R^2	0.045	0.212	0.225	0.022	0.155	0.141

Note: two-tailed test, * $P < 0.10$), ** $P < 0.05$), *** $P < 0.01$).Dependent variable is time until withdrawal in models 1-3 and defection in model 4-6. SEs clustered by coalition are reported in parentheses.

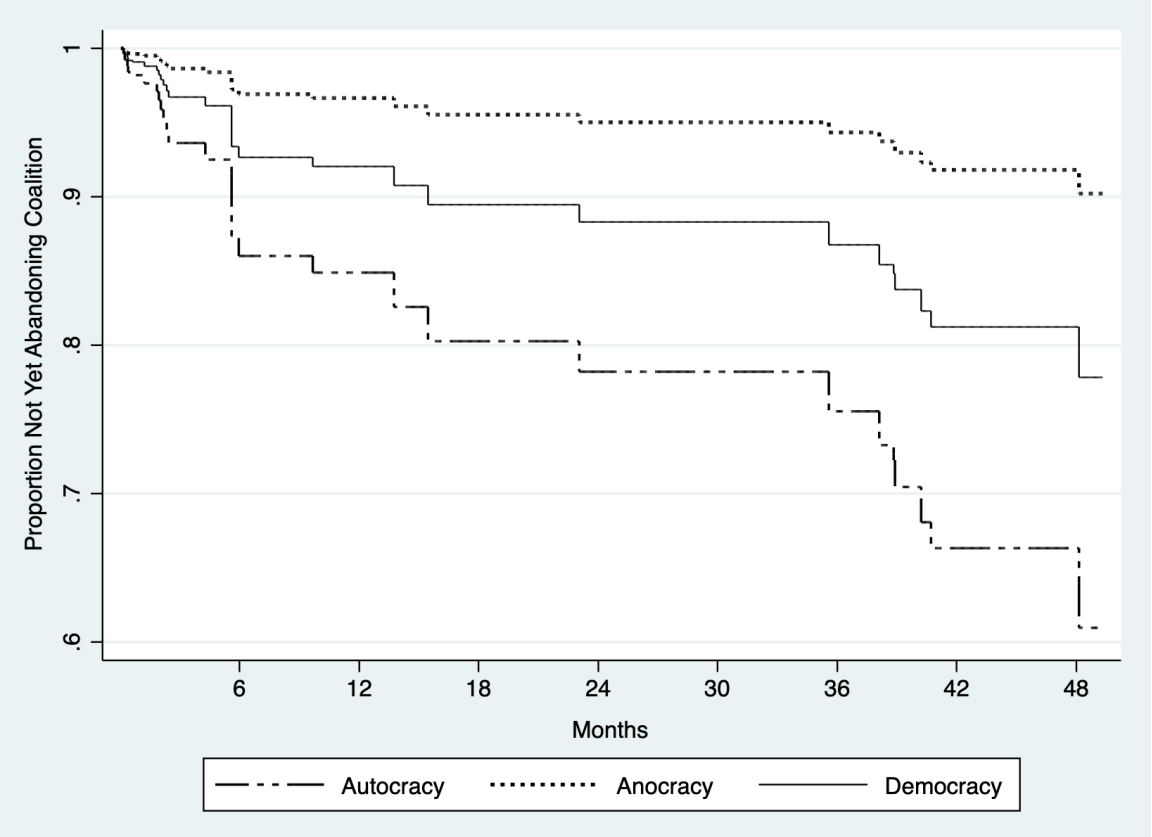

Figure 2.1: Predicted duration until defection by regime types

Note: predictive duration is computed while holding all continuous variables at their means and dichotomous variables at their modes

(2012) employed a binary measure coded 1 if the total coalition power (measured in CINC scores) divided by that of the enemy was more than the target's power and zero otherwise. However, I included a continuous measure of the same operationalization which offers higher precision. I rerun models with a binary measure of *Expected Victory* and found results confirming previous findings by Choi (2012). However, I kept my operationalization as it provides a more nuanced measure of expected victory.

Consistent with past research I find that a history of military cooperation and the existence of alliance among coalition partners enhance states' chances of working together as effective coalition partners reducing coalition abandonment (Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Weitsman 2013). The coefficient for *Leader Change* is statistically significant and has a positive sign. This finding confirms past research that leadership

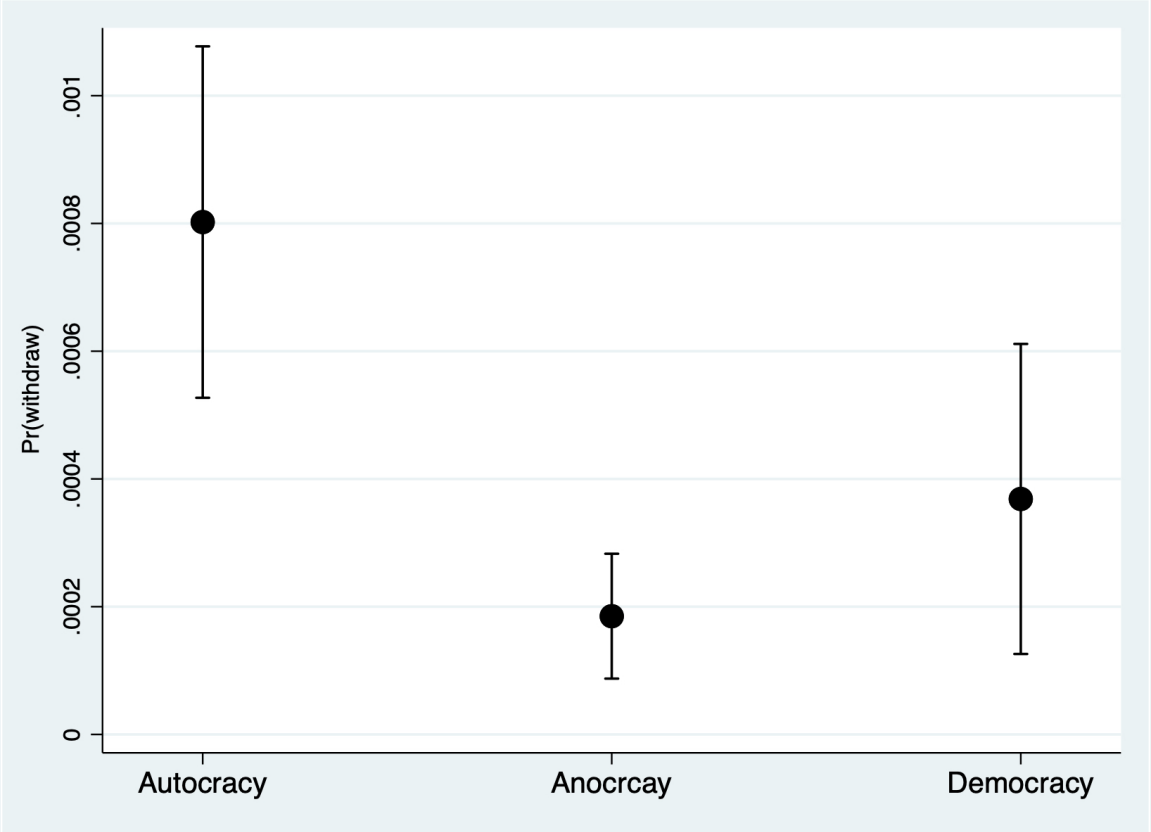

Figure 2.2: Marginal effects of regime types on defection

Note: predictive marginal effects are computed while holding all continuous variables at their means and dichotomous variables at their modes. Lines indicate 90% confidence interval.

turnover is positively associated with changes in foreign policy including withdrawal from coalitions and alliances (Bennett 1997; Pilster et al. 2015; Tago 2009). In line with expectation, we observe a domino effect as when defection occurs other coalition partners are more likely to follow. The coefficient for *Recent Defection* has a positive sign and is statistically significant across all models, which confirms past finding in the literature (Weisiger 2016a). Finally, the coefficient for *Coalition Size* is statistically insignificant but has a negative sign as hypothesized. Larger coalitions produce a higher aggregation of power while leading to coalition ineffectiveness and by implication higher probability of defection. This result is consistent with past research about the size of the coalition and operational effectiveness (Kreps 2011; Weitsman 2013).

2.6 Conclusion

Fighting wars as a coalition has become a dominant feature of international conflict over the past two centuries. While fighting multilaterally improves chances of victory (Morey 2016), keeping countries with different regimes and interests together as an effective coalition is a challenging task. Prior research has advanced our understanding of the domestic political determinants of coalition defection (e.g., Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015; Tago 2009) and battlefield dynamics' impact on coalition abandonment (Weisiger 2016a; Choi 2012). Past research examining the effects of regime type on coalition defection has been limited to uncovering the reliability of different democratic regimes or democracies versus autocracies (Choi 2012; Mello 2020; Tago 2009). Previous research has not investigated the impact of regime types on coalition defection, particularly breaking down regimes beyond the simple dichotomy of autocracy and democracy. To address this gap in the literature, this paper examined the effect of regime type on the unilateral withdrawal of states from military coalitions. I argued and found support that anocracies or mixed regimes are more reliable coalition partners and less likely to abandon coalition warfare compared to autocracies and democracies.

Post-exit punishment motivates anocratic leaders to continue contributing to coalition warfare despite increasing human and material costs. Because belligerent foreign policy failures can lead to both removal and post-removal punishment in anocracies more often than in democracies and autocracies. Leaders in anocracies rely on moderate levels of repression and exclude a significant portion of society from the public policymaking process. Defeat in interstate conflict signals leadership incompetency and degrades the regimes' repression apparatus. Military defeat gives the excluded populace an opportunity to remove a repressive leader from office with lower costs than in the past. To avoid losing power and post-exit additional punishment, regime elites will be incentivized to help topple the current leader.

The winning coalition in democracies is larger than autocracies but smaller than autocracies. Anocratic leaders rely on a mixture of public and private goods provisions to stay in power. States defect when the cost of war outweighs the expected utility, especially victory becomes unlikely. The institutionalized and shared decision-making processes in democracies allow leaders to pull out of coalition wars with minimal domestic backlash. Autocratic leaders, with a small winning coalition, will have an easier time adjusting their war aims in light of growing costs. However, leaders of mixed regimes will not leave before their autocratic and democratic counterparts in hopes of securing a larger share of private goods (i.e., control of territory and resources) and public goods (i.e., victory in war and enforcement of norms and international law when applicable). When coalition size gets smaller autocratic and democratic states bail out. This should further disincentivize anocracies from withdrawing earlier because a smaller coalition size means less dilution of spoils of victory. Moreover, recent research suggests that states receive side payments for their contribution to coalition warfare. All these potential gains strongly incentivize anocratic leaders to avoid withdrawing early from ongoing coalition warfare.

This research has important policy implications because military coalitions are increasingly prevalent fixtures of interstate conflicts and multinational military missions. Over a quarter of all international conflicts since the early 19th century involve coalitions (Morey 2016, 533). Fighting as a coalition is a fundamental policy of NATO, the defense departments of the U.S., the United Kingdom, and many other nations (Weitsman 2011).

Coalition defection has important consequences not only for intra-coalitional politics but also seriously impacts the success and failure of its mission. For instance, the United States and its allies had to find replacement troops after Canadian and Dutch forces withdrew from the two southern provinces of Afghanistan. The Taliban and other insurgents took advantage of the ensuing uncertainty and the spatial and

operational vacuum created by the transition process making territorial gains in the region (Brunnstrom 2010). The Dutch and Canadian defections from the NATO-led coalition reversed the progress made in several areas, mainly security and economic sectors, over the years as soon as the Taliban took control of the vast areas in rural Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces. The Taliban used these newly gained territories to regroup and launch their military campaigns in other regions of the country (Jockel 2014). Therefore, understanding the determinants of coalition defection helps policymakers prevent military setbacks.

Scholarly consensus shows that anocratic regimes are more likely to experience civil war than any other regime type (Regan and Bell 2010; Walter 2022). Major powers often play a pivotal role in contemporary coalitions. They invest in preventing civil wars to avoid expected economic and humanitarian crises including mass refugees and economic migration. The broader implication of my results is that by recruiting anocratic regimes as coalition partners, major powers not only go to war with reliable partners but also avoid the outbreak of devastating civil wars that can have negative consequences for their own security and economic prosperity.

There are a few major areas that warrant further research. First, our understanding is lacking regarding the ways and the strategies states adopt when exiting coalitions. We still do not know and do not have data about partial withdrawal, repositioning of forces, alteration in responsibilities of troops, and whether these changes occur within the framework agreed upon before the coalition warfare. Acknowledging these challenges with the definition and operationalization of various defections, some scholars (e.g., McInnis 2019) call for research and data collection, a conclusion that this research paper agrees with and advocates as well. Second, another area is investigating the relationship between autocratic leaders' tenure and coalition defection. Existing research shows that there is an inverted-U relationship between autocratic leadership and international conflict initiation. Autocratic leaders go through three

stages: power struggle in the early periods, consolidation in the middle, and power dissipation in the later periods (Bak 2017; Weeks 2012). It is worth examining when autocratic leaders are more likely to defect from a military coalition throughout their tenure in power.

Third, recent scholarship has demonstrated that foreign policy and alliance commitment varies across sub-regime types both in democracies and nondemocracies. The existing datasets about regime types go as far as the early 1900s. Future research can expand the data on regime types that will greatly increase the spatiotemporal domain for the empirical examination of regimes' effect on coalition defections.

Finally, future research and especially data-gathering projects can focus on the type of commitments made before wars and whether states fail or succeed in delivering their coalition commitments. Pointing to the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provision (Leeds et al. 2002) as an example, Morey (2017) suggests in order to determine coalition defection, it is essential to understand what states agreed to commit to the coalition in the first place. Comparing individual states' actual contribution to their initial commitment will reveal whether states defected or not, and to what degree the states honored their commitments.

CHAPTER 3.

The Impact of Leadership Insecurity on Coalition Defection

Malaysia and Indonesia committed to the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping coalition mission in the Congo that lasted from 1960 to 1964. Both states were fighting their own civil wars with varying intensity (Jacobson 1964). In 1960, the annual battle-related deaths reached 25 in Malaysia while it peaked at 3,331 in Indonesia (Lacina and Gleditsch 2005). The same year, Indonesia decided to withdraw from the UN mission while Malaysia continued its original commitment to the mission in the Congo for another two years (Bunnell 1966; Hossain 1997; Nzongola-Ntalaja 2004; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015). Elsewhere in Africa, Sudanese President Gaafar Al Nimery survived a coup attempt in 1977, after which he made drastic changes in domestic and foreign policies including withdrawal from the Arab Deterrence Force coalition in Lebanon (Howard 1977; State Department 1978). These cases show that state leaders adjust their commitment to international military coalitions when faced with elite discontent and civil wars, which raises the question of why do states withdraw from military coalitions.

Existing literature on defection focuses on collective action problems, burden-sharing challenges within alliances and coalitions, national elections and leadership turnover, battlefield circumstances, international legitimacy of coalition missions, and other areas of domestic politics including economic recession and social unrests (Choi 2012; Kober 2002; Leeds 2003; McInnis 2019, 2020; Pilster et al. 2015; Schmitt 2019; Tago 2009; Weisiger 2016a; Wells 2016). Though scholars have studied coalition defection, on balance it is still an underexplored area in the literature (Mello and Saideman 2019). To fill this gap, I investigate the effect of leadership insecurity on the withdrawal of states from ongoing military coalition operations. I argue that

leadership insecurity borne by civil wars and coups contributes to coalition defection. Domestically vulnerable leaders redirect attention and resources inward to consolidate their hold on power rather than foreign policy engagements that could have negligible impact on their survivability. An empirical analysis of coalition defection between 1950 to 2001 supports the expectation that leaders are more likely to defect from coalition operations after both successful and failed coups and when faced with intensified civil wars.

This research has important policy implications. Coalition defection affects conflict outcome, duration, and terms of settlements. For instance, the early withdrawal of Canadian, Dutch, and French troops from Afghanistan created an operational vacuum, which Afghanistan and the United States struggled to fill. The Taliban-led insurgency consolidated its grip in the southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan between 2006 to 2010 following these withdrawals (Brunnstrom 2010; Jockel 2014; McInnis 2020). Moreover, military coalitions are prevalent fixtures of interstate conflicts and multinational military missions. Over a quarter of all international conflicts since the early 19th century involve coalitions (Morey 2016, 533). Operating within a coalition framework is a fundamental policy of NATO, the US, and the United Kingdom (Weitsman 2011). This research shows that policymakers need to pay close attention to leadership insecurities when choosing their war partners. The unreliability of partners and their precarious commitments jeopardize coalition effectiveness. This can be avoided with careful assessment during the coalition recruitment process.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. First, I review the existing studies on coalition defection. Second, drawing on existing scholarship, I present a theoretical argument explaining coalition abandonment due to leadership insecurities. Third, in the research design, I discuss methods and data used for the empirical analysis. The closing section entails the conclusion and future research avenues.

3.1 Explaining military coalition defections

Before reviewing the research on coalition defection, it is necessary to clarify the difference between alliance and coalition because the two terms have been used interchangeably (Bensahel 1999; McInnis 2019; Morey 2016; Weitsman 2011). First, alliances are formal and institutionalized types of interstate security arrangements; coalitions are transitory, less formal, and institutionalized, and often created for specific purposes (Belinski 1997; Bensahel 1999; Kober 2002; McInnis 2020). Second, alliances are formed before the outset of conflicts while coalitions are formed as ad hoc arrangements in response to a crisis that is impending or has already begun (McInnis 2020; Morey 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017; Weitsman 1997, 2010). Considering the preceding overview and consistent with these distinctions, I define a coalition as an ad hoc transitory grouping of two or more states that will dissolve after the completion of a specific multinational military mission. Therefore, the use of the term "coalition" in this research closely mirrors definitions offered by Morey (2016), McInnis (2020), and Weitsman (1997; 2013).

3.1.1 What constitutes as coalition defection?

Most studies focus on the total or near-complete withdrawal of military forces and capabilities from an ongoing coalition operation to define coalition defections (Pilster et al. 2015; Tago 2009; Weisiger 2016a). For instance, coalition abandonment can be the complete military withdrawal of troops against the wishes of coalition partners (Weisiger 2016a, 754) or official announcements of withdrawal irrespective of troop movements (Mello 2020). This binary conceptualization of defection (i.e., states are either in or out) obfuscates the many ways by which states leave a coalition operation (McInnis 2019). Though scholars acknowledge variation in defection, most focus on the full or near-complete withdrawal of military forces and capabilities (Massie 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017; Pilster et al. 2015; Tago 2009).

For this research, I define defection to take place when a state officially declares to withdraw from a military coalition operation before the coalition leaders formally conclude the coalition operation or declare a drastic change in the direction of the coalition mission. My conceptualization merges several definitions that emphasize unilateral abrogation of military operations and responsibilities resulting in the withdrawal of military forces and capabilities at the expense of partners before the official conclusion of the coalition mission (Kober 2002; McInnis 2019; Pilster et al. 2015; Weisiger 2016a)

3.1.2 What makes states abandon their coalition partners?

While there is bourgeoning literature exploring the formation, structure, and effectiveness of international military coalitions (Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Kreps 2011; Morey 2016, 2020; Pilster 2011; Tago 2007, 2014; Weitsman 2011), scholarship exploring conditions under which coalition defection occurs is relatively limited. One of the earliest works on defection showed that a country's (self-perceived) power, the structure of the international system (i.e., multipolarity and bipolarity), coalition cohesion, and national leaders' perceptions of success explained coalition defections (Kober 2002, 186). The subsequent research into coalition defection has proceeded along two main lines. One group of studies locates diminishing state commitments and defections in the dynamics of coalition warfare, the circumstances of the battlefield, and the strategic location and environment of the coalition deployment. Coalition abandonment is more likely when states fight away from partners on separate fronts and when the probability of victory trends downhill (Weisiger 2016a). Similarly, coalition defection occurs when casualties start increasing from a coalition war that is not going well or has continued for a long time (Wells 2016).

A second line of research explores the influence of state-level characteristics and domestic politics of coalition members and their interaction with international fac-

tors. Cantir's analysis of defections from the "Coalition of the Willing" in Iraq reveals that factors grounded in domestic politics account for withdrawal decisions. Cantir maintains that differences in institutional decision-making mechanisms regarding military interventions abroad, domestic security challenges, and lack of consensus among policymakers contributed to unilateral military withdrawals from Iraq (Cantir 2011).

Public support for continued engagement in coalition operations erodes as costs of foreign military campaigns increase, especially prolonged and inconclusive military campaigns (Kober 2002; Massie 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017; Wells 2016). Differences in perceptions about alliance value and threats to national interest among governments, opposition parties, and the public contributed to withdrawal decisions from U.S.-led interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq by Australia, Italy, and the Netherlands (Davidson 2014). These differences give rise to three causal paths. First, defection occurred when the public and opposition favored it. Second, the public's demands for withdrawal materialized absent bipartisan consensus, and when policymakers believed national interests were not threatened, the negative repercussions of defection were minimal, and that coalition operation would not succeed. Third, withdrawal did not occur when there was a bipartisan consensus that continued engagement was necessary to impede threats to national interests and to uphold the alliance with the coalition leader. In a similar vein, Massie (2016) shows that an interplay between elite consensus, public opinion, electoral calculations, and alliance pressure accounted for the withdrawal of Canadian and Dutch troops from the U.S.-led intervention in Afghanistan.

Multiple studies show that as the number of casualties and material costs from international campaigns increases, support for future military interventions conducted alone or as part of a military coalition declines. This directly motivates leaders to leave coalitions to curtail the domestic opposition from the public and elites. This effect is present across all regime types though more readily observed in democracies

through voting choices in elections and public opinion surveys (Aldrich et al. 2006; Boettcher 2004; Fordham 2016; Geys 2010; Wells 2016).

Several studies emphasize regime types, variation in institutional constraints, and leadership turnover as factors of coalition defection (McInnis 2019; Pilster et al. 2015). Previous findings regarding the impact of regime type and domestic politics on coalition defection are inconclusive. Several scholars consider democracies to be unreliable coalition partners. For example, Tago (2009) showed that numerous factors in democracies (e.g., election cycles, leadership turnover, the number of veto players, and constitutional designs) contributed to cases of defection from Iraq between 2003 to 2006. Moreover, democracies are considered less dependable partners due to their structural weaknesses (i.e., the disproportionate influence of interest groups on foreign policy decisions, public accountability of leaders, and the cyclical turnover of leaders and governments). The institutional restrictions make democracies less effective in making a credible commitment to coalitions (Gartzke and Gleditsch 2004).[1] Moreover, there is a rich debate within the alliance literature, which explores the reliability of democracies and other regime types. However, since these studies focus on variation of commitment across regime types within alliances, they are of limited use in evaluating wartime coalition defection (Mello 2020)

Scholarship has moved from a mere focus on regime-type differences to when leaders become unreliable coalition partners. New leaders have dissimilar preferences, evaluate information about military interventions differently, and are unwilling to get entrapped in the interventionist policies of their predecessors (Pilster et al. 2015). Pilster and colleagues show that early withdrawal from international military coalition increases during election cycles in democracies more than in non-democracies. Their analysis reveals strong support for earlier findings that leadership turnovers matter

[1] coalition findings contradict work in the alliance literature that finds democracies honor their alliance commitments more than nondemocracies and major powers. This is attributed to the ability of nondemocratic states to renegade their international commitments with lower audience costs compared to their democratic counterparts (Choi 2012; Leeds 2003)

across all regimes (e.g., Downs and Rock 1994), especially democracies for a drastic change in foreign policy, including withdrawal from wartime coalition.

Leadership changes, when accompanied by leftist partisanship and in the absence of imminent elections as well as a rise in coalition casualties, lead to coalition defection even by leaders who originally joined the coalition in the first place (Mello 2020). In a similar vein, Pelletier and Massie (2017) show that Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, due to his left-leaning political affiliation, withdrew the Canadian air force from airstrikes against the Islamic State while at the same time increasing the number of Canadian troops training Iraqi security forces. This shift in policy is indicative of Trudeau's support for international norms favoring cooperation and good citizenship rather than honoring alliance commitments involving belligerent interventions. Moreover, when operational and political risks of coalition operation are high, state leaders find it harder to marshal domestic support for continued participation. Therefore, coalition members either completely withdraw or seek less risky ways to stay engaged in coalition operations (McInnis 2019, 2020).

Prior research on coalition defection enhances our understanding by examining important state-level characteristics, national politics, international factors, and the interplay between them. However, there are a few important limitations that warrant further research. First, except for Pilster and colleagues (2015), most studies focus on a select number of cases to explain defection (Massie 2016; McInnis 2020; Pelletier and Massie 2017). While these studies improve our understanding of specific conditions under which a few states defected, they conceal substantial variation across time and space. These limitations may weaken the generalizability of their findings. Second, prior studies show that leadership turnover contributes to withdrawal from wartime coalitions (e.g., Pilster et al. 2015; Tago 2009) but we know very little about why the same leaders who originally joined the coalition defect.

The only scholar who directly addresses defection by the same leader who joined

the coalition is Mello (2020). His work on the "Coalition of the Willing" in Iraq shows that the same leaders who authorized deployment to Iraq defected after intense domestic pressure because of the deteriorating situation in Iraq and when they did not face elections in the near future. This study is limited to the Iraq War and only focuses on defection by democratic leaders, both good reasons to doubt whether the results could be applied to larger groups of states across long time frames. The leaders' situation changes over time. A multitude of domestic and external factors can either solidify or threaten a leader's position in power. While a few existing studies link declining public support, lack of consensus among elites, and electoral politics to early withdrawal from multinational coalition operations (Massie 2016; Mello 2020; Pelletier and Massie 2017), no prior study has explored the relationship between leadership insecurity due to civil wars and coup attempts to coalition defection. Therefore, to fill this gap in the literature, I offer systematic theorizing and empirical evidence that will improve our understanding of how leadership insecurity due to domestic security threats contributes to premature withdrawals from military coalitions.

3.2 Leadership insecurity and defection from military coalitions

Drawing on rationalist approaches to leadership survival, I argue that domestically insecure leaders are constrained in their capabilities to maintain military engagement overseas and defect from coalition operations to bolster their security at home. While domestic sources of leadership insecurity are diverse, the most pressing threats to a political leader's survival emanate from rebellions and coups (Fravel 2005, 51-52). According to the Archigos Dataset of Political Leaders, coups followed by rebellion are the most likely methods employed to irregularly remove leaders (Goemans et al. 2009; Powell 2019). Coup attempts involve military and civilian elites illegally overthrowing incumbent executive leaders and assuming power for themselves while rebellions

mostly pursue regime change and autonomy or secession (Kebschull 1994; Powell and Thyne 2011)

The common denominator in both rebellions and coup attempts is the removal of the sitting leaders. Rebellions and coup attempts have grave consequences for state leaders including execution, imprisonment, exile, and loss of possession in addition to immediate removal from power. Faced with such serious internal threats to their survival, leaders will rely on all tools and resources at their disposal to enhance their political security and survival. Therefore, this paper focuses on coups and civil wars as major domestic sources of leadership insecurity.

3.2.1 Coups and defection

The central assumption is that leaders are primarily motivated to gain political power and retain their office; they act to stay in power (Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2003; Bueno De Mesquita and Siverson 1995; Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2003). Therefore, I begin by considering leaders as self-interested, rational actors who prioritize policies that ensure their ability to maintain power. Domestically vulnerable leaders need to focus on building and maintaining pro-regime military and security forces for domestic power consolidation rather than using them for external conflict, including multinational military operations. The use of military forces abroad is costly for insecure leaders. Deployment of military troops and capabilities overseas, irrespective of scale and size, means diversion of military resources away from defending and consolidating leaders' hold on power (Bak 2017; Gelpi and Grieco 2001; Wolford 2012; Wolford and Ritter 2016). Coups are direct challenges to the survivability of political leaders because the primary goal of coup plotters is unseating the incumbent executive. Since coup attempts either succeed or fail, I start by discussing the relationship between failed coup attempts and coalition defection.

3.2.1.1 *Failed coups:*

We should expect a drastic change in foreign policy including early withdrawal from a going coalition operation after a failed coup attempt. Coup attempts are risky ventures with dire consequences for plotters when unsuccessful. Elites stage coups when they are extremely unhappy with the status quo; unlike mass protests and riots, coup attempts are a credible signal from within the state that the situation must change for the leader to stay in power (Thyne and Powell 2016). Moreover, failed coup attempt is a reliable predictor of future similar plots (Belkin and Schofer 2003) which further deepens domestic threats to leaders' survival in power. This makes it even more likely that state leaders will have to undertake broad changes in domestic and foreign policies to stay in power after surviving coup attempts. Therefore, the likelihood of withdrawal from coalition operation increases following a failed coup attempt for several reasons.

First, disagreements over foreign policy could potentially motivate military and civilian elites to stage a coup in the first place. Even after thwarting a coup attempt, the leader's foreign policy will have to differ drastically from the pre-coup attempt period. This is necessary to keep the elites happy and avoid another coup attempt. For instance, in 1975 Umar Meheishi along with other military officers staged an unsuccessful coup against Libyan leader, Mummar Qaddafi when their demands to end Libyan support to terrorist groups abroad, especially ventures to foment unrest in Arab states were rejected (Cooley 1982, 166). Similarly, Sudan's defection from the Syrian-led Arab Deterrence Force (ADF) in Lebanon is directly tied to a failed coup attempt. Sudanese President Jaafar Nimeiri succeeded in putting down two coup attempts; one led by Sadiq Al-Mahdi in July of 1976 and another led by the Air Force generals in February of 1977 (Johnson 2016; Tanner 1976). During this time, Sudan had 500 soldiers deployed in Lebanon ADF, a military coalition of Arab states led by Syria. The mission of ADF was to deter Israeli attacks and maintain domestic

peace in Lebanon (Haddad 1982). Following the second failed coup attempt, President Nimeiry declared to withdraw troops from Lebanon despite Syrian disapproval (State Department 1978). Nimeiry survived previous coup attempts by continually purging the military and appointing loyal generals to key positions of power; he repeated this policy by bringing in all troops to Sudan before restructuring the military (Jacobs 1985).

Second, in the aftermath of a failed coup attempt, leaders often engage in widespread crackdowns and purges to punish coup plotters, consolidate their hold on power, and prevent future coups (Cook 2016; Easton and Siverson 2018). These measures can include immediate massive crackdowns and implementing coup-proofing. The latter involves strategies and tactics adopted by the regime to prevent the military from seizing power (Sudduth 2017). For instance, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan conducted massive purges following the failed coup in 2016. Thousands of military and civilian personnel, including military officers serving abroad, were arrested. Erdogan effectively rendered himself as the sole power holder by replacing the parliamentary system with a presidential system, amending the constitution, and making other major changes in domestic policy (Cook 2016; Robinson 2022; Gall 2021). Moreover, after the unsuccessful coup, Erdogan adopted a more strategic autonomy in Turkish foreign policy by breaking from NATO allies and gravitating more towards transactional-based relations with Russia and Iran (Haugom 2019; Sözen Usluer 2016).

Finally, to maximize their tenure in office following unsuccessful coup attempts, leaders implement coup-proofing strategies to diminish future coup attempts. This entails creating structural hurdles including dividing the military into rival forces, establishing parallel forces, and frequent rotation of officers (Böhmelt and Pilster 2014; Sudduth 2017). However, coup-proofing weakens the military's fighting effectiveness. This increases regime vulnerability to domestic and foreign enemies (Powell 2014;

Quinlivan 1999). Enacting coup-proofing efforts increase the risk of a coup where generals act preemptively and stage a coup (Sudduth 2017). The consolidation of power by reorganizing military and civilian elites is risky and requires coordinated efforts. This is a resource-draining undertaking, which requires that leaders redirect all military capabilities inwards and address sources of insecurity at a slower pace to avoid unwittingly increasing the risk of another coup. This discussion leads to the following hypothesis:

H3.1a: Failed coup attempts increase the likelihood of premature withdrawal from an ongoing military coalition operation

3.2.1.2 *Successful coups:*

In a successful coup the incumbent leader is removed (i.e., killed, exiled, imprisoned, etc.) and a new leader comes to power (Luttwak 2016; Powell and Thyne 2011). We should expect a higher likelihood of withdrawal from coalition operations following a successful coup for several reasons. First, new leaders rely on support from different political and societal groups compared to their predecessors. Scholarship has shown that domestic political cleavages correspond to different foreign policy preferences (Snyder 2013). Therefore, substantial foreign policy change occurs when new leaders come to power and rely on different domestic actors than their predecessor (Mattes, Leeds, and Carroll 2015). We should observe major shifts in foreign policy after successful coups. For instance, the Pakistani military's coup in 1999 was partially prompted by the Pakistani prime minister's signing of the Lahore Declaration, which was aimed at establishing and resuming peace talks with India—something the Pakistani military strongly opposed. The declaration was mostly scrapped after the coup (Dugger 1999; Grare 2016).

Second, broadly speaking new leaders have different foreign policy preferences,

evaluate information about military engagement overseas differently, and avoid getting entrapped in the interventionist policies of their predecessors (Massie 2016; Mello 2020; Pilster et al. 2015). These reasons combined suggest leaders coming to power through a coup will have to focus the military apparatus inwards to strengthen domestic security. Below I discuss a case of a successful coup that resulted in early withdrawal from an ongoing coalition operation.

In 1977 South Yemen contributed 2,000 troops along with additional military capabilities to the Ethiopian-led counter-insurgency operations in the Ogaden region (Cooper and Fontanellaz 2018). In July of 1978, General Abdul Fatah Ismail led a successful coup and became president of South Yemen (Homan 1978). The ousted president, Salim Robaya Ali, gravitated towards Maoism while General Ismail was pro-Soviet Union and opposed South Yemen's military involvement in Ethiopia (Halliday 1986). After taking power, the new leader started pulling South Yemeni troops out of the coalition in Ethiopia (Pilster et al. 2015). This case demonstrates that successful coups are positively correlated with leadership insecurity and shifts in foreign policy, which in turn is associated with defection from military coalitions. This discussion leads me to hypothesize the following about the relationship between successful coups and coalition defection:

H3.1b: Successful coup attempts increase the likelihood of premature withdrawal from an ongoing military coalition operation

3.2.2 Civil Wars and defection

The last part of my theory links leadership insecurity borne by civil war to early withdrawal from military coalition operations. Initiating and maintaining international conflict is challenging for leaders when ongoing civil wars deteriorate by way of increased casualties and major losses of material and territory. When casualty

numbers rise, autocratic and democratic leaders face mounting domestic pressures both from elites and the public (Massie 2016; McInnis 2020; Mello 2020). However, while highly committed and resolved leaders may continue to fight, insecure leaders will pull out of international military coalition to redirect military capabilities to the solidification of their power and managing domestic crises (Dafoe 2012).

The impact of civil war on coalition defection should be conditional upon its intensity. The presence or onset of civil war does not always negatively affect leadership security. Some states such as India and Bangladesh have been experiencing civil conflict for several years (Gleditsch et al. 2002). However, the extent to which these conflicts threaten national stability and leadership security is negligible compared to leaders facing intensified domestic conflicts. A drastic change in the intensity of an ongoing civil war produces higher costs in blood and treasure in addition to the political price which negatively affects leaders' hold on power.

Several empirical studies support the argument that leaders end military campaigns abroad when there is an upsurge in human and material costs of belligerent foreign policy. For instance, an analysis of the impact of battlefield casualties on the abandonment of military operations abroad from 1800 to 2005 showed that states withdrew from international conflicts after a rising number of deaths (Wells 2016). Moreover, another analysis of interstate wars from 1816 to 2003 involving coalitions demonstrated that battlefield circumstances, especially the geographical distribution of battlefields and the number of casualties, contributed to coalition defection (Weisiger 2016a). Therefore, an increase in the intensity of civil war should be positively associated with withdrawal from an ongoing coalition operation. Because a leader's hold on power is directly threatened when rebels approach the center. Therefore, the leader will have to bring in all forces and military capabilities from overseas to protect the capital and ensure their survival in power.

I discuss two cases to illustrate that severe civil wars cause leaders to defect from

coalition operations. Bangladesh participated in and fulfilled its commitment to the U.S.-led Coalition of the Gulf War between 1990-1991. During this period, a low-intensity civil war was going on in Bangladesh that resulted in approximately 72 battle-related deaths in 1991. The domestic conflict neither posed a national security threat nor drew much of the media's attention as the insurgency was limited to a few areas where the government fought small Islamist insurgents (Khan 1993). On the other hand, Rwanda defected from the Anti-Kabila Coalition in 1998 when battle-related deaths in the ongoing Rwandan civil war reached 3,750 (Lacina and Gleditsch 2005; McKnight 2015; Nzongola-Ntalaja 2004). These cases demonstrate that both autocratic and democratic leaders withdraw from multinational military operations when domestic conflicts escalate. Moreover, an empirical analysis of all U.S.-led coalitions since World War Two showed that states faced with domestic challenges, such as violent protests, riots, and economic recessions, were less likely to take part in coalition operations (Tago 2014). This reinforces my argument that vulnerable leaders will withdraw from coalitions when ongoing domestic conflicts intensify. The government will have to commit additional military capabilities to the domestic conflict, which can induce withdrawal from coalition operations abroad. Therefore, this discussion leads me to derive and empirically evaluate the following hypotheses:

H3.2: the presence or onset of civil war should increase the likelihood of premature withdrawal from an ongoing military coalition operation (H3.2a); this effect should increase as the intensity of the civil war increases (H3.2b)

3.3 Counterarguments

My theory presents a counterintuitive argument about the effects of coups and domestic conflict on foreign policy decisions. I argue that coups and intensified civil wars can cause leaders to prematurely withdraw from wartime coalitions. There are

two main counterarguments for the explanations presented above: *coup-proofing and diversionary war theory.*

Domestically vulnerable leaders engage in coup-proofing to reduce the ability of the military to stage a coup. Coup-proofing strategies involve regular rotation of military commanders, division of military into rival branches, the establishment of parallel military and paramilitary organizations, the appointment of family and co-ethnic/coreligionists in the top military and political positions, creation of secret military intelligence with overlapping jurisdiction, and increasing the military budget or providing private goods to key officials—all in an attempt to coup-proof the regime and ensure the survivability of political leadership (Belkin and Schofer 2003; Biddle and Zirkle 1996; Böhmelt and Pilster 2014; Powell 2014; Quinlivan 1999). Coup-proofing strategies may also involve sending would-be coup plotters (generals and officers) overseas, including participation in coalition operations.

Instead, I argue that participation in a military coalition operation abroad may not serve as a viable coup-proofing strategy for several reasons. First, states often send small military units, relative to their military size as observed in the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan, overseas as part of coalition operations (Gannon and Kent 2020). Second, coalition members, especially junior partners, deploy low-ranking officers as commanders of their troops abroad as opposed to high-ranking generals (Schmitt 2019) who are often involved in successful coups. Third, the duration of coalition operations is shorter on average compared to other interstate conflicts. Empirical studies show that long and protracted international conflicts increase leaders' survivability by reducing the probability of coup attempts (Piplani and Talmadge 2016). This means participation in coalition or short-term interstate conflicts does not shield leaders from internal threats. Fourth, excessive coup-proofing can have a countereffect. Vulnerable leaders have incentives to avoid engaging in coup-proofing as such strategies will induce a higher risk of coups because coup-proofing actions by

leaders prompt militaries to launch coups as preemptive strategies (Sudduth 2017). Finally, coup-proofing strategies reinforce ethnic and political divisions, drain states' financial resources, and most importantly render the military and the security apparatus ineffective against domestic and foreign threats (De Bruin 2020). Therefore, these insights lead me to maintain that on average participation in coalition operations does not reduce threats to the survivability of political leaders in office.

The second main counterargument to my position is the diversionary theory of war which links vulnerable leaders to international conflict through two causal mechanisms. According to the gamble for the resurrection logic, state leaders engage in international conflict to deal with internal problems and demonstrate competence to their winning coalitions. According to the rally-around-the-flag explanations, domestically vulnerable leaders use military forces abroad to divert and alleviate domestic pressures. Thus, domestic problems incentivize insecure leaders to engage in aggressive foreign policies to increase their chance of remaining in power (Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2003; Bueno De Mesquita and Siverson 1995). Several empirical studies lend mixed support to the underlying logic of this theory (Haynes 2017; Manus 2021). Based on this logic, insecure leaders should be less likely to defect from international military coalitions.

I maintain that the logic of diversionary theory does not hold in instances when leaders face severe threats to their survival, such as military coups and or severe civil conflicts. Vulnerable leaders often engage in diversionary war when faced with a set of problems that affect all or most of the society which leads to collective pressure against the regime and the ruling elite. However, leaders respond differently to discontent coming from segments of society that play a critical role in the maintenance of leaders' ruling coalition (Morgan and Bickers 1992). Moreover, leaders often engage in short-lived belligerent military crises short of full-out war because the cost of initiating and maintaining an interstate conflict outweighs the expected benefits

(Tarar 2006). It is more common for leaders, especially in democracies, to initiate short-lived interstate crises when faced with episodes of economic recession and less substantively significant domestic challenges, such as sex scandals (Baker 2004). Arguably, most of the coalition operations do not create a strong rally-around-the-flag effect because states collectively undertake a mission. This effect should be present for the state leading the coalition.

Erosion of domestic support among the ruling elite including the military will motivate leaders to focus on power rearrangements and withdraw from foreign military operations. For instance, Gelpi and Grieco (2001, 801) assert that vulnerable leaders faced with serious domestic opposition to their survival from crucial groups in the society will avoid costly international conflict and instead focus on addressing domestic threats. Therefore, coup-proofing and diversionary theory of conflict do not undermine my theoretical explanation linking civil wars and coups to defection from ongoing multinational operations.

3.4 Research design

My theory predicts that early withdrawal from military coalition operations is more likely following both failed (H3.1a) and successful coups (H3.1b) as well as when the intensity of civil wars increases (H3.2a and H3.2b). My unit of analysis to test these hypotheses is country-year for all state participation in military coalition interventions between 1950 to 2001 originally compiled by Pilster et al. (2015). This dataset includes coalition incursions into a target country that involve more than a total of 1,000 soldiers for combat or intimidation. Pilster and colleagues (2015) use participating country intervention as a unit of analysis to investigate the effect of leadership turnover on coalition defection. Their focus was on whether a change in state leaders during the entire duration of the coalition operation influenced early withdrawal decisions.

The nature of my theoretical argument necessitates time-variant empirical analyses. To this end, I expanded and updated the main data on early withdrawal from the coalition operations (Pilster et al. 2015). I primarily relied on the International Military Interventions (IMI) data (Pearson and Baumann 1993; Pickering and Kisangani 2009) to identify the start and end dates of each military intervention. This extended version of the data allows for cross-sectional time series analysis. I also consulted additional sources (i.e., historical works, official government statements, policy announcements, media, and other relevant sources for the data collection process) in addition to the IMI data.

The updated data allows me to use coalition-country-year as the unit of analysis. Following Pilster and colleagues (2015), I exclude coalition lead states to ensure the homogeneity of the sample. In total, the final cross-sectional time-variant data consist of 43 coalition operations involving troop contributions by 62 different countries, with a total of 412 observations. The observations are further reduced to 393 since data on coups start in 1950. There are a few limitations to empirically evaluating my argument. There is potential for self-selection bias because coalition members are not a random sample of all states in the system. Rather, they self-select into the coalition either voluntarily or are indirectly compelled due to their alliance obligations or security concerns. However, the probability of selection bias is low. Because states are unlikely to partner with countries that are likely to withdraw. Moreover, all states have some incentives to join coalitions. I include several control variables to help capture alternative explanations.

3.4.1 Dependent variable

The outcome variable of this study is defection. This is a binary measure coded 1 if a participant state defects and 0 otherwise. *Defection* is operationalized and coded 1 when three conditions are met: (i) a state completely withdraws while the coali-

tion operation is ongoing, (ii) a coalition member unilaterally changes the mission or direction of its troops before the coalition leader, and (iii) when a state completes withdrawal of contributed troops without the coalition leader's approval (Pilster et al. 2015, 471). To estimate the data, I employ the logistic regression model because the dependent variable is dichotomous with standard errors clustered on individual coalition intervention to capture possible intra-group error correlations (Long 1997). I also include time, time-squared, and time-cubed to the model to account for time-series auto-correlation of the outcome variable (Beck et al. 1998). Table 3.1 provides descriptive statistics of all the variables included in the model.

3.4.2 Independent variable

There are three main explanatory variables. I include two dichotomous independent variables to test my first hypotheses (H3.1a and H3.1b): *Failed coup* and *Successful coup*. Both variables gauge if a country experienced failed or successful coup while taking part in a coalition operation. Data for this variable come from Powell and Thyne (2011). My final hypotheses (H3.2a and H3.2b) predict a conditional relationship for both civil war and its intensity. I expect civil war to have its strongest positive influence on the probability of coalition defection under higher battle-related deaths. I assess these expectations using the *Battle Deaths* variable, which is a proxy measure for the intensity of an active civil war(Bakken and Buhaug 2021). It measures the annual number of battled-related deaths(Lacina and Gleditsch 2005). Instead of a precise number, the dataset records low, high, and best estimates of battled-related deaths per year. I use the natural logarithm of the best estimates as a measure of civil war intensity.

3.4.3 Controls

I include several controls to account for alternative factors explaining premature withdrawal based on existing scholarship on coalition defection. The literature shows that militarily and economically weaker states are less likely to fulfill their alliance commitments (Leeds 2003). It is reasonable to expect that weaker states are more likely to abandon coalitions compared to stronger ones. Moreover, powerful states are better able to use military force abroad and are relatively less concerned about adverse consequences of crisis initiation. Thus, I add *Power (CINC)* to control for each state's annual material capabilities measured by the Composite Indexes of National Capabilities (CINC) score (Singer et al. 1972).

The literature also shows that leadership turnover is positively associated with the abandonment of coalition warfare (Aldrich et al. 2006; Tago 2009; Pilster 2011). Therefore, the variable *Reg. leader change*, coded dichotomously, controls for leadership turnover. Data for this variable come from the Archiogos dataset on political leaders (Goemans et al. 2009). Generally, democratic leaders are more reliable partners who are less likely to renege on their international security commitment and obligations (Choi 2012; Leeds 2003; Pilster 2011). To account for this finding in the literature, the variable *Democracy* controls whether a coalition member is a democracy. It is coded 1 if the country's average annual Polity IV score is +6 or above (Marshall et al. 2009).

National-level elections are shown to influence coalition defection (Mello 2020; Tago 2009). Thus, the variable *Election* controls whether a state had national-level elections during its participation in the coalition operations. Data for this variable come from the Varieties of Democracy project (V-Dem) (Knutsen et al. 2019). Larger coalitions ensure increased aggregation of power but also create intra-coalitions burden-sharing challenges including coordination of military and political activities (Kreps 2011; Weitsman 2013). Therefore, medium-sized, or smaller coalitions com-

bined with stronger leaders and clear command and control structures are preferred. Moreover, states with larger troop contributions are less likely to defect. Similarly, longer conflict duration is also positively linked to defection. However, these are context-specific and based on the type and level of threats and coalition warfare dynamics (Barrett 1992; Kreps 2011; Poast 2019; Weitsman 2013; Bensahel 1999). Therefore, I control for coalition size, length of contribution, number of troops contributed by each coalition partner, and whether the coalition was formed for combat or intimidation. Data for these variables come from the updated version of the International Military Intervention (IMI) dataset (Pickering and Kisangani 2009). *Coalition Size* measures the number of states in the coalition. *Duration* measures the length of contribution until defection (logged months). *Troops* account for the maximum number of troops contributed by each state and follow an ordinal coding taken from the original dataset: 0 (none), 1(1-1,000), 2 (1,000-5,000), 3 (5,001-10,000) 4 (10,000+). *Combat* is a dichotomous measure taking a value of 1 if the coalition mission consists of combat and zero otherwise.

Approval by international organizations, especially United Nations authorization, helps with the legitimization of the coalition mission and recruitment of states to the coalition (Schmitt 2019; Tago 2007). For instance, Tago (2007) showed that mission type and legitimacy matter. A coalition for domestic intervention had fewer partners while operations authorized by the United Nations for humanitarian and peacekeeping purposes attracted more members. Therefore, the binary variable, *Domestic dispute*, measures if the coalition intervened in a domestic dispute or was an internationally sanctioned operation (Pearson and Baumann 1993).

Geographic distance influences a state's ability to conduct military operations abroad (Russett 1971). Thus, I control for the capital-to-capital distance between a coalition participant and the target country as well as between the participant and

the lead state in each coalition[2]. Election and leadership turnover positively influence defection; this effect is more pronounced in democracies (Mello 2020; Pilster et al. 2015). To account for this finding in the literature, I interact *Reg. leader change* and election variables with *Democracy* to account for the effect of election and leadership turnover in democratic states. Finally, following Pilster et al. (2015) I incorporate *Neutrality*, a binary measure of whether a coalition participant state is neutral or towards the target country. Neutral states join coalitions to mitigate conflict rather than taking sides in the conflict (Peksen 2012). Therefore, neutral states are more likely to defect, especially when coalition intervention escalates. In the next section, I present the results.

Table 3.1: Summary statistics

	N	**Mean**	**SD**	**Min**	**Max**
Defection	393	0.04	0.19	0	1
Failed coup	393	0.02	0.12	0	1
Successful coup	393	0.01	0.09	0	1
Battle Deaths (log)	393	0.83	2.43	0	13.12
Democracy	393	0.53	0.50	0	1
Reg. leader change	393	0.13	0.34	0	1
Election	393	0.27	0.44	0	1
Power (CINC Scores)	393	0.01	0.03	.0001	.29
Neutrality	393	0.33	0.47	0	1
Troops	393	2.05	0.58	1	3
Domestic dispute	393	0.24	0.43	0	1
Target distance (log miles)	393	6.62	2.85	0	9.17
Lead state distance (log miles)	393	7.00	2.87	0	9.37
Coalition Size	393	6.55	4.04	1	12
Combat	393	0.77	0.42	0	1
Democracy*leader change	393	0.12	0.32	0	1
Democracy*Election	393	0.15	0.36	0	1
Time	393	4.19	1.24	-1.1	5.8
Time ^{2}	393	19.08	8.98	.006	33.17
Time ^{3}	393	90.65	56.93	-1.33	191.05

[2]Data for the distance between capital cities are available at http://ksgleditsch.com/data-5.html

3.5 Results

Table 3.2 presents the results from the logistic regression models. The empirical results from all models support the main theoretical expectation; all three hypotheses are supported. In model 1, I only include the key explanatory variables without controls. The coefficients for both failed and successful coups and battle deaths are positive and statistically significant. I add all controls in model 2 along with the key independent variables. Next, I run three different specifications, models 3 – 5, for each of the three theoretical variables alone with controls included. Finally, I specify and run model 6 which is the complete specification with all relevant controls and two interaction terms included.

Looking at the results in Table 3.2, the coefficient for the *Failed coup* is positive and statistically significant across all model specifications. According to model 6, on average for every one-unit increase in the *Failed coup* that is going from none to a failed coup attempt, we expect an 11.47 increase in the logged odds of defection holding all continuous variables at their means and binary variables at their mode. Similarly, the expected logged odds of early withdrawal increase by 6.597 for every unit increase in *Successful coup*. Thus, I find support for both hypotheses 3.1a and 3.1b. The results confirm that coups pose a significant direct threat to the survivability of leaders. Failed and successful coup attempts will result in leaders engaging in reshuffling and rearrangement of military and civilian elites to consolidate their hold on power. Doing so often results in leaders withdrawing from coalition missions to focus all resources and attention inwards. These results help explain the puzzles that motivated this research including the premature withdrawal of Sudanese troops from ADF following a failed coup attempt in 1977 and South Yemen's defection from the Ethiopian war effort following a successful coup.

The coefficient for the *Battle deaths* is positive and statistically significant across all models. According to the full model, on average, for every one-unit increase in

logged *Battle deaths*, we expect a .742 increase in logged odds of premature withdrawal from a coalition operation. These results confirm H3.2a and H3.2b that predicted a higher probability of coalition defection as the intensity of civil conflicts measured by increased battle deaths increases. These results demonstrate that the onset of civil war does not always negatively impact leadership security. Some states such as India and Bangladesh have been experiencing civil conflict for several years (Gleditsch et al. 2002). However, the scale and magnitude of these conflicts are negligible on overall national stability and leadership insecurity compared to leaders facing severe and intensified domestic conflicts. This finding explains why Bangladesh did not defect from the U.S.-led coalition during the first Gulf War in 1991 while fighting a sporadic and low-intensity civil war against Islamic insurgents. A drastic change in the intensity of an ongoing civil war produces higher costs in blood and treasure in addition to a higher political price which negatively affects leaders' hold on power.

The coefficient estimates do not fully explain the relationship between leadership insecurity and coalition defection. Going beyond statistical significance, I perform post-estimation analysis to show the substantive impact of leadership insecurity on coalition defection. As demonstrated in Figure 3.1, the probability of defection increases from 2.8% to 58% when moving from the minimum to maximum value for the logged number of battle deaths while keeping all continuous variables at their means and dichotomous variables at their modes. Moreover, the probability of defection increases from a low of 3% (no coup attempt) to approximately 52% after a failed coup attempt. The probability of defection from the coalition reaches 89% when a coup attempt succeeds. The substantive results are strongly indicative of the prediction that political leaders are highly likely to withdraw from ongoing military coalition operations after both coup attempts and intensified civil wars.

Table 3.2: Early withdrawal from military coalitions, 1950-2001

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Failed coup	4.504***	11.553***	7.126***			11.474***
	(1.152)	(3.295)	(1.983)			(3.586)
Successful coup	3.275***	6.645***		2.590**		6.597***
	(1.237)	(1.397)		(1.127)		(1.518)
Battle Deaths	0.204**	0.741***			0.385**	0.742***
	(0.103)	(0.170)			(0.186)	(0.173)
Democracy		2.333**	0.052	-0.939	0.144	2.376***
		(0.958)	(0.759)	(0.763)	(1.000)	(0.849)
Reg. leader change		-2.76	-1.89	-1.19	-1.49	-11.88***
		(2.330)	(2.294)	(1.896)	(1.938)	(1.138)
Election		0.238	0.191	0.355	0.653	0.394
		(0.928)	(0.787)	(0.479)	(0.480)	(1.847)
Power (CINC)		-0.143	-0.205	-0.111	-0.236	-0.138
		(0.331)	(0.264)	(0.228)	(0.243)	(0.320)
Neutrality		3.748*	2.700**	2.191**	2.268*	3.746*
		(1.920)	(1.164)	(0.994)	(1.356)	(1.927)
Troops		1.961**	1.892**	0.946	1.070	1.954**
		(0.804)	(0.769)	(0.602)	(0.697)	(0.796)
Domestic dispute		7.418***	3.398**	2.734	4.804*	7.374***
		(2.229)	(1.707)	(1.726)	(2.771)	(2.202)
Target distance		0.008	0.127	0.102	0.078	0.011
		(0.167)	(0.080)	(0.149)	(0.174)	(0.177)
Lead state distance		-0.293	-0.324***	-0.291**	-0.253*	-0.291
		(0.188)	(0.122)	(0.124)	(0.135)	(0.185)
Coalition Size		0.083	-0.083	0.026	0.177	0.078
		(0.219)	(0.134)	(0.135)	(0.172)	(0.212)
Combat		2.469	2.698	2.241	2.060	2.516
		(2.356)	(2.234)	(1.496)	(1.316)	(2.133)
Time		47.463***	31.965***	14.790	17.132*	47.214***
		(14.711)	(12.087)	(9.743)	(10.184)	(15.129)
Time^2		-15.05***	-9.66***	-4.37	-5.53*	-14.93***
		(4.251)	(3.419)	(2.729)	(3.048)	(4.365)
Time^3		1.391***	0.857***	0.375	0.510*	1.385***
		(0.377)	(0.299)	(0.237)	(0.277)	(0.387)
Democracy*leader						9.135***
						(2.639)
Democracy*elect.						-0.270
						(2.102)
Constant	-3.97***	-57.16***	-40.67***	-21.30*	-25.01**	-56.9***
	(0.447)	(18.401)	(14.821)	(11.386)	(12.535)	(18.671)
N	393	393	393	393	393	393
Pseudo R^2	0.226	0.613	0.486	0.287	0.348	0.613

Note: two-tailed test, * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.Dependent variable is defection in all models. SEs clustered by coalition are reported in parentheses.

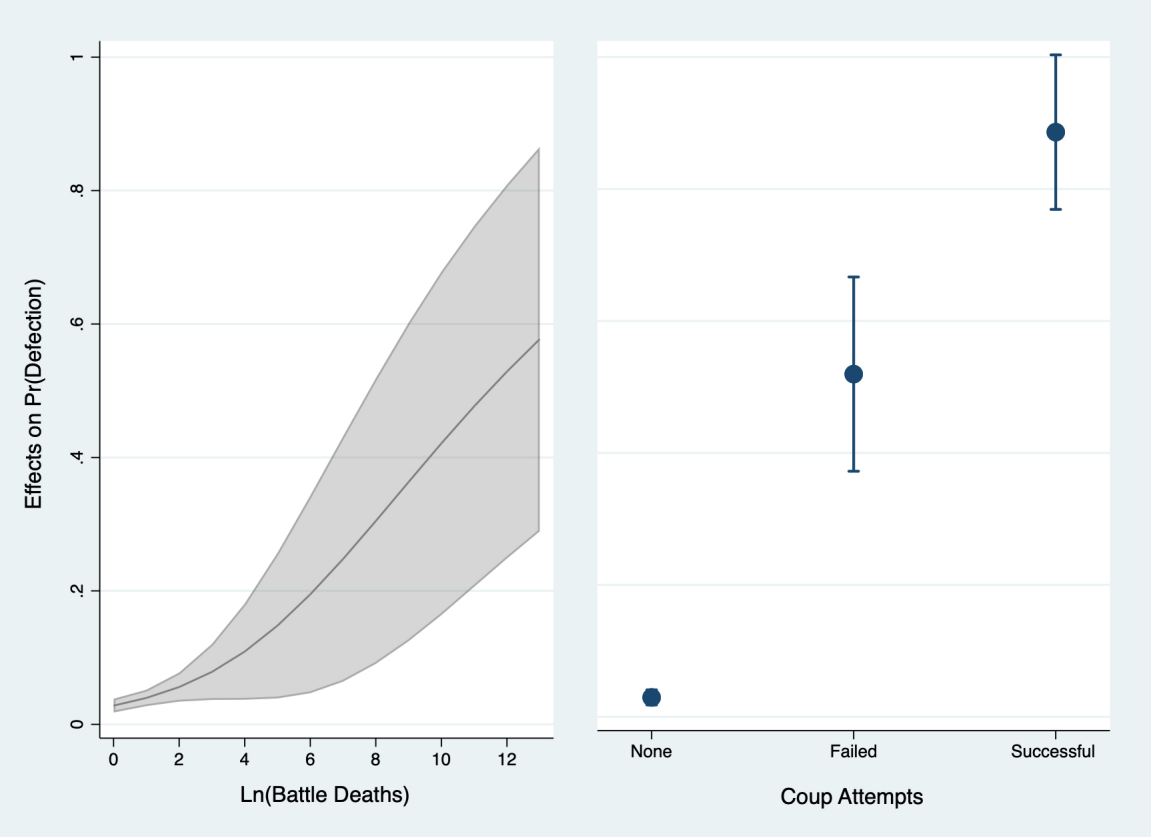

Figure 3.1: Predictive marginal effects of leadership insecurity on defection.

Note:whisker and grey area indicate 95% confidence interval.Predictive margins are computed while holding all continuous variables at their means and dichotomous variables at their modes.

Next moving on to the controls, I find a few interesting findings. The coefficient for regular leadership change is negative across all models reaching statistical significance in model 6. My results do not corroborate previous findings that leadership turnover is positively associated with drastic changes in foreign policy, including coalition defection (Mello 2020; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015). There are two reasons for these contradictory findings. First, Pilster et al. (2015) used a different unit of analysis by focusing on leadership turnover during the entire period a state took part in a coalition operation. My results are based on a country-year unit of analysis that is proper for establishing a more direct cause-effect relationship, especially when the time sequence between events is accounted for. Second, Mello (2020) focused on the Iraq war alone and evaluated democratic leadership change while this study covers a

wider spatiotemporal range.

The coefficient for *Democracy* is positive across all model specifications except model 4 reaching statistical significance in models 2 and 6. Overall democracies are more prone to abandoning their military partners. This does not lend support to some of the previous findings regarding the reliability of democracies as allies and coalition partners (Choi 2012; Leeds 2003). These results corroborate previous scholarship that maintaining institutional restriction makes democracies less effective in making a credible commitment to coalitions (Gartzke and Gleditsch 2004).

The results for the influence of elections are consistent. The coefficient for *Election* is positive across all models but statistically insignificant showing an overall positive impact. However, election negatively influences coalition defection in democracies as shown by the interaction term model 6. Moreover, the impact of leadership turnover in a democratic regime is positive and reaches statistical significance. My results corroborate existing findings regarding elections, leadership turnover, and their interaction with regime type (Böhmelt and Pilster 2014; Mello 2020; Pilster 2011).

The coefficient for states' power measure, *Power(CINC Score)*, has a negative sign across all models, which is indicative of the previous findings that a larger coalition size may reduce effectiveness despite not always inducing defection (Kreps 2011; Weitsman 2011, 2013). As the distance from the target country grows coalition members are unable to maintain their contributions and are more likely to defect as indicated by the positive sign of the coefficient for the distance between coalition participants and the target country. Though the coefficient for distance is positive across all models, it is statistically insignificant.

Contrary to previous findings, the size of troop contribution is positive and statistically insignificant across all models except 4 and 5 (Schmitt 2019; Weitsman 2013). Last, states defect from interventions not sanctioned by international organizations such as UN authorization as the coefficient for *Domestic dispute* is significant and

positive across all models. Relatedly, coalition abandonment is more likely when states are neutral towards the target state as shown by the positive and statistically significant coefficient of neutrality. These findings are in line with previous research that international legitimacy positively influences recruitment and cohesion of the coalition operations (Schmitt 2019; Tago 2007).

3.6 Conclusion

This paper examined the effect of leadership insecurity on the early withdrawal of states from military coalitions. Groupings of states to fight interstate wars or execute other military missions are a prominent feature of international politics. Scholars have explored several aspects of multilateral cooperation among states before, during, and after coalition wars. This paper contributes to the literature by specifically focusing on coalition defection and when leaders become unreliable as coalition partners.

In this paper, I argued and found support that political leadership insecurity explains defection from ongoing military coalition operations. Political leaders are motivated to gain and stay in power. Leaders who face elite unrest and intensified civil wars are constrained in their capabilities to maintain military engagement overseas and are highly likely to defect from coalition operations. This is because domestically vulnerable leaders need to focus inwards and consolidate their hold on power rather than focus on belligerent foreign policies that may have a negligible or peripheral impact on their survivability.

This research has important policy implications because military coalitions are increasingly prevalent fixtures of interstate conflicts and multinational military missions. Over a quarter of all international conflicts since the early 19th century involve coalitions (Morey 2016, 533). Fighting as a coalition is a fundamental policy of NATO, the defense departments of the U.S., the United Kingdom, and many other nations (Weitsman 2011). Very few countries fight on their own, and nearly all conflicts today are conducted by coalitions, alliances, and other similar international security arrangements and organizations. States prefer to fight as coalitions because on average coalitions enhance victory, reduce costs, and confer international legitimacy to the military campaigns (Belinski 1997; Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Morey 2016).

My results show that policymakers need to pay close attention not only to regime types but leadership insecurities. Because recruiting unreliable leaders can threaten

the effectiveness of the coalition mission, it is thus imperative for the coalition leaders to not only be selective in choosing partners but also closely monitor and have prior knowledge of potential partners' domestic politics. Because coalition defection jeopardizes the mission at hand, its negative effects can have prolonged military and political consequences.

Coalition defection has important consequences not only for intra-coalitional politics but also seriously impacts the success and failure of its mission. For instance, the United States and its allies had to find replacement troops after Canadian and Dutch forces withdrew from the two southern provinces of Afghanistan. The Taliban and other insurgents took advantage of the ensuing uncertainty and the spatial and operational vacuum created by the transition process making territorial gains in the region (Brunnstrom 2010). The Dutch and Canadian defections from the NATO-led coalition reversed the progress made in several areas, mainly security and economic sectors, over the years as soon as the Taliban took control of the vast areas in rural Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces. The Taliban used these newly gained territories to regroup and launch their military campaigns in other regions of the country (Jockel 2014)

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to investigate the effects of leadership insecurity borne by coups and civil war intensity on coalition defection. There are a few major areas that warrant further research. First, our understanding is lacking regarding the ways and the strategies states adopt when exiting coalitions. We still do not know and do not have data about partial withdrawal, repositioning of forces, alteration in responsibilities of troops, and whether these changes occur within the framework agreed upon before the coalition warfare. Acknowledging these challenges with the definition and operationalization of various defections, some scholars (e.g., McInnis 2019) call for additional research and data collection, a conclusion that this research paper agrees with and advocates as well.

Second, another area is investigating the relationship between autocratic leaders' tenure and coalition defection. Existing research shows that there is an inverted-U relationship between autocratic leadership and international conflict initiation. Autocratic leaders go through three stages: power struggle in the early periods, consolidation in the middle, and power dissipation in the later periods (Bak 2017; Weeks 2012). It is worth examining when autocratic leaders are more likely to defect from a military coalition throughout their tenure in power. Third, recent scholarship has demonstrated that foreign policy and alliance commitment varies across sub-regime types both in democracies and nondemocracies. The existing datasets about regime types go as far as the early 1900s. Future research can expand the data on regime types that will greatly increase the spatiotemporal domain for the empirical examination of regimes' effect on coalition defections.

Finally, future research and especially data-gathering projects can focus on the type of commitments made before wars and whether states fail or succeed in delivering their coalition commitments. Pointing to the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provision (Leeds et al. 2002) as an example, Morey (2017) suggests in order to determine coalition defection, it is essential to understand what states agreed to commit to the coalition in the first place. Comparing individual states' actual contribution to their initial commitment will reveal whether states defected or not, and to what degree the states honored their commitments.

CHAPTER 4.

When Acquaintances Make Better War Partners than Friends: Alliance Potential and Coalition Defection

4.1 Introduction

Soon after his election victory, Spain's prime minister-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez declared the full withdrawal of Spanish troops supporting the U.S.-led "Coalition of the Willing" presence in Iraq. Despite U.S. opposition, the Spanish contingent pulled out of Iraq within a month following an official declaration of withdrawal (Cooley and Hopkin 2010). Other formal U.S. allies followed suit including Japan and Italy also withdrew their forces and military capabilities before the formal conclusion of the coalition mission in Iraq (McInnis 2019, 117). By contrast, states such as Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bosnia, and Georgia, which lacked formal alliances with the United States, did not withdraw their troops but instead ended their engagements in Iraq in close coordination with the U.S. (Tago 2009, 226-27). The states that did not withdraw experienced significant domestic and international political pressure and incurred high costs in terms of blood and treasure, despite the minimal impact on their national security from the war in Iraq. This raises the question of why do states withdraw from military coalitions?

Existing literature on coalition defection focuses on collective action problems, burden-sharing challenges within alliances and coalitions, national elections and leadership turnover, battlefield circumstances, international legitimacy of coalition mission, and other areas of domestic politics including economic recession and social unrests (Choi 2012; Kober 2002; Leeds 2003; McInnis 2019, 2020; Pilster et al. 2015; Schmitt 2019; Tago 2009; Weisiger 2016a; Wells 2016).

The existing studies made important contributions to our understanding of coali-

tion defection. Though scholars have studied coalition defection, on balance it is still an under-explored area in the literature (Mello and Saideman 2019). I aim to fill this gap by offering a new explanation for coalition defection. I argue and find support for the expectation that states with higher levels of unfulfilled alliance potential with a coalition leader will not defect from an ongoing coalition operation. Because continued engagement in coalition operations serves as a costly signal of reliability and commitment by states unsatisfied with their current level of security and political embeddedness with a coalition leader.

This research makes several contributions to the literature on international military coalitions and has significant policy implications. This is the first study, to the best of my knowledge, that links states' coalition commitments directly to their expectation of developing stronger ties with the coalition leader. Second, this research has important policy implications for coalition formation and effectiveness. Coalition leaders engage in extensive negotiations to recruit countries as coalition partners. The U.S. used financial and political deals to reward partners for their contribution to the U.S.-led coalitions (Henke 2019) I show that coalition leaders do not need to rely on political and financial incentives alone in recruiting coalition partners. States with unfulfilled alliance potential make reliable and effective partners when going to war. Finally, I make an empirical contribution by compiling an original dataset of defection from the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq.

In the section that follows, I review the existing explanations for coalition abandonment. Second, drawing on existing scholarship I present a theoretical framework for coalition defection. Third, the research design describes the methods and data, and the final two sections entail a discussion of the results, conclusion, and future research avenues.

4.2 Existing research on military coalition defection

Before reviewing the research on coalition defection, it is necessary to clarify the difference between alliance and coalition because the two terms have been used interchangeably (Bensahel 1999; McInnis 2019; Morey 2016; Weitsman 2010). First, alliances are formal and institutionalized types of interstate security arrangements; coalitions are transitory, less formal, and institutionalized, and often created for specific purposes (Belinski 1997; Bensahel 1999; Kober 2002; McInnis 2020). Second, alliances are formed prior to the outset of conflicts while coalitions are formed as ad hoc arrangements in response to a crisis that is impending or has already begun (McInnis 2020; Morey 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017; Weitsman 1997). Consistent with these distinctions, I define a coalition as an ad hoc transitory grouping of states that will dissolve after the completion of a specific multinational military mission. Therefore, the use of the term "coalition" in this research closely mirrors definitions offered by Morey (2016), McInnis (2020), and Weitsman (1997; 2013).

4.2.1 What is coalition defection

Most studies focus on the total or near-complete withdrawal of military forces and capabilities from an ongoing coalition operation to define coalition defections (Pilster et al. 2015; Tago 2009; Weisiger 2016a). For instance, coalition defection can be the complete military withdrawal of troops against the wishes of coalition partners (Weisiger 2016a, 754) or official announcements of withdrawal irrespective of troop movements (Mello 2020). This binary conceptualization of defection (i.e., states are either in or out) obfuscates the many ways by which states leave a coalition operation (McInnis 2019). Though scholars acknowledge variation in defection, most focus on the full or near-complete withdrawal of military forces and capabilities (Massie 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017; Pilster et al. 2015; Tago 2009).

For this research, I define defection to take place when a state officially declares

to withdraw from a military coalition before the coalition leader formally concludes the coalition operation or declares a drastic change in the direction of the coalition mission. For instance, after winning the general elections on March 14, 2004, the new Spanish prime minister, José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero, announced that all Spanish troops would leave Iraq as soon as possible despite requests from the U.S. President, George W. Bush, that Zapatero back off his campaign pledge (McInnis 2019; Milbank 2004). The withdrawal of Spanish forces started immediately after Zapatero's government took office on April 18, 2004, and was completed by May 2004 (Xuclà 2022). Another example is France's announcement of withdrawing all of its forces from the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan in 2012, two years prior to the official end of the ISAF mission scheduled for 2014 (Erlanger and Rubin 2012; Pilster et al. 2015). My conceptualization merges several definitions that emphasize unilateral abrogation of military operations and responsibilities resulting in the withdrawal of military forces and capabilities at the expense of partners before the official conclusion of the coalition mission (Kober 2002; McInnis 2019; Mello 2020; Weisiger 2016a).

4.2.2 Existing research on causes of coalition abandonment

While there is bourgeoning literature exploring the formation, structure, and effectiveness of international military coalitions (Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Kreps 2011; Morey 2016, 2020; Pilster 2011; Tago 2007, 2014; Weitsman 2010), scholarship exploring conditions under which coalition defection occurs is relatively limited.

One of the earliest works on defection showed that a country's (self-perceived) power, the structure of the international system (i.e., multi-polarity and bipolarity), coalition cohesion, and national leaders' perceptions of coalition's success explained defection (Kober 2002, 186). The subsequent research into coalition defection has proceeded along two main lines. One group of studies locates diminishing state com-

mitments and defections in the dynamics of coalition warfare, the circumstances of the battlefield, and the strategic location and environment of the coalition deployment (Weisiger 2016a; Wells 2016; Wolford 2014a, 2015). Coalition abandonment is more likely when states fight away from partners on separate fronts and when the probability of victory trends downhill (Weisiger 2016a). Similarly, coalition defection occurs when casualties start increasing from a coalition war that is not going well or has continued for a long time (Wells 2016).

A second line of research explores the influence of state-level characteristics and domestic politics of coalition members and their interaction with international factors. Cantir's analysis of defections from the "Coalition of the Willing" in Iraq 2003-2009 reveals that factors grounded in domestic politics account for withdrawal decisions. Cantir maintains that differences in institutional decision-making mechanisms regarding military interventions abroad, domestic security challenges, and lack of consensus among policymakers contributed to unilateral military withdrawals from Iraq (Cantir 2011).

Public support for continued engagement in coalition operations erodes as costs of foreign military campaigns increase, especially prolonged and inconclusive military campaigns (Kober 2002; Massie 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017; Wells 2016). Differences in perceptions about alliance value and threats to national interest among governments, opposition parties, and the public contributed to withdrawal decisions from U.S.-led interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq by Australia, Italy, and Netherlands (Davidson 2011). These differences give rise to three causal paths. First, defection occurred when the public and opposition favored it. Second, the public's demands for withdrawal materialized absent bipartisan consensus, and when policymakers believed national interests were not threatened, the negative repercussions of defection were minimal, and that coalition operation would not succeed. Third, withdrawal did not occur when there was a bipartisan consensus that continued engagement

was necessary to impede threats to national interests and to uphold alliances with coalition leaders. In a similar vein, Massie (2016) shows that an interplay between elite consensus, public opinion, electoral calculations, and alliance pressure accounted for the withdrawal of Canadian and Dutch troops from the U.S.-led intervention in Afghanistan.

Multiple studies show that as the number of casualties and material costs from international campaigns increase, support for future military interventions conducted alone or as part of a military coalition declines. This directly motivates state leaders to leave coalitions to curtail the domestic opposition from the public and elites. This effect is present across all regime types though more readily observed in democracies through voting choices in elections and public opinion surveys (Aldrich et al. 2006; Boettcher 2004; Fordham 2016; Geys 2010).

Several studies emphasize regime types, variation in institutional constraints, and leadership turnover as factors motivating coalition defection (McInnis 2019; Pilster et al. 2015). Previous findings regarding the impact of regime type and domestic politics on coalition defection are inconclusive. Several scholars consider democracies to be unreliable coalition partners. For example, Tago (2009) showed that numerous factors in democracies (e.g., election cycles, leadership turnover, the number of veto players, and constitutional designs) contributed to cases of defection from Iraq between 2003 to 2006. Moreover, democracies are considered less dependable partners due to their structural weaknesses (i.e., the disproportionate influence of interest groups on foreign policy decisions, public accountability of leaders, and the cyclical turnover of leaders and governments). The institutional restrictions make democracies less effective in making credible commitments to coalitions (Gartzke and Gleditsch 2004)[1]. Moreover, there is a rich debate within the alliance literature which

[1]coalition findings contradict work in the alliance literature that finds democracies honor their alliance commitments more than nondemocracies and major powers. This is attributed to the ability of nondemocratic states to renegade on their international commitments with lower audience costs compared to their democratic counterparts (Choi 2012; Leeds 2003)

explores the reliability of democracies and other regime types. However, since these studies focus on variation of commitment across regime types within alliances, they are of limited use in evaluating wartime coalition defection (Mello 2020).

Scholarship has advanced from a mere focus on regime-type differences to when leaders become unreliable coalition partners. New leaders have dissimilar preferences, evaluate information about military interventions differently, and are unwilling to get entrapped in the interventionist policies of their predecessors (Pilster et al. 2015). Pilster and colleagues show that early withdrawal from international military coalitions increases during election cycles in democracies more than in nondemocracies. Their analysis reveals strong support for the earlier findings that while leadership turnovers matter across all regimes (e.g., Downs 1994), the effect is especially more salient in democracies for a drastic change in foreign policy, including withdrawal from wartime coalition.

Leadership changes, when accompanied by leftist partisanship and in the absence of imminent elections as well as a rise in coalition casualties, lead to coalition defection even by leaders who originally joined the coalition in the first place (Mello 2020). In a similar vein, Pelletier and Massie (2017) show that Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, due to his left-leaning political affiliation, withdrew the Canadian air force from airstrikes against the Islamic State while at the same time increasing the number of Canadian troops training Iraqi security forces. This shift in policy is indicative of Trudeau's support for international norms favoring cooperation and good citizenship rather than honoring alliance commitments involving belligerent interventions. Moreover, when operational and political risks of coalition operations are high, state leaders find it harder to marshal domestic support for continued participation. Therefore, coalition members either completely withdraw or seek less risky ways to stay engaged in coalition operations (McInnis 2019, 2020).

Prior research on coalition defection enhances our understanding because they

examine important state-level characteristics, national politics, international factors, and the interplay between them. Coalition leaders often invoke alliance obligations or rely on side payments, policy concessions, and other political incentives to recruit wartime partners (Henke 2019; Henriksen and Ringsmose 2012; Jakobsen et al. 2018). However, allies and friends are not always reliable war partners (von Hlatky 2013). Our understanding is lacking about why states with minimal security and material interests in the outcome of the coalition warfare exceed expectations by not prematurely exiting a coalition operation. While a few existing studies link participation and contribution to coalitions with states' intention for an improved relationship with coalition leaders (e.g., Davidson 2011; Gannon and Kent 2020; Henke 2019; Ringsmose and Saxi 2018), no prior study has directly explored continued engagement of states in a coalition to their desire for strengthening or establishing security alliances with coalition leaders. Therefore, to fill this gap in the literature, I offer a novel theoretical argument supported by empirical evidence showing that states' decision not to defect from a coalition operation can serve as a costly signal of reliability and a desire for an improved security partnership with coalition leaders.

4.3 A theory of alliance potential and coalition defection

States take part in coalitions for a multitude of reasons; some join because their security is directly threatened by the target state while others advance objectives unrelated to a coalition mission. Often states that are minimally affected by the outcome of the coalition war contribute to the coalition not only to fulfill their alliance obligations but also to demonstrate that they are not free-riding or are pursuing objectives unrelated to the coalition mission (Gannon and Kent 2020; Jakobsen et al. 2018; Schmitt 2019; Tago 2007). However, the literature is not clear why some states, despite lacking alliance obligations, join a coalition and make contributions that exceed expectations. Their contribution to the coalition war effort is not readily linked

to the explicit or implicit goals of the coalition. For example, several states such as Armenia, El Salvador, the Republic of Georgia, and Mongolia made costly contributions to the Iraq War despite no direct threats to their national security. What explains this pattern of behavior among states? I propose that states not content with their current security ties with a coalition leader are more dependable coalition partners that will make significant contributions to a coalition effort and for longer periods. Such continued costly contributions serve as a signal of reliability, commitment, and a desire for a stronger relationship with coalition leaders that is not yet realized despite greater alignment in their foreign policies. Therefore, states that wish to enhance the strength of their relationship with a coalition leader will not defect from a coalition mission compared to states that already have strong and established ties with a coalition leader. This argument is predicated based on the following explanations.

First, sustained engagement and nondefecting from a coalition operation can be conceptualized as a case of overcontribution. States incur costs like military expenditure and casualties and endure international and domestic political pressures for their participation in a coalition operation. For instance, leaders in Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, and Canada faced persistent domestic pressures for their participation in both the Iraq War and ISAF operations in Afghanistan (Massie 2016; McInnis 2019; Pelletier and Massie 2017). States that do not leave coalition operations endure increasing costs as coalition size shrinks (McInnis 2019). Thus, by not defecting states contribute beyond expectations to the coalition's war efforts.

Second, contributions to coalition operations vary across states because not all coalition members are equally motivated nor have similar objectives despite their unison in working towards achieving the central goal of the coalition (Belinski 1997). None of the existing theories of alliance and coalition contribution sufficiently explain why states contribute or over-contribute to coalition operations. According to the

theories grounded in the collective action hypothesis (Olson and Zeckhauser 1966), junior partners could free-ride at the expense of dominant states' contribution while enjoying the benefits from the coalition outcome (Schmitt 2019; Weitsman 2013). Thus, smaller states will defect quickly compared to pivotal states and those making larger contributions. This framework does not account for the voluntary continued engagement and contributions exceeding the expectation of some coalition members by way of not defecting. Contribution levels can be a function of domestic politics such as mounting costs, election cycles, leadership turnover, economic and security challenges (Pilster et al. 2015; Tago 2009, 2014; Wells 2016) or driven by alliance dependence dynamics such as fears of abandonment or entrapment (Snyder 1984). The levels of threat can determine a state's coalition contribution. States adjust contributions in proportion to their perception of threat levels by the third country (Walt 1987). However, these explanations fail to adequately explicate the continued engagement of a coalition member in a war that is minimally affecting its national security.

Third, military coalitions are different from alliances in their form and membership. The latter is a public good where members enjoy the benefits of alliances even if they fail to contribute adequately (Olson and Zeckhauser 1966). Since not all coalition members are allies (Morey 2016), there is more opportunity for states to gain private-goods (Henke 2017). Cooperative security agreements can be reached in exchange for bilateral private goods such as improved security alliances and closer economic and diplomatic ties (Henke 2019; Long 2003). States that have a higher alignment in their foreign policy but lack strong ties with a coalition leader will not withdraw prematurely. This signals their reliability and commitment to the coalition leader's war efforts. Because past research shows that states honoring their alliance commitments and obligations are perceived as more reliable partners (Gibler 2008). Therefore, the private good that states gain from their non-defection, a costly contri-

bution, is an improved and more entrenched strategic and security relationship with the coalition leader.

Fourth, the other important part of my argument is that the coalition leader should perceive the lack of defection as a costly contribution that benefits the lead state in the coalition. A signal can be perceived as a costly contribution by the coalition leader when the contribution outweighs the potential private goods the contributing state will receive from joining the collective war effort (Davidson 2011; Tago 2007). Moreover, states wishing for a stronger relationship with coalition leaders in return for their costly contribution will make their intentions known either privately or in public. Georgia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Azerbaijan, Mongolia, Norway, and others that signed up for the U.S.-led coalitions in Iraq and Afghanistan paid a high price in terms of blood and treasure, all of whom have expressed a desire for closer security and diplomatic ties with the United States (Jakobsen et al. 2018; Maskaliūnaitė 2014).

As indicated earlier both the coalition leader and the contributing state must acknowledge the continued engagement and non-defection benefit the coalition leader's goals. The prime minister of Georgia publicly declared that his country fought "alongside America and its NATO allies in hotspots like Iraq and Afghanistan" in order to reach a "formal strategic partnership with the United States" in addition to desiring closer economic and trade cooperation. The Republic of Georgia did not defect from the "Coalition of the Willing" in Iraq despite domestic and regional pressures. Most of the Georgian forces pulled out of Iraq when Russia attacked Georgia in 2008 (Smolnik 2020, 21-22). The U.S. has acknowledged the costly contributions made by states that are minimally affected by the outcome of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, President George W. Bush thanked Georgia, Mongolia, and Poland for their contribution to the Iraq War despite facing domestic political challenges for their continued support of the Iraq War (Beehner 2007; The White House 2006).

Some states, especially small states lacking greater military power, contribute to coalition interventions in pursuit of prestige and soft power as a means of access to political and policy gains (Henriksen and Ringsmose 2012). A comparative case study of Danish and Norwegian decisions to provide military support to U.S.-led warfare in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya showed that both states made costly military contributions in order to increase their standing and prestige with the United States, a form of soft power that states can convert to influence and access in attracting material, political, and security gains (Jakobsen, Ringsmose, and Saxi 2018). Therefore, a contribution is not made by those that already enjoy strong relationships with the coalition leader (Ringsmose 2010; Wolford 2014a). Rather, states that lack stronger ties with the pivotal state in the coalition will over-contribute in hopes of building stronger ties in the future (Gannon and Kent 2020).

Early withdrawal from a coalition leads to political and military challenges for the coalition leader. The operational vacuum created by departing forces must be filled by coalition leaders or other members often through deploying additional troops. The disruption in military operations and the additional costs incurred by a coalition leader can negatively affect the overall effectiveness and outcome of the coalition operation (Massie 2016; McInnis 2019, 2020; Mello 2020; Weisiger 2016a; Weitsman 2011). The United States and the United Kingdom worked hard behind the scenes trying to convince Canada, France, and the Dutch among others not to pull their troops out of Afghanistan. Similarly, the U.S. tried unsuccessfully to avoid the early withdrawal of troops by Italy, Spain, Denmark, and Australia from the Iraq War (McInnis 2019).

States that already have more embedded and stronger security alliances with a coalition leader may not need to prove their reliability and commitment to the war aims of the coalition leader, because they are satisfied with their current depth of security partnership. However, states that have similar security interests and greater

foreign policy alignment with a coalition leader will engage in costly behaviors to improve their relationship with coalition leaders. Therefore, states unsatisfied with their current levels and depth of security alliance and overall political relationship with a coalition leader will not defect from the coalition warfare. Because by not defecting a state sends a costly signal to the coalition leader about its reliability and commitment to the coalition leader's foreign policy. The costly signal, especially when acknowledged by the coalition leader, serves as an effective tool to gain favor with the state leading the coalition in hopes of improving and establishing a deeper and more integrated military and political relationship in the future. The above discussion leads to the following theoretical expectation:

H4.1: A state with a higher unrealized alliance potential with a coalition leader is less likely to prematurely withdraw from an ongoing coalition operation compared to a state with lower levels of unfulfilled alliance potential.

4.4 Data and methods

I test my argument by examining coalition defection from the U.S.-led "Coalition of the Willing" that was formed before the invasion of Iraq in 2003 (Newnham 2008) for several reasons. First, 'coalitions of the willing' are the prominent fixtures of the post-WWII security arrangements. Looking to the future, the trend toward greater reliance on coalitions resembling U.S.-multinational forces in Iraq will likely continue, which adds to the significance of this study and its generalizability. Second, I depart from the previous studies on alliances, developed before the end of the Cold War, by explaining security cooperation between states in a mostly unipolar international system. Past research and its conclusions relied heavily on samples of countries skewed in favor of cases from the early 19th to 20th centuries dominated by multi-polar and bipolar international systems. The Iraq War is a prime example of the increased U.S.-led Post-Cold War coalitions. It involved numerous intra-coalition contentions and cases of variegated defections about which we know relatively little (McInnis 2019).

Third, I rely on a newly compiled dataset for this research. I collected data on cases of defection from the U.S.-led Coalition in Iraq from 2003 to 2009. I relied on primary and secondary sources to determine when states declared to unilaterally withdraw from the Iraq War. I consulted historical works, official government statements and policy announcements, LexisNexis, Google News, and other relevant sources for the data collection process. I use this dataset for the dependent variable (defection) and two independent variables namely the number of troops and casualties. This is the empirical contribution of my dissertation to the literature on early withdrawal from multinational military missions. Previous data on defection from Iraq are limited spatiotemporally. For instance, some scholars have focused on either only withdrawal of democracies until 2006 or the declaration of withdrawal by democracies (Mello 2020; Tago 2009).

There are a few limitations to empirically testing my argument. First, there is a

self-selection bias. The coalition members are not a random sample of states. Rather, they self-select into the U.S.-led coalition either voluntarily or indirectly compelled due to their alliance obligations. However, the probability of selection bias is low. Because states are unlikely to partner with countries that are likely to withdraw. Moreover, all states have some incentives to join coalitions. I include several control variables to help capture alternative explanations. Second, though I include several control variables, the likelihood of variation in the outcome explained by unobserved factors cannot be fully mitigated. Third, while the U.S.-led multinational forces in the Iraq War present a unique opportunity to test my argument, the generalizability of my results could potentially be called into question due to the Eurocentricity of coalition members and the skewness of the sample mostly towards democratic countries. While Western democracies formed a plurality, the coalition included states from Asia, Latin America, and Oceania.

4.4.1 Outcome variable

The dependent variable is *Defection*, which is a binary variable coded 1 when states declare an early withdrawal of forces from the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq. The temporal domain ranges from May 2003 to December 31, 2008, and country-month is the unit of analysis. I chose this cut-off date for two reasons. First, the United Nations did not extend the coalition mandate beyond December 2008. Second, the U.S. officially declared the end of the coalition combat mission and subsequent withdrawal in June 2009. Based on the Status of Force Agreement (SOFA) signed between the U.S. and Iraq in 2008, all coalition forces were to cease their combat mission and leave major cities by June 2009 and complete the withdrawal process by end of 2011 (Cantir 2011; Martinez 2009). Therefore, I consider a state to have defected when it declared unilaterally to fully withdraw its troops before December 2008, which is six months before the coalition leader, the United States officially concluded its military

mission in Iraq. Previous research used a similar time threshold for withdrawal to be considered as a case of defection (Mello 2020).

To estimate the data, I use a logistic regression model because the outcome variable is coded dichotomously with standard errors clustered on individual coalition members to capture possible-intragroup error correlations (Lenth and Dobler 2005; Long 1997). I also include time polynomials in the models to control for potential temporal dependence (Beck, Katz, and Tucker 1998). As a secondary tool of analysis, I use the Cox-proportional hazard model to estimate how long it takes a coalition partner to abandon its partners. I expect states with lower unfulfilled alliance potential to defect sooner while the duration of states with higher unrealized alliance potential until defection should be longer.

4.4.2 Explanatory variable

The main independent variable is *Alliance Potential* which is a latent measure of a state's "unrealized alliance potential" with the U.S. conceptualized by Gannon and Kent (2020). Following Gannon and Kent (2020), I operationalize the primary explanatory variable by subtracting Benson and Clinton's (2016) measure of alliance depth from each state's voting similarity with the U.S. in the United Nations General Assembly (Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten 2017). Both measures are first normalized before subtraction. Gannon and Kent (2020) developed this measure of alliance potential to investigate why states overcontributed to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

Benson and Clinton (2016) created a continuous composite measure of alliance depth by doing a factorial analysis of Alliance Treaty and Provisions Project (ATOP) data. The alliance depth measures the extent to which an alliance requires: peacetime military contact, coordination of a common defense policy, integrated military command, military aid, military basing, stipulations about specific contributions, the

creation of stand-alone organizations, economic aid, or secret provisions. The final number is a composite measure of an alliance's overall value. Therefore, the final value of the main independent variable is the difference between a country's UN voting similarity with the U.S. and the depth of its current alliance with the U.S..

4.4.3 Controls

I include several controls to account for alternative factors based on existing explanations for coalition contribution and defection as well as variables that could account for the main independent variable. The inclusion of controls will avoid any spurious relationship and guard against any potential backdoor causal paths (Cunningham 2021). Prewar military cooperation and alliances enhance states' chances of working together as effective coalition partners (Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Weitsman 2013). The existence of formal alliance commitments should disincentivize coalition abandonment. Thus, using Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions dataset (Leeds et al. 2002), I include *US Ally* as a dichotomous measure coded 1 if there is a formal alliance between the U.S. and the coalition member and zero otherwise. Furthermore, states sharing similar foreign policy as the U.S. should be less likely to defect. Thus, using data from Baily et al. (2017) I include *UNGA Vote (% US agreement)*, which is Lijpharts' (1963) index of agreement between a state and the U.S. in the United Nations General Assembly votes. This equals 1 if a state always agrees with the U.S. and 0 if it always votes the other way. If one state votes yes and the other abstains, the vote is coded as .5.

The existing studies present conflicting findings about the reliability of democracies as wartime partners. For example, Tago (2009) and Mello (2020) argue that democracies are less reliable because democratic leaders adjust their security based on electoral incentives and public accountability among other factors. On the other hand, scholars show that democracies are more dependable coalition partners and are

less likely to defect from coalition warfare. This is attributed to the multiple veto players and institutionalized decision policymaking processes in democracies (Choi 2012; Pilster et al. 2015). Moreover, it is more likely that states sharing the same regime type as the U.S. will already have realized their alliance potential (Simon and Gartzke 1996). To account for these findings, I include a control for *Democracy,* which measures if a participant country is a democracy. I code this variable 1 if the country's Polity IV average annual democracy score is + 6 and above and zero otherwise (Marshall et al. 2009).

It is likely that a recent exit by a member influences another state's defection decision. To account for the contagious effects, I include *Recent Defection.* This is the cumulative count of earlier premature withdrawals. The variables *Troops* and *Troops Ratio* are two measures of states' contribution of military troops to the Iraq War. I use my original dataset for the number of monthly deployed troops for each state. For the troop ratio, I divided the monthly deployment contingent by the total armed forces of that country (Gannon and Kent 2020). I expect states with a higher number of troops are less likely to defect while junior partners with smaller contingents withdraw earlier (Olson and Zeckhauser 1966).

Increased number of battle-related casualties positively correlates with coalition abandonment and duration of interstate conflicts (Gartner and Segura 1998; Bueno De Mesquita et al. 1992; Weisiger 2016a; Wells 2016). To account for the casualty aversion effect, I include *Casualty*, which captures the number of battle deaths for a country in a given month. I use my newly compiled data for this variable. I expect a positive association between increased combat deaths and defection.

Geographical distance influences states' ability to project power, initiate, and maintain military operations abroad (Mearsheimer 2001; Russett and Oneal 2001). Thus, I control the distance between a coalition participant and the target country. This also further accounts for whether a coalition partner is affected by instability in

the target state. Data for *Distance (log miles)* come from Weidman et al. (2010).

Prior studies show that militarily and economically weaker states are less likely to fulfill their alliance commitments (Leeds 2003). It is reasonable to expect that weaker states are more likely to abandon coalition compared to stronger ones. Moreover, powerful states are better able to use military force abroad and less concerned about adverse consequences of crisis initiation. As such, the variable *Power (CINC)* is included to control for each state's material capabilities each year measured by Composite Indexes of National Capabilities (CINC) score (Singer et al. 1972).

Leadership turnover and national elections are positively associated with changes in foreign policy including withdrawal from coalitions and alliances (Bennett 1997; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015; Tago 2009). Moreover, research demonstrates that the political ideologies of national leaders influence their belligerent foreign policies with left-leaning politicians being less supportive of the U.S.-led interventions (Mello 2020; Schuster and Maier 2006). To account for these alternative explanations, I include three controls. The *National Election* controls whether a state has national-level elections in a month during its participation in the coalition. Following Tago (2009) I include an alternative coding for national elections to account for the strategic position-taking by incumbent leaders and their challengers. Debates regarding foreign policy are salient in the months prior to the election month when candidates rule out new policies. To measure these effects on defection from the Iraq War, I include *Pre-Election Period*. It is coded 0.1, 0.5, and 1 for two, one, and the month of elections, respectively. *Leader Pol. Orientation* is an ordinal measure of a national leader's political orientation. It is coded from 1 to 3 for Right, Center, and Left, respectively. Data for these three variables come from the Database of Political Institutions (Cruz, Keefer, and Scartascini 2021). *Leadership Change* dichotomously coded controls for leadership turnover during the months a state participated in the Iraq War. Data for this variable come from the Archiogos dataset on political leaders (Goemans,

Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009).

Coalition leaders sometimes rely on side payments including economic and political incentives to recruit war partners (Henke 2019; Newnham 2008; Russett 1971). To test if foreign aid is an effective tool for maintaining coalition cohesion, *US Aid* measures the total economic and military aid provided by the United States (logged millions of constant U.S. dollars) to the Iraq War coalition participants on annual basis. Data for this variable come from U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants, an annual report issued by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID 2019). The logged GDP per capita controls for a state's ability to contribute and maintain a military mission abroad (Bank 2020). Table 4.1 provides summary statistics of all variables included in this research.

Table 4.1: Summary of Descriptive Statistics

	N	**Mean**	**SD**	**Min**	**Max**
Defection	1764	0.02	0.15	0	1
Alliance Potential	1742	0.26	0.29	-.65	.73
US Ally	1764	0.61	0.49	0	1
UN-GA Vote (% US agreement)	1742	0.29	0.10	.06	.50
Democracy	1764	0.86	0.35	0	1
Recent Defections	1764	11.39	7.48	0	40
Troops Ratio (contribution/total)	1742	0.01	0.02	.0002	.22
Troops(total/month)	1764	851.52	2311.39	7	46000
Casualty	1764	0.18	1.08	0	27
Distance (log miles)	1764	8.12	0.74	6.66	9.67
Power(CINC Scores)	1742	0.01	0.01	.0002	.05
National Election	1764	0.02	0.15	0	1
Pre-Election Period	1764	0.03	0.16	0	1
Leader Change	1764	0.03	0.16	0	1
Leader Pol.Orientation	1764	1.73	0.87	1	3
GDP per capita(log)	1764	8.86	1.22	6.30	10.97
US Aid(log constant US dollars)	1761	15.2	5.33	0	22.6
Time	1764	29.24	19.03	1	73
Time^2	1764	1216.97	1261.48	1	5329
Time^3	1764	58725.40	78840.76	1	389017

4.5 Results

Table 4.2 presents the results of the logistic regression and Cox proportional hazards models. The table entries are coefficients in all models. In lieu of hazard ratios, I report regression coefficients for the duration analysis in models 4 – 6, which are the expected log of the relative hazard for defection. Because, unlike hazard ratios, coefficients readily indicate the direction of effect due to the positive or negative signs. The negative coefficients are associated with the reduced probability that a coalition partner withdraws and thus increased duration until such withdrawal.

I rely on three different model specifications to evaluate the data. In the first model, I regress the main explanatory variable on coalition defection to gauge the effect of alliance potential in isolation from other factors. Model 2 is the full model specification containing all control variables. In model 3, I exclude variables pertinent to battlefield circumstances. My expectation is that states with unrealized potential will continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to the war efforts of the U.S. regardless of the security situation in Iraq. This reinforces my argument and its generalizability that states lacking strong security partnerships with the U.S. will exhibit similar costly behavior in different regions when the U.S. spearheads a military campaign. I repeat the same model specification for the duration analysis in models 4 through 6.

The empirical results irrespective of model specification support the main expectation. States scoring higher in their unfulfilled alliance potential with the United States are less likely to defect compared to those with lower values. The coefficient for the main explanatory variable has a negative sign as expected and reaches statistical significance across all models except 5. According to the logistic model, on average for every one-unit increase in the unrealized alliance potential, we expect approximately an 8.37 decrease in the log-odds of defection holding all other variables constant. Thus, I find support for the main expectation that higher unrealized

alliance potential is correlated to a lower probability of defection. We observe similar results from the duration analysis. According to model 5, on average, there is a 5.48 unit decrease in the expected log of the relative hazard of withdrawal for each unit increase in unrealized alliance potential, holding all other variables constant. In other words, on average, the probability of defection decreases by approximately 77% for each unit increase in the unrealized alliance potential.

However, the coefficient estimates do not fully explain the relationship between unrealized alliance potential and coalition defection. Going beyond statistical significance, I perform post-estimation analysis to show the substantive impact of alliance potential. I calculated the predictive margins for the main independent variable based on model 2, which includes controls for a variety of measures common to defection models. As demonstrated in figure 4.1, the probability of defection increases to 78% from a low of .2% when the value of *Alliance Potential* goes down from 1 (fully unrealized) to zero (fully realized). These results provide strong empirical support for the two cases of Spain and the Republic of Georgia discussed in the theory section. The average *Alliance Potential* scores for Georgia and Spain are .91 and .61, respectively. This demonstrates that despite greater alignment in their foreign policies and security interests, the full potential for a security partnership between Georgia and the U.S. is not realized. This explains why the Republic of Georgia withdrew most of its forces from Iraq after the Russo-Georgia War of 2008. By contrast, Spain with nearly half of its alliance potential realized withdrew earlier despite pressures from the U.S. to reconsider. These examples further show that states wanting to establish or enhance existing security ties with the U.S. need to do more to demonstrate their reliability via costly military contribution to a conflict that has minimal or no direct security impact on their national security and territorial integrity.

I continue evaluating the substantive effects of unfulfilled alliance potential by performing post-estimation analysis of the duration models. Figure 4.2 graphs the

predicted survival curves for *Alliance Potentia*l based on model 5. The x-axis in the figure is time measured in 6-month intervals while the y-axis shows the proportion not yet abandoning coalition partners. All unlisted covariates are held at their means (continuous) and modes (dichotomous). The predicted survival pattern for states with unrealized alliance potential equal or above .95 indicated by the green solid line remains above 90% for the first 60 months of coalition engagement in Iraq. The second line (dotted orange line) denotes states with half their alliance potential with the U.S. realized. We observe that approximately 20% of states with a score of .5 on alliance potential withdrew early twelve months after the coalition mission. The share of states staying in coalition drops by approximately 95% when three-quarters of their alliance potential realized is realized. These results further substantiate my main argument that the more the alliance potential with the U.S. is realized the more coalition members are likely to defect. These results demonstrate that states unsatisfied with their current level of alliance and security ties with the coalition leader are less likely to defect. Because their non-defection serves as a costly signal of reliability and commitment to the coalition leader's war efforts. Overall, these results provide strong support for the hypothesis presented in the paper.

Regarding the control variable, we observe results that are generally consistent with previous work and my theoretical expectations. The existence of a formal alliance between coalition partners and the US reduces early withdrawal as expected. The coefficient for *US Ally* reaches statistical significance in models 2 and 6 while its sign is negative across all model specifications as hypothesized. This result concurs with past research that the existence of formal alliances should decrease coalition abandonment (Cranmer and Menninga 2018; Weitsman 2013). Though the coefficient for the *UNGA Vote (% US agreement)* does not reach statistical significance, its negative sign across all models supports previous findings regarding the positive association between foreign policy alignment and votes in the United Nations. My

findings regarding regime type are supportive of scholars that believe democracies are less dependable wartime partners(e.g., Mello 2020; Tago 2009). The measure capturing regime type, *Democracy,* is positive and statistically significant across 4 of the 5 model specifications. My results corroborate the argument that greater regime similarity will have led to higher levels of alliance potential realization (Simon and Gartzke 1996).

Moving on to factors accounting for operational circumstances on the ground in Iraq, I find a few interesting findings. In line with expectations, we observe the presence of a domino effect. The coefficient for *Recent Defection* has a positive sign and is statistically significant across all models, which confirms past findings (Weisiger 2016a). Defection has a contagious effect; when a state leaves prematurely, other coalition partners are more likely to follow. For instance, shortly after Spain declared to withdraw from Iraq, Honduras and the Dominican Republic announced they would follow the lead of Spain and withdraw their contingents from Iraq despite urges from the U.S. President and Secretary of Defense to consider extending their missions (Bash and CNN 2004; McInnis 2020). The coefficients *Troops* is positive and statistically significant while *Troops Ratio* is statistically insignificant and has a positive sign. As hypothesized countries with higher numbers of troops stayed longer in the coalition while junior partners with smaller contingents withdrew earlier (Olson and Zeckhauser 1966).

I find support for the casualty aversion argument. The coefficient for *Casuality* is positive and statistically significant. Consistent with expectation total battled-related deaths have a positive impact on withdrawal from the coalition. Thus, I find support for the past findings on the effects of battle deaths and ending international conflict (Gartner and Segura 1998; Bueno De Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller 1992; Weisiger 2016a,b; Wells 2016). The measure capturing geographical distance between Iraq and coalition participants is negative and statistically significant in 3 out of 4

Table 4.2: US-led Coalition of the Willing in Iraq, 2003-2008

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Alliance Potential	-0.772*	-8.368***	-4.845*	-0.810	-5.484**	-4.735**
	(0.408)	(3.249)	(2.853)	(0.599)	(2.752)	(2.349)
US Ally		-4.308*	-2.654		-2.164	-2.574*
		(2.223)	(1.654)		(1.929)	(1.525)
UNGA Vote		-1.885	-3.630		-1.664	-3.384
		(3.862)	(4.755)		(4.038)	(4.510)
Democracy		3.328**	2.002*		2.361	1.909*
		(1.674)	(1.077)		(1.523)	(1.072)
Recent Defections		0.329***			0.272***	
		(0.059)			(0.047)	
Troops Ratio		7.707			6.623	
		(15.821)			(12.482)	
Troops		-0.001***			-0.001***	
		(0.000)			(0.000)	
Casualty		0.287***			0.370**	
		(0.087)			(0.174)	
Distance		-1.770**	-0.983		-1.500*	-1.001*
		(0.891)	(0.643)		(0.788)	(0.560)
Power (CINC)		28.253	-21.574		32.986	-29.483
		(32.700)	(48.551)		(37.514)	(38.003)
National Election		-2.736	-2.628		-1.539	-1.885
		(1.818)	(1.778)		(2.007)	(1.935)
Pre-Election Period		2.989**	2.846*		1.709	2.148
		(1.496)	(1.510)		(1.425)	(1.442)
Leader Change		0.926	1.200		0.856	1.109*
		(0.785)	(0.754)		(0.838)	(0.668)
Leader Orientation		1.355***	0.713*		1.171***	0.626**
		(0.376)	(0.365)		(0.341)	(0.298)
GDP per capita		1.172	0.751		0.530	0.738
		(0.737)	(0.559)		(0.684)	(0.541)
US Aid		-0.126**	-0.072		-0.137**	-0.053
		(0.053)	(0.046)		(0.054)	(0.041)
Time		0.008	0.322***			
		(0.100)	(0.095)			
Time^2		-0.005	-0.012***			
		(0.003)	(0.003)			
Time^3		0.000*	0.000***			
		(0.000)	(0.000)			
Constant	-3.549***	-0.464	-3.510			
	(0.149)	(3.079)	(3.725)			
N	1742	1731	1731	1620	1617	1617
pseudo R^2	0.006	0.305	0.191	0.009	0.231	0.097

Note:table entries are coefficients; standard errors clustered by states are reported in parentheses. two-tailed test, * $p < 0.10$), ** $p < 0.05$), *** $p < 0.01$).The dependent variable is defection in models 1-3 and duration until defection (in months) in models 4 - 6.

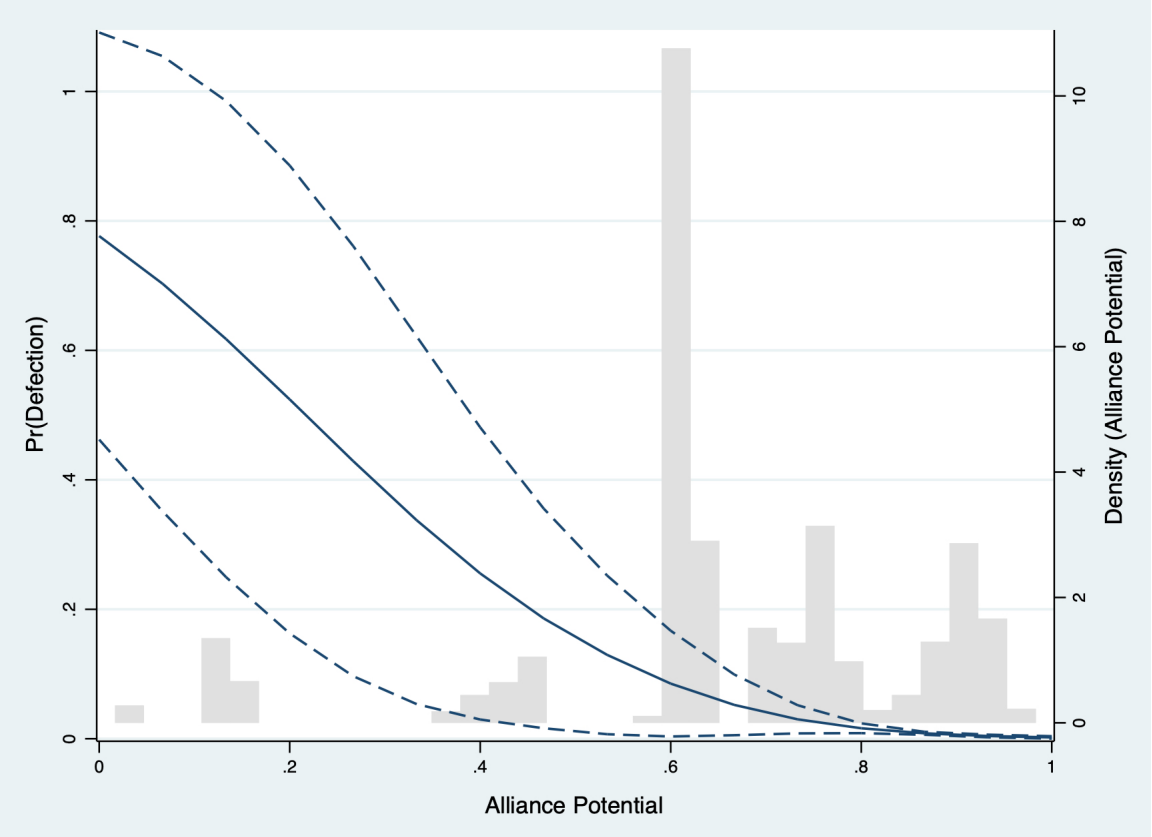

Figure 4.1: Marginal effects of alliance potential.

Note: Predictive margins are computed while holding all continuous variables at their means and dichotomous variables at their modes. Dotted lines indicate 90% confidence interval

models, which shows that growing distance did not inhibit prolonged engagement in military operations overseas for the states. Moreover, I find inconclusive results about the impact of states' power as measured by the Composite Indexes of National Capabilities (CINC) score. A potential explanation for the conflicting effects of power is that CINC scores do not vary drastically and the skewness of data is in favor of major powers.

The empirical results largely support my theoretical expectations about the impact of leadership turnover, leadership political ideologies, and electoral politics. I find that states did not withdraw from the coalition mission in Iraq within the same month as when elections were held as observed by the negative sign of *National Election*. However, as expected, leaders engage in strategic position-taking in the three

months before the election. The measure capturing the pre-election period has a positive sign across all models and reaches statistical significance in models 2 and 3. Debates regarding foreign policy are salient in the months prior to the election month when candidates roll out new policies. To measure these effects on defection from the Iraq War, my findings corroborate past findings that incumbent leaders are more likely to rule out major foreign policy changes ahead of elections to boost their chance of retaining office (Massie 2016; McInnis 2019). Consistent with past studies, I find that leadership turnover is positively associated with early withdrawal from coalition defection. This finding confirms past research that leadership turnover is positively associated with changes in foreign policy including withdrawal from coalitions and alliances (Bennett 1997; Pilster, Böhmelt, and Tago 2015; Tago 2009). The coefficient capturing leaders' ideology is positive and statistically significant across all model specifications. Leaders and political parties with left-leaning ideologies were less supportive of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq (Mello 2020; Schuster and Maier 2006).

The reliance of coalition leaders on side payments including economic and political incentives to form a coalition seems to be effective. My results show that recipients of the U.S. military and economic aid reduced the probability of defection as observed the coefficient for *US Aid* is negative across all models while statistically significant in models 2 and 4. This result not only concurs with past findings that side-payments are an effective strategy to recruit war partners (Henke 2019; Newnham 2008; Russett 1971) but also shows the strategy's effectiveness to prevent premature withdrawals.

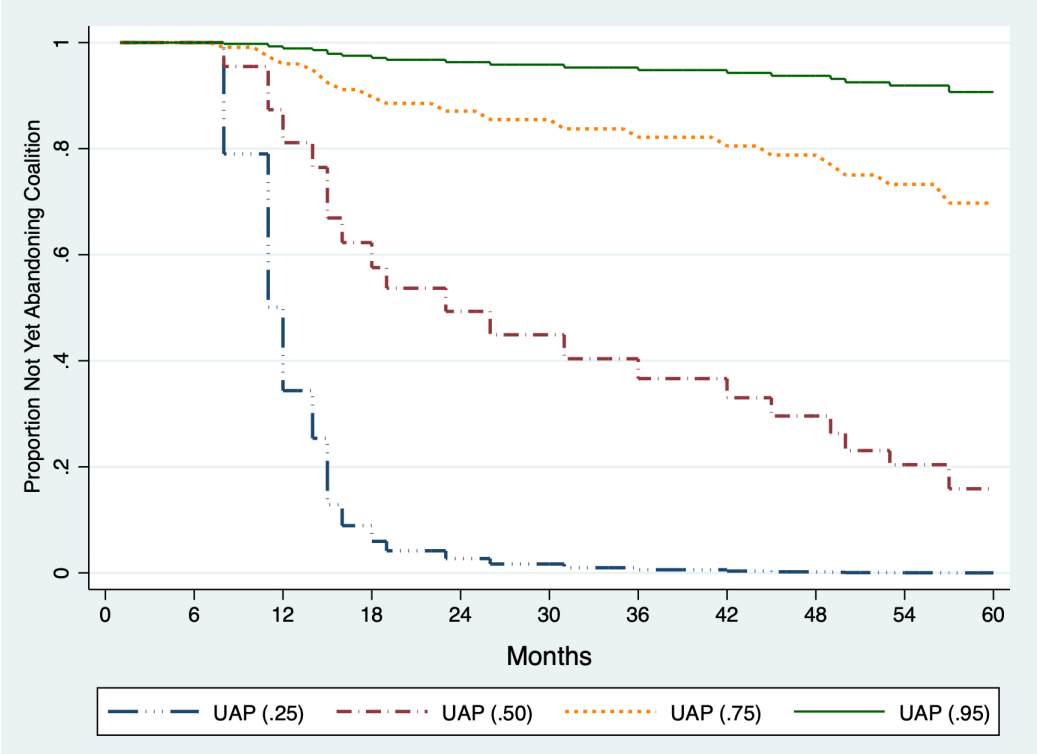

Figure 4.2: Predicted duration until defection.

Note: predictive durations are computed while holding all continuous variables at their means and dichotomous variables at their modes

4.6 Conclusion

This paper contributes to the literature by considering when states become unreliable as wartime partners. Past research has focused on battlefield circumstances, collective action problems, intra-coalition burden-sharing issues, leadership turnover, and other domestic factors to explain defection from military coalitions. In this paper, I offered a new argument focusing on international factors, especially alliance politics and its relationship to military coalitions, to explain defection from multinational military coalitions. I argued and found support that coalition members lacking stronger security ties with a coalition leader are less likely to defect from ongoing military coalition operations. Because states' sustained engagement in coalition operations serves as a costly signal of reliability and commitment as well as a desire for improved relations with the coalition leader that is not yet realized despite greater alignment of its

security interests with the coalition leader.

Participation in coalition operations allows states to gain private goods such as economic benefits or improved political and security partnerships. Continued engagement in belligerent foreign policies can serve as a costly contribution by a state to demonstrate its reliability and commitment to the war efforts of the coalition leader. This argument explains the observed empirical puzzle where states directly unaffected by the outcome of coalition warfare not only participate in the coalition mission but do not defect in the face of growing material and intangible costs. The puzzle is further compounded when close allies of coalition leaders do not honor their security commitments by leaving their partners behind.

My findings have important policy implications. States often engage in extensive bargaining and often use financial incentives and policy concessions to form military coalitions (Henke 2017, 2019). The extensive use of side payments by the U.S. to recruit Turkey and other Islamic countries prior to invading Iraq in 2003 led many pundits to label the coalition as "coalition of the billing" (McClure 2003). Policymakers looking to build a formidable and reliable coalition should consider the degree to which potential members desire a security alliance and stronger political relations with a coalition leader. Although domestic constraints and battlefield circumstances are important, they often change quickly. Political leaders and battle-related deaths fluctuate multiple times within a year. However, the formation and dissolution of alliances are lengthy processes involving drawn-out negotiations and domestic ratification. States desiring stronger security ties with a coalition leader will not be deterred by short-term costs associated with coalition operations. Because the long-term expected utility outweighs the immediate costs of participation in coalition warfare. Thus, states deficient in their security alliance potential with coalition leaders will make reliable wartime partners.

Coalition defection has important consequences for intra-coalition politics and im-

pacts the success and failure of coalition missions. For instance, the United States and its allies had to find replacement troops after Canadian and Dutch forces withdrew from the southern two provinces of Afghanistan. The Taliban took advantage of the ensuing uncertainty and the operational vacuum due to the rapid withdrawal and made territorial gains in the region (Brunnstrom 2010). The Dutch and Canadian defections from the NATO-led coalition reversed the progress made in several areas, mainly security and economic sectors, over the years as soon as the Taliban took control of the vast areas in rural Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces. The Taliban and their allied insurgents used these newly gained territories to regroup and launch deadly campaigns in other regions of the country (Jockel 2014).

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study investigating the effects of unrealized alliance potential on coalition defection. There are a few key areas that warrant further research. First, the empirical assessment of my argument is limited to the coalition of the willing in the Iraq War. Further research is needed to examine the explanatory power of the theory more rigorously across multiple coalitions. Second, our understanding is lacking regarding the ways and the strategies states adopt when exiting coalitions. We still do not know and do not have data about partial withdrawal, repositioning of forces, alteration in responsibilities of troops, and whether these changes occur within the framework agreed upon before the coalition warfare. Acknowledging these challenges, some scholars (e.g., McInnis 2019) propose additional data collection, a conclusion that this research paper agrees with and advocates as well.

Finally, future research and especially data-gathering projects can focus on the type of commitments made before coalition operations and whether states fail or succeed in delivering those commitments. Referring to the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provision (Leeds et al. 2002) as an example, Morey (2017) suggests that to determine coalition defection, it is essential to understand what states agreed to commit

to the coalition in the first place. Comparing individual states' actual contribution to their initial commitment will reveal whether states defected or not, and to what degree did the states honor their commitments.

CHAPTER 5.

Conclusion and Next Steps

5.1 Conclusion

Military coalitions are a common phenomenon in international politics. Fighting wars and executing non-combat military missions as a coalition have become dominant features of international conflict and cooperation over the past two centuries. While fighting multilaterally improves chances of victory (Morey 2016), keeping countries with different regimes and interests together as an effective coalition is a challenging task. Although scholarship exploring coalitions is growing, our understanding of why states abandon coalition partners is limited (McInnis 2019).

This dissertation sought to help address some of the limitations of the literature on coalition defection by presenting novel theoretical explanations for coalition defection. In the second chapter, I showed that past research examining the effects of regime type on coalition defection has been limited to uncovering the reliability of different democratic regimes or democracies versus autocracies (Choi 2012; Mello 2020; Tago 2009). I addressed this limitation by investigating the effect of regime type on the unilateral withdrawal of states from military coalitions. I argued and found support that anocracies or mixed regimes are more reliable coalition partners and less likely to abandon coalition warfare compared to autocracies and democracies. Post-exit punishment motivates anocratic leaders to continue contributing to coalition warfare despite increasing human and material costs. Because belligerent foreign policy failures can lead to both removal and post-removal punishment in anocracies more often than in democracies and autocracies. Leaders in anocracies rely on moderate levels of repression and exclude a sizable portion of society from the public policymaking process. Defeat in interstate conflict signals speaks of leadership in-

competency and degrades the regimes' repression apparatus. Military defeat allows the excluded populace to remove a repressive leader from office with lower costs than in the past. To avoid losing power and post-exit additional punishment, regime elites will be incentivized to help topple the current leader.

The winning coalition in democracies is larger than autocracies but smaller than autocracies. Anocratic leaders rely on a mixture of public and private goods provisions to stay in power. States defect when the cost of war outweighs the expected utility, especially when victory becomes unlikely. The institutionalized and shared decision-making processes in democracies allow leaders to pull out of coalition wars with minimal domestic backlash. Autocratic leaders, with a small winning coalition, will have an easier time adjusting their war aims in light of growing costs. However, leaders of mixed regimes will not leave before their autocratic and democratic counterparts in hopes of securing a larger share of private goods (i.e., control of territory and resources) and public goods (i.e., victory in war and enforcement of norms and international law when applicable). Coalition size gets smaller due to autocratic and democratic states leaving early. This should further disincentivize anocracies from withdrawing earlier because a smaller coalition size means less dilution of spoils of victory. Moreover, recent research suggests that states receive side payments for their contribution to coalition warfare. All these potential gains strongly incentivize anocratic leaders to avoid withdrawing early from ongoing coalition warfare.

In the third chapter, I examined the effect of leadership insecurity on the unilateral withdrawal of states from military coalitions. I argued and found support for the idea that political leadership insecurity explains defection from ongoing military coalition operations. Political leaders are motivated to gain and stay in power. Leaders who face elite unrest and intensified civil wars are constrained in their capabilities to maintain military engagement overseas and are highly likely to defect from coalition operations. This is because domestically vulnerable leaders need to focus inwards

and consolidate their hold on power rather than focus on belligerent foreign policies that may have a negligible or peripheral impact on their survivability.

In the fourth chapter of this project, I offered a new argument focusing on international factors, especially alliance politics and its relationship to military coalitions, to explain defection from military coalitions. I showed that coalition members lacking stronger security ties with a coalition leader are less likely to defect from ongoing military coalition operations. Because a state's sustained engagement in coalition operations serves as a costly signal of reliability and commitment as well as a desire for improved relations with the coalition leader that is not yet realized despite greater alignment of its security interests with the coalition leader.

Participation in coalition operations allows states to gain private goods such as economic benefits or improved political and security partnerships. Continued engagement in belligerent foreign policies can serve as a costly contribution by a state to demonstrate its reliability and commitment to the war efforts of the coalition leader. This argument explains the observed empirical puzzle where states directly unaffected by the outcome of coalition warfare not only participate in the coalition mission but do not defect in the face of growing material and intangible costs. The puzzle is further compounded when close allies of coalition leaders do not honor their security commitments by leaving their partners behind.

The findings of this dissertation have important implications for international relations and policy. My results in chapter two showed that anocracies or mixed regimes are relatively more reliable wartime partners. The civil conflict literature anocratic regimes are more likely to experience civil war than any other regime type (Regan and Bell 2010; Walter 2022). The broader implication of my results is that by recruiting anocratic regimes as coalition partners, major powers not only go to war with reliable partners but also avoid the outbreak of devastating civil wars that can have negative consequences for their own security and economic prosperity.

Forming and maintaining coalitions are challenging tasks. My findings in chapter three show that policymakers need to pay close attention not only to regime types but leadership insecurities. Because recruiting unreliable leaders can threaten the effectiveness of the coalition mission, it is thus imperative for the coalition leaders not only to be selective in choosing partners but also closely monitor and have prior knowledge of potential partners' domestic politics. Because coalition defection jeopardizes the mission at hand, its negative effects can have prolonged military and political consequences.

Pivotal states rely on financial incentives and policy concessions to form military coalitions (Henke 2017, 2019). The extensive use of side payments by the U.S. to recruit Turkey and other Islamic countries prior to invading Iraq in 2003 led many pundits to label the coalition as "coalition of the billing" (McClure 2003). A key implication of my findings in chapter 4 is policymakers looking to build a formidable and reliable coalition should consider the degree to which potential members desire a security alliance and stronger political relations with a coalition leader. Political leaders and battle-related deaths fluctuate multiple times within a year. However, alliance formation is time-consuming involving drawn-out interstate bargaining and domestic ratification. States desiring stronger security ties with a coalition leader will not be deterred by short-term costs associated with coalition operations. Because the long-term expected utility outweighs the immediate costs of participation in coalition warfare. Thus, states deficient in their security alliance potential with coalition leaders will make reliable wartime partners.

The international legitimacy of the coalition operation is instrumental for coalition formation and should influence cohesion and defection. Support and approval by international organizations, especially UN authorization, help legitimize the operation and facilitate smoother recruitment of states to the coalition. For instance, Tago (2007) shows that mission type and legitimacy matter. A coalition for domestic

intervention had fewer partners while operations authorized by the United Nations for humanitarian and peacekeeping purposes attracted more members. Similarly, the size of the coalition matters for its effectiveness and cohesion that subsequently influence defection. A larger coalition ensures increased aggregation of power but also creates challenges with military and political activities coordination. Therefore, medium-sized, or smaller coalitions combined with a stronger coalition leader and clear command and control structures are preferred. However, this prescription is context specific and varies based on the type and level of threat (Barrett 1992; Bensahel 1999; Kreps 2011; Morey 2020; Poast 2019; Riscassi 1993; Weitsman 2013). Therefore, policymakers must balance the tradeoff between legitimacy and effectiveness. Future research will benefit from investigating and identifying an equilibrium between these two factors.

5.2 Next Steps

There are a few major areas that warrant further research. First, mostly coalition defection is studied and measured as a binary outcome with two exceptions (Kober 2002; McInnis 2019, 2020). Scholars acknowledge variation in defection but ultimately focus on complete withdrawal (Massie 2016; Pelletier and Massie 2017). We still do not know why states do not withdraw completely and instead remained engaged in coalition with limited capacity. In other words, why do states follow variegated withdrawal strategies? Scholars point to the pressure states face when balancing alliance commitments and demands from domestic actors (McInnis 2019, 2020; Pelletier and Massie 2017). However, we still do not know empirically and theoretically how the interaction between these factors could produce different results. Further research is needed to flesh out the complex reasons leading to the conditions under which states follow variegated exit strategies.

One way to address this gap in the literature is by collecting data on coalition

defections following recommendations by McInnis (2019) and focusing only on the 20th century or post-WWII defections. This will allow us to move beyond the conventional conceptual and operational definitions of coalition defection and arrive at an in-depth understanding of why and how states defect. The major challenge to this end is the resources and time required for this large undertaking. Moreover, the lack of formal written documents outlining coalition goals and obligations has made it almost impossible to empirically gauge the various defection strategies. This explains why existing work in this area is case studies and qualitative.

Second, the scholarship focusing on coalition and alliance formation is expansive and comparatively more developed (Mello and Saideman 2019). The literature provides several broad explanations for states' participation. These include balancing against threats (neorealists), creating more stable and transparent relations among states and organizations (neoliberalist institutionalist), and alignment of states with those having similar values and norms (constructivists) (McInnis 2020; Walt 1997, 2011). The factors explaining the formation and effectiveness of coalitions should also influence states' decisions to leave.

States join military coalitions to advance several interests that can be broadly categorized into three types; "core interests" which are grounded in a state's fundamental national interests, culture, and values. The second is "shared interests" which resemble the international perspective of liberalism. These entail adherence to treaties, protection of borders and deterring territorial aggression, advancing state sovereignty principles, and other similar international norms and regimes. The last one is "linked interests" which are state motivations for participation that are not directly related to the problem or challenge that the coalition is designed to address (McInnis 2020, 50-54). Sometimes states participate in coalition not because they care about the problem they are created to address but to achieve material or political gains from the coalition leader or other states. This distinction between the

different motivations of states is important in shedding light on defection. One feasible way to examine this relationship is to determine the degree to which states place significance on the different interest types. The lower the degree the higher the likelihood of defection.

Third, although coalition members are united by a broad common objective, they almost never have identical objectives and interests (Barrett 1992; Henke 2019; Riscassi 1993; Weitsman 2013). Barrett (1992) maintains that the biggest common interest in a military coalition is victory. However, victory could mean different things for coalition participants. Some participants may be satisfied with a tactical/strategic victory while others prefer total annihilation of the enemy or opt for a continued post-victory territorial occupation. Identifying states' goals and objectives, especially their desired levels of victory could explain which states will leave coalitions earlier or stay longer. The perception of victory is tied to the expected rewards (Barrett 1992) and threat perception (Poast 2019) which are adjusted through information updating based on the circumstances on the battlefield. Fourth, from a bargaining approach, coalition partners need to decide what to demand from the adversary rather than bear the costs of war and which demands are they willing to resist through force. For example, before invading Afghanistan the United States demanded that the Taliban hand over Bin Laden and cut ties with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups. What if the Taliban agreed to all or a few demands midway through fighting? In situations like these, some members may stop fighting, believing the objective of the war is obtained or the costs to continue fighting is either unjustified or outweigh the expected outcome. Alternatively, the coalition might avoid military conflict altogether if the target state caves to the demands. Parsing these complexities of coalition warfare and prewar bargaining processes should directly affect coalition abandonment and the way states choose to defect.

Fifth, future research should also consider investigating the relationship between

autocratic leaders' tenure and coalition defection. Existing research shows that there is an inverted-U relationship between autocratic leadership and international conflict initiation. Autocratic leaders go through three stages: power struggle in the early periods, consolidation in the middle, and power dissipation in the later period (Bak 2017; Weeks 2012). It is worth examining when autocratic leaders are more likely to defect from a military coalition throughout their tenure in power. Finally, recent scholarship has demonstrated that foreign policy and alliance commitment varies across sub-regime types both in democracies and nondemocracies. The existing datasets about regime types go as far as the early 1900s. Future research can expand the data on regime types that will greatly increase the spatiotemporal domain for the empirical examination of regimes' effect on coalition defections.

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Outstanding Teaching Assistant, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Kentucky (2022-2023)

Malcolm E. Jewell Outstanding Graduate Student Award, Department of Political Science, University of Kentucky (Spring 2023)

Ken & Mary Coleman-Penny Miller Fellowship, University of Kentucky (2022)

Ken & Mary Sue Coleman Research Award, University of Kentucky (2020,2022)

Coleman-Chris Gorman-Penny Miller Fellowship, University of Kentucky (2021)

Alumni Development Fund, University of Kentucky (2020)

Four-Year Teaching Assistantship, University of Kentucky (2019)

Elkins Endowed Scholarship, Wright State University (F2018)

Two-Year Teaching Assistantship, Wright State University, 2015

Layman Memorial Award in International Relations, Berea College (2015)

Four-year tuition scholarship, Berea College (2012)