THE INSTITUTIONAL ORIGINS OF MISCALCULATION IN CHINA'S INTERNATIONAL CRISES

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Online Appendix

Contents

1 The Study of Chinese Foreign Policy Decision-Making: An Overview

The study of Chinese foreign policy decision-making, particularly whether and how these processes shape China's international behavior, has lagged behind other aspects of domestic politics (e.g., leaders, public opinion, ideology).[1] As Thomas Christensen, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Robert Ross summarize in a review of the field, there is "a dearth of studies on the policy process" underpinning China's foreign relations and crisis behavior.[2] Existing research tends to focus either on identifying the comprehensive set of bureaucratic stakeholders involved in foreign policy decision-making or on providing a snapshot of the decision-making process at a particular moment in time.[3] While such accounts offer rich description of China's bureaucratic institutions, they have largely sidestepped the question of whether changes in decision-making have systematically shaped China's international behavior. Thus, one of the contributions of this piece is to incorporate existing descriptions into an theoretical framework, in which the formal and informal rules governing foreign policy decision-making (what I term national security institutions) are an explanatory variable for China's behavior in international crises.

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[1]On the role of leaders in Chinese foreign policy, see Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995); Lucian W. Pye, "Rethinking the Man in the Leader," *The China Journal*, no. 35 (1996): 107–112; Feng Huiyun, *Chinese Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Confucianism, Leadership and War* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Andrew Kennedy, *The International Ambitions of Mao and Nehru: National Efficacy Beliefs and the Making of Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Zhang Qingming, "Lingdaoren rengge tedian yu Zhongguo waijiao yanjiu [Leader Characteristics and the Study of Chinese Foreign Policy]," *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi [World Economics and Politics]* 6 (2014): 93–119.

[2]Thomas J. Christensen, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Robert S. Ross, "Conclusions and Future Directions," in *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 406. On how bureaucracy shapes China's domestic policy, see David M. Lampton, *Policy Implementation in Post-Mao China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Kenneth Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg, *Policy Making in China: Leaders, Structures, and Processes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); David M. Lieberthal Kenneth G.and Lampton, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); David L. Shambaugh, "Elite Politics and Perceptions," in *Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy Reform*, ed. Gerald Segal (London: Kegan Paul International, 1992), 100–114; Carol Lee Hamrin, "Elite Politics and the Development of China's Foreign Relations," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, ed. Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 70–114; Andrew Mertha, "'Fragmented Authoritarianism 2.0': Political Pluralization in the Chinese Policy Process," *The China Quarterly*, no. 200 (2009): 995–1012; Iza Ding, *The Performative State: Public Scrutiny and Environmental Governance in China* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022).

[3]See especially the pathbreaking work in Michael D. Swaine, *The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy-making* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1998); David M. Lampton, ed., *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), especially Chapters 2, 3 and 10; Lu Ning, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China*, 2nd ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 150–170. See also Zhou Qi, "Organization, Structure and Image in the Making of Chinese Foreign Policy since the Early 1990s" (PhD diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 2008); Linda Jakobson and Dean Knox, *New Foreign Policy Actors in China* (Solna: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2010); Yun Sun, *Chinese National Security Decision-Making: Processes and Challenges* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013); Bonnie S. Glaser and Evan S. Medeiros, "The Changing Ecology of Foreign Policy-Making in China: The Ascension and Demise of the Theory of 'Peaceful Rise'," *The China Quarterly*, no. 190 (2007): 291–310; David M. Lampton, *Following the Leader: Ruling China, from Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Hongyi Lai and Su-Jeong Kang, "Domestic Bureaucratic Politics and Chinese Foreign Policy," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 86 (2014): 294–313; Pascal Abb, "China's Foreign Policy Think Tanks: Institutional Evolution and Changing Roles," *Journal of contemporary China* 24, no. 93 (2015): 531–553.

Two adjacent literatures are worth noting. First, some studies have applied factional models to explain Chinese foreign policy. Such models suggest that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is composed of different elite "factions" whose members share similar preferences and that foreign policy outcomes reflect the preferences of the dominant group.[4] Second, there is a vibrant literature on Chinese civil-military relations, which often applies a factional logic by suggesting that Chinese foreign policy reflects the military's parochial preferences when the People's Liberation Army is more powerful.[5] Yet both literatures tend to sidestep the process by which party leaders extract information from the broader set of national security bureaucracies—of which the military is only one—and whether and how changes in how informational interactions proceed may shape China's behavior in international crises.

Traditionally, one of the reasons that foreign policy decision-making may have received less attention is lack of data.[6] The opaque nature of elite politics make uncovering even basic characteristics of crisis decision-making (e.g., when decisions were taken, who participated in deliberations, what information was available, who provided the information) a time-intensive endeavor. For example, in a pioneering study, A. Doak Barnett describes that questions regarding how China coordinated military and diplomatic policy, among many others, remained "unanswerable" with the data available at the time.[7] Another review of field similarly notes that the effects of bureaucracy are easier to study when considering local governments—where "access to lower level functionaries is more easily gained" but where decision-making is focused on domestic issues—than at the apex of the CCP—where access is limited but where the most important foreign policy decisions are taken.[8]

[4]Andrew J. Nathan, "A Factionalism Model for CCP Politics," *The China Quarterly*, no. 53 (1973): 34–66; Victor C. Shih, *Factions and Finance in China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[5]Studies of Chinese civil-military relations include Ellis Joffe, *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949–1964* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965); William W. Whitson and Chen-Hsia Huang, *The Chinese High Command: A History of Communist Military Politics, 1927-71* (London: Macmillan, 1973); William L. Parish, "Factions in Chinese Military Politics," *The China Quarterly*, no. 56 (1973): 667–699; Harvey Nelson, *The Chinese Military System: An Organizational Study of the Chinese People's Liberation Army* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1977); Harlan W. Jencks, *From Muskets to Missiles: Politics and Professionalism in the Chinese Army, 1945–1981* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982); David L. Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems, and Prospects* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Michael D. Swaine, "The PLA Role in China's Foreign Policy and Crisis Behavior," in *PLA Influence on China's National Security Policy-Making*, ed. Phillip C. Saunders and Andrew Scobell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015); Alice Miller, "The PLA in the Party Leadership Decisionmaking System," in *PLA Influence on China's National Security Policy-Making*, ed. Phillip C. Saunders and Andrew Scobell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015); Chen Yali, "The PLA in China's Foreign and Security Policy-Making: Drivers, Mechanisms, and Interactions" (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2015); Daniel C. Mattingly, "How the Party Commands the Gun: The Foreign–Domestic Threat Dilemma in China," *American Journal of Political Science*, 2022,

[6]The Chinese government has also restricted the study of the decision-making system. For an overview, see Chu Xiaobo, "A Brief Analysis of China's Crisis Diplomacy Decision-Making in the Post-Cold War Era," in *Participation and Interaction: The Theory and Practice of China's Diplomacy* (Hackensack: World Scientific, 2013), 103–104.

[7]A. Doak Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China: Structure and Process* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 104.

[8]Avery Goldstein, "Trends in the Study of Political Elites and Institutions in the PRC," *The China Quarterly*, no. 139 (1994): 725.

2 Coding China's National Security Institutions

Table 1 summarizes my codings of China's national security institutions from 1949 to 2012. As detailed in the main text, I base my codings of China's national security institutions on several types of observable indicators: (1) patterns in information flow discussed directly in memoirs, secondary sources from Chinese scholars who were permitted to study China's decision-making, as well as semi-structured interviews[9] conducted with Chinese interlocutors;[10] and (2) bureaucratic appointment to key advisory and coordination bodies, as well as patterns in de facto participation in the leader's decision-making. In this section, I provide additional details on the both categories of data. First, I discuss data on body membership, which I used to gauge bureaucratic appointment. Second, I discuss data on national security decision-making, which I use to discuss body utilization and de facto bureaucratic participation in decision-making.

2.1 Body Membership Data

To measure bureaucratic appointment, I used CCP organizational records detailing the membership of key bodies used for foreign and defense affairs. This approach is analogous to other elite actor datasets, but focused on the compositional characteristics of advisory and coordinating bodies for foreign policy decision-making.[11] I examined two types of bodies.

First, I coded *advisory bodies* that helped to relay information and recommendations to the leader. Throughout the study period, I collect membership data on the Political Bureau (Politburo) and its Standing Committee, which represents the apex political body of the CCP. Particularly under Mao Zedong, it is more accurate to describe the Politburo as an advisory body, rather than a decision-making body. Both during the early Mao and post-Mao periods, however, Politburo members could provide information and recommendations either directly through formal meetings of the Politburo or outside these meetings through their status as Politburo members. Beginning in the late 1990s and 2000s, I also code the leading small groups (discussed below) as advisory bodies.[12]

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[9]I cross-reference my own interview data with past interview transcripts and quotes published in past scholarship. For example, the transcript of Doak Barnett's interview with Zhao Ziyang is now publicly available in the Columbia University Library. Zhao Ziyang Interview Transcript, Arthur Doak Barnett Papers, Box 116, Columbia University Library.

[10]These supplemental sources are particularly helpful for drawing inferences about the Jiang and Hu era, as only a limited number of chronicles covering this period have been released to date.

[11]For example, see Victor Shih, Wei Shan, and Mingxing Liu, "Gauging the Elite Political Equilibrium in the CCP: A Quantitative Approach using Biographical Data," *The China Quarterly*, no. 201 (2010): 79–103; Victor Shih, Christopher Adolph, and Mingxing Liu, "Getting Ahead in the Communist Party: Explaining the Advancement of Central Committee Members in China," *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 1 (2012): 166–187.

[12]In Table **??**, I use 1998 as the transition point, as Jiang Zemin reportedly assumed control over the Foreign Affairs Leading

Table 1: Summary of China's National Security Institutions, 1949–2012[a]

| Period | Nat. Security Institution | Bureaucratic Representation and Utilization | |
		Advisory Level	Coordination Level
Early Mao (1949–1962)	Integrated	**Politburo**: defense and diplomatic representation; high utilization[b]	**CMC**: defense and diplomatic representation (1949–1952, 1958–1962); high utilization; **State Council (1953–1962)**: defense and diplomatic representation; low utilization; **Secretariat (1956–1962)**: defense and diplomatic representation; high utilization[c]
Pre-Cultural Revolution (1963–1965)	Fragmented	**Politburo**: diplomatic and defense representation; utilization mostly standing committee meetings with only defense representation[b]	**State Council** defense and diplomatic representation; low utilization; **Secretariat**: defense, diplomatic, intelligence representation; low utilization; **CMC** defense and diplomatic representation; high utilization[c]
Cultural Revolution (1966–1976)	Fragmented	**Politburo**: defense representation (foreign minister informally demoted by 1968, subsequent foreign ministers not appointed); low utilization[d]	**Secretariat**: abolished; **State Council**: low utilization; **CMC** defense representation (foreign minister informally demoted by 1968, subsequent foreign ministers not appointed); high utilization[e]
Hua-Deng (1977–1981)	Fragmented	**Politburo**: defense representation; Deng Xiaoping serves as his own Chief of General Staff; low utilization; mostly informal meetings between leader and military[f]	**FALSG**: reestablished only in 1981 without defense representation; **CMC**: defense representation (CMC member Li Xiannian leads FALSG beginning in 1981); low utilization[g]
Deng-Lieutenant (1982–1989)	Siloed	**Politburo**: defense representation; diplomatic representation (1985–1989); low utilization; mostly informal meetings between leader and either diplomatic or defense[h]	**FALSG**: diplomatic representation; defense minister/military intelligence representation (1983–1989); moderate utilization; **CMC**: no diplomatic representation; high utilization[i]
Jiang-Hu (1990–2012)	Siloed	**Politburo**: defense and diplomatic representation (1990–2002), only defense representation (2003–2012); **NSLSG/FALSG** (1998-2012): shift to advisory body; defense, diplomatic, and intelligence representation[j]	**FALSG (1990–1997)**: diplomatic representation; defense minister/military intelligence representation; **CMC**: no diplomatic representation[k]

[a]Representation data from *Zhongguo gongchandang zuzhi shi ziliao*, hereafter ZGZSZ; Zou Ximing, ed., *Zhonggong zhongyang jigou yange shilu [Record of CCP Organizational Evolution: 1921.7–1997.9]* (Beijing: Zhongguo dang'an chubanshe, 1998), hereafter ZZJYS; and various issues of *Directory of PRC Military Personalities* and *China Directory*. State Councillor for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Ministry, International Liaison Department all coded as diplomatic representation. Utilization data taken from the PRC National Security Decision-Making Dataset. High utilization is more than 10 meetings per year on average recorded in the dataset; moderate utilization is 5–9 meetings per year on average recorded in the dataset; low utilization is 4 or fewer meetings per year on average recorded in the dataset. Due to temporal coverage of the dataset, utilization codings only reported from 1950 to 1989. See main text for qualitative discussion of utilization from 1990 to 2012.

[b]ZGZSZ, 9: 36–37, 40–41.
[c]ZGZSZ, 9: 41–42, 56–58; 15: 64–65. Yang Shangkun oversaw Central Investigation Department activities during this period.
[d]ZGZSZ, 10: 22–24, 31–33.
[e]ZGZSZ, 10: 24–25, 55–60; 15: 498–499.
[f]ZGZSZ, 11: 67–68, 78–80,
[g]ZZJYS, 132; ZGZSZ, 11: 215–220.
[h]ZGZSZ, 11: 95–97, 116–118
[i]ZZJYS, 132, 144, 160; ZGZSZ, 11: 220–221.
[j]ZGZSZ, 11: 116–118, 130–131.
[k]ZZJYS, 160, 186; ZGZSZ, 11: 221–222.

Second, I examined *coordination bodies* that facilitated information sharing between bureaucratic actors. For the Mao period, I collected membership data on the State Council and the Secretariat, which were utilized by Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping respectively to coordinate policymaking. For both the Mao and post-Mao periods, I collected membership data on three leading small groups: Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group, Taiwan Leading Small Group, and National Security Leading Small Group.[13] Finally, I collected membership data on the Central Military Commission, which played some role in intra-party coordination in the early Mao period.[14]

Body membership data for the Politburo, State Council, Secretariat, and Central Military Commission were primarily drawn from *Materials on CCP Organizational History*, *Materials on CCP Chinese People's Liberation Army Organizational History*, and annual volumes of *Directory of People's Republic of China Military Personalities*.[15] For leading small groups, authoritative Chinese sources (e.g., *Record of CCP Organizational Evolution*) provide a relatively complete picture for the 1980s and 1990s.[16] A variety of unofficial sources provide membership of leading small groups in the early 2000s, but should be considered less authoritative. Tables 2 through 5 list membership data for leading small groups.

Small Group at that time. See Zhao Kejin, "Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiao zhidu bianqian de lilun chanshi [A Theoretical Clarification of the Transition of PRC's Diplomatic Institutions]" (PhD diss., Fudan University, 2005), 127.

[13]These data complement pathbreaking work by Alice Miller, especially her work on leading small groups. Miller suggests that, during the Jiang and Hu administrations, the Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group and National Security Leading Small Group were the same de facto body ("two signboards, one body"; (两块牌子，一套机构). Alice L. Miller, "The CCP Central Committee's Leading Small Groups," *China Leadership Monitor* 26 (2008): 26. See also Alice Miller, "More Already on the Central Committee's Leading Small Groups," *China Leadership Monitor* 44 (2014).

[14]I do not collect data on the State Council or Secretariat for the post-Mao era, as both played a less important role for coordination in foreign and defense affairs after 1976.

[15]Zhonggong zhongyang zuzhibu, ed., *Zhongguo gongchandang zuzhi shi ziliao [Materials on the Organizational History of the Chinese Communist Party]* (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2000); Zeng Dadu, ed., *Zhongguo gongchandang Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun zuzhishi ziliao [Materials on CCP Chinese People's Liberation Army Organizational History]* (Beijing: Changzheng chubanshe, 1996).

[16]Zou Ximing, ed., *Zhonggong zhongyang jigou yange shilu [Record of CCP Organizational Evolution: 1921.7–1997.9]* (Beijing: Zhongguo dang'an chubanshe, 1998).

2.1.1 Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group

Table 2: Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group Membership, 1981–2002

1981[a]	1983[b]	1987[c]	1993[d]	1998[e]
Li Xiannian	Li Xiannian	Li Peng	Li Peng	Jiang Zemin
Wan Li	Zhao Ziyang	Wu Xueqian	Qian Qichen	Zhu Rongji
Gu Mu	Wan Li	Qin Jiwei	Li Lanqing	Qian Qichen
Chen Muhua	Ji Pengfei	Qian Liren	Chi Haotian	Tang Jiaxuan
Ji Pengfei	Chen Chu	Zhu Liang	Li Shuzheng	Wu Yi
Liao Chengzhi	Chen Muhua	Qian Qichen	Jia Chunwang	Liu Huaqiu
Huang Hua	Gu Mu	Zheng Tuobin	Qi Huaiyuan	Chi Haotian
Wu Xiuquan	Qiao Shi	Jia Chunwang		Dai Bingguo
Huang Zhen	Geng Biao			Qi Huaiyuan
Zhu Muzhi	Wu Xueqian			Xu Yongyue
	Wu Xiuquan			
	Qian Liren			
	Zhu Muzhi			
	Xu Xin			

[a]Zou Ximing, ed., *Zhonggong zhongyang jigou yange shilu [Record of CCP Organizational Evolution: 1921.7–1997.9]* (Beijing: Zhongguo dang'an chubanshe, 1998) (hereafter *ZYJYS*), 132.

[b]*ZYJYS*, 144.

[c]*ZYJYS*, 160. Ji Pengfei, Zhu Muzhi, and Chen Chu were appointed as advisers to the FALSG.

[d]*ZYJYS*, 186

[e]Zhao Kejin, "Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiao zhidu bianqian de lilun chanshi [A Theoretical Clarification of the Transition of PRC's Diplomatic Institutions]" (PhD diss., Fudan University, 2005), 127.

2.1.2 Foreign Affairs/National Security Leading Small Group

Table 3: Foreign Affairs/National Security Leading Small Group Membership, 2002–2012

Hu Jintao – First Term[a]	Hu Jintao - Second Term[b]
Hu Jintao	Hu Jintao
Zeng Qinghong	Xi Jinping
Liu Yunshan	Liu Yunshan
Wu Yi	Dai Bingguo
Zhou Yongkang	Liao Hui
Cao Gangchuan	Yang Jiechi
Tang Jiaxuan	Wang Yi
Liao Hui	Wang Guangya
Li Zhaoxing	Wang Jiarui
Dai Bingguo	Wang Chen
Wang Jiarui	Geng Huichang
Cai Wu	Chen Deming
Xu Yongyue	Li Haifeng
Bo Xilai	Ma Xiaotian
Chen Yujie	
Xiong Guangkai	

[a]Zhou Qi, "Organization, Structure and Image in the Making of Chinese Foreign Policy since the Early 1990s" (PhD diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 2008), 151–152. Membership lists are for the Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group.

[b]Source: *China Directory* (Tokyo: Radiopress, 2011), 26. Another source suggests that Liang Guanglie, Meng Jianzhu, and Qiao Zonghuai may have also served on the FALSG during this time. See "Zhongyang guojia anquan lingdao xiaozu—Zhongyang waishi gongzuo lingdao xiaozu," *Baidu Baike*, https://baike.baidu.com/item/9739882.

2.1.3 Taiwan Leading Small Group

Table 4: Taiwan Leading Small Group Membership, 1979–2002

1979[a]	1983[b]	1988[c]	1991[d]	1993[e]	1998[f]
Deng Yingchao	Deng Yingchao	Yang Shangkun	Yang Shangkun	Jiang Zemin	Jiang Zemin
Liao Chengzhi	Yang Shangkun	Wu Xueqian	Wu Xueqian	Qian Qichen	Qian Qichen
Luo Qingchang	Wang Feng	Ding Guangen	Wang Zhaoguo	Wang Zhaoguo	Wang Zhaoguo
	Yang Jingren		Zhu Muzhi	Wang Daohan	Wang Daohan
			Jia Chunwang	Jia Chunwang	Xu Yongyue
			Jiang Minkuan	Xiong Guangkai	Xiong Guangkai
			Qi Huaiyuan		Chen Yunlin
			Yang Side		Zeng Qinghong
			Sun Xiaoyu		

[a]Wang Jianying, ed., *Zhongguo gongchandang zuzhi shi ziliao huibian: Lingdao jigou gaige he chengyuan minglu [Collection of Historical Materials on CCP Organization: Evolution and Lists of Member Lists of Leadership Organizations]* (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1995) (hereafter *ZGZSZH*), 1121; "Deng Yingchao dang 'duiTai' xiaozu zuzhang' de rizi" [Deng Yingchao's days as Chairman of the Taiwan Small Group], *Zhongguo gongchandang xinwenwang [CCP News Archive]*, July 11, 2006.

[b]*ZGZSZH*, 1189. Wang Feng was appointed in 1981. See "Jinian Wang Feng tongzhi danchen 100 zhounian zuotanhui fayan zhaibian" [Speech Excerpts of the 100th Birthday of Comrade Wang Feng] *Renmin ribao*, December 17, 2010. Yang Jingren was appointed in 1982. See "Yang Jingren tongzhi shengping" [The Life of Comrade Yang Jingren], *Renmin ribao*, October 23, 2001.

[c]Yang Shangkun was promoted to chairman of the group in 1987. Yang Shangkun, *Yang Shangkun huiyilu [Memoirs of Yang Shangkun]* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2001), 365; "Wu Xueqian tongzhi shengping" [The Life of Comrade Wu Xueqian] *Renmin ribao*, April 11, 2008. "Ding Guangen yiti jinri zia Babaoshan huohua" [Body of Ding Guangen Cremated Today in Babaoshan] *Xinhua*, July 28, 2012.

[d]Zou Ximing, ed., *Zhonggong zhongyang jigou yange shilu [Record of CCP Organizational Evolution: 1921.7–1997.9]* (Beijing: Zhongguo dang'an chubanshe, 1998) (hereafter *ZZJYS*), 178.

[e]*ZZJYS*, 188.

[f]Zhou Qi, "Organization, Structure and Image in the Making of Chinese Foreign Policy since the Early 1990s" (PhD diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 2008), 158.

Table 5: Taiwan Leading Small Group Membership, 2002–2012

Hu Jintao - First Term[a]	Hu Jintao - Second Term[b]
Hu Jintao	Hu Jintao
Jia Qinglin	Jia Qinglin
Liu Yunshan	Ma Xiaotian
Wu Yi	Du Qinglin
Guo Boxiong	Dai Bingguo
Wang Gang	Geng Huichang
Tang Jiaxuan	Chen Deming
Wang Daohan	Wang Yi
Liu Yandong	Ling Jihua
Chen Yunlin	Chen Yunlin
Xu Yongyue	
Xiong Guangkai	

[a]Zhou Qi, "Organization, Structure and Image in the Making of Chinese Foreign Policy since the Early 1990s" (PhD diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 2008), 159.

[b]*China Directory* (Tokyo: Radiopress, 2010), 24. Another source suggests that Wang Qishan, Liu Yunshan, Liu Yandong, Guo Boxiong, and Wang Gang may have also served on the TLSG during this time. See "Zhongyang dui Tai gongzuo lingdao xiaozu," *Wikipedia* (Chinese), https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-hans/中央对台工作领导小组.

2.2 PRC National Security Decision-Making Data

To measure de facto bureaucratic participation in national security decision-making, I built build a dataset of formal and informal meetings touching on defense and foreign affairs by leveraging official chronicles are records of the activities of key party elites from 1950 to 1989. The dataset draws on a range of archival materials documenting the daily affairs of senior CCP officials (e.g., 年谱, 大事记, 实录). Many of the most detailed of these records, such as the six-volume chronicle of Mao Zedong's daily activities, were only released within the last decade. Each chronicle focuses on the activities on one particular individual, such as Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, or Deng Xiaoping. The contents provide a chronological account of the meetings the individual attended. This includes meetings of formal bodies, such as the Politburo or Central Military Commission, as well as informal meetings outside these bodies. The records usually include the meeting's agenda and other meeting participants.[17] While a limited number of these records provide short excerpts of meeting discussions, the content is not sufficiently complete or detailed to support a systematic analysis at this time. Four examples below illustrate the structure of the materials.

Example #1: Mao Zedong Chairing a Politburo Meeting

1962年3月29日：下午，在中南海颐年堂主持召开中共中央政治局常委会议，讨论中共中央对苏共中央二月二十二来信的复信稿。

March 29, 1962: In the afternoon, chaired an meeting of the Politburo Standing Committee in Zhongnanhai Yinian Hall. Discussed the draft of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee's reply to the Soviet Union Central Committee's letter from February 22.[18]

Example #2: Mao Zedong Chairing an Informal Meeting

1958年7月14日：晚上，在中南海游泳池住处召开会议，讨论外交问题，邓小平、彭真、彭德怀、陈毅、李先念、胡乔木、罗贵波、乔冠华出席。

July 14, 1958: In the evening, held a meeting outside the Zhongnanhai swimming pool. Discussed the issue of PRC-US ambassadorial level talks and the issue of Iraq. Deng Xiaoping, Peng Zhen, Peng Dehuai, Chen Yi, Li Xiannian, Hu Qiaomu, Luo Guibo, Qiao Guanhua attended.[19]

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[17]Footnotes within these materials identify the organizational affiliation of other meeting participants at the time of the meeting (e.g. Vice Foreign Minister, Chief of General Staff, etc).

[18]Pang Xianzhi, ed., *Mao Zedong nianpu, 1949–1976 [Chronicle of Mao Zedong, 1949–1976]* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013), Vol. V, 99.

[19]Ibid., Vol. III, 387.

Example #3: Zhou Enlai Chairing a CMC Meeting

1950 年8 月10 日：主持中央军委会议，讨论为适应空军执行空中运输任务的需要，向苏联购买适合于高空飞行的运输机问题。会后，将研究意见报告毛泽东。

August 10, 1950: Chaired a Central Military Commission meeting. Discussed the issue of purchasing transport aircraft suitable for high-altitude flight in order to meet requirements of the Air Force to execute air transport missions. After the meeting, reported the research and opinions to Mao Zedong.[20]

Example #4: Zhou Enlai Leading an Informal Meeting

1960 年7 月10 日：约孔原、张彦、龚饮冰谈港澳市场问题。

July 10, 1960: Appointment with Kong Yuan, Zhang Yan, Gong Yinbing to discuss Hong Kong and Macao market issues.[21]

Historians and political scientists generally consider these materials among the most authoritative available—and frequently leverage them to study specific events in Chinese foreign policy. To date, however, they have not been used to measure patterns in decision-making.[22] When aggregated, these materials offer insights into how decision-making have evolved over time. This approach is similar to that in Kenneth Lieberthal's *A Research Guide to Central Party Government Meetings in China, 1949–1975*.[23] However, new materials offer several improvements. First, new data sources provide a more complete record of formal body meetings. Because past collection efforts relied on media reports, they could not document meetings that the party chose not to disclose publicly. Second, new data sources also record informal meetings. For example, they include meetings between Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, which would not have been reported publicly but are commonly viewed as important to decision-making in China. Third, new data sources offer more

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[20]Li Ping and Ma Zhisun, ed., *Zhou Enlai nianpu, 1949–1976 [Chronicle of Zhou Enlai, 1949–1976]* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997), Vol. I, 63.

[21]Ibid., Vol. II, 330.

[22]For example, see M. Taylor Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Christopher P. Twomey, *The Military Lens: Doctrinal Difference and Deterrence Failure in Sino-American Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010); Thomas J. Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith: Alliance Politics and Problems of Coercive Diplomacy in Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Xiaoming Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War: The Military Conflict Between China and Vietnam, 1979–1991* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Manjari Chatterjee Miller, *Wronged by Empire: Post-Imperial Ideology and Foreign Policy in India and China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); M. Taylor Fravel, *Active Defense: China's Military Strategy since 1949* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019); Oriana Skylar Mastro, *The Costs of Conversation: Obstacles to Talks in Wartime* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019); Joseph Torigian, *Prestige, Manipulation, and Coercion: Elite Power Struggles in the Soviet Union and China after Stalin and Mao* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022).

[23]Kenneth Lieberthal, *A Research Guide to Central Party and Government Meetings in China, 1949–1975* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1978).

detailed information on participation in and the agenda of these meetings.

One potential question concerns whether and how much data is missing. For example, it is possible that not every meeting was recorded, meaning that chronicles may underestimate meeting frequency. However, there are three reasons that this should less concerning in the context of this article. First, the descriptive inferences drawn in this article are relative, meaning that they are interested in comparing how decision-making patterns changed over time. Consistent missingness across the sample would not necessarily bias such inferences. Second, I have no reason to believe that editors systematically censored the participation of certain bureaucracies and not others.[24] For example, I find no evidence that military participation—perhaps more sensitive due to national security concerns—was under-reported. In fact, more military participation is recorded during the Cultural Revolution than diplomatic. Another reason to doubt this type of censorship is that the materials contain frequent references to controversial figures in the official party history, such as Lin Biao, Kang Sheng, Jiang Qing. Third, based on the substance of the meetings included in these materials, it would appear that editors may have prioritized meetings in which more important topics were discussed. While this might undermine measurements of more mundane aspects of decision-making, it offers an advantage in focusing attention on more substantively meaningful interactions between leaders and the bureaucracy. Ultimately, however, these data should be seen as one of many indicators of China's national security institutions.

2.2.1   Sampling and Coding Procedures

Data sampling procedures focused on materials affording insight into the political-bureaucratic relationship of substantive interest in this article. The first set of chronicles that I collected were those at the party's political apex. For the period from 1949 to 1976, this is the formal and informal meetings of Mao Zedong. For the period from 1976 to 1989, this is the formal and informal meetings in all available chronicles of Politburo members. Given that these materials typically list other meeting participants, these sources provide one observation of political-bureaucratic interaction. I supplement this approach with materials for senior leaders in military and diplomatic bureaucracies.[25] As diplomatic affairs are conducted both on a state-to-state and party-to-party level in China, I collected available materials for both the Ministry of For-

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[24] An exception is the participation of intelligence personnel, the frequency of which is not examined in the article.

[25] While senior intelligence officials are sometimes referenced in the chronicles of other party elites, no dedicated chronicles are available for intelligence officials. This likely reflects the sensitivity of the party's intelligence activities, although it is also compatible with others who have speculated that foreign intelligence organizations were not as influential in China as in other major powers. See Lu, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China*, 148n70.

eign Affairs and International Liaison Department (ILD). For more consistent measurement across periods, I sampled based on the years in which bureaucratic leaders held one of the following positions: CMC Vice Chairman, Chief of General Staff, Defense Minister, Foreign Minister, ILD Head, and FALSG Chairman. Finally, I included all formal and informal meetings led by Zhou Enlai (1949–1976) and Deng Xiaoping (1956–1966) that focused on foreign or defense affairs, given their coordination responsibilities.

Coding rules are listed below. I first coded the meeting date and type. Meetings were divided into one of four categories: Politburo/Secretariat; CMC/Central Special Commission (CSC), leading small groups, and informal. In the analysis, I chose to group the CMC and CSC as both are focused on defense affairs, although the former handled operational and the latter procurement and nuclear matters. For meetings of formal bodies, I also coded meeting type (regular, expanded, standing committee). Second, I coded meeting agenda and whether subordinate reports were provided. Given the substantive focus of this paper, I coded whether the meeting agenda included foreign affairs, military affairs, both, or neither.[26] Future research might expand this to include other agenda types (economic, legal, social). Third, I recorded meeting participation, again with a focus on political-bureaucratic interaction. Specifically, I coded whether the supreme leader, as well as representatives from the military, diplomatic, and intelligence bureaucracies, attended. When formal body meetings did not list individual participants, I imputed them based upon the membership data described in Section 2.1.

2.2.2 Coding Rules

date: date of the meeting

body_name: name of the body convening the meeting[27]

- Politburo (政治局)
- Secretariat (书记处)[28]
- Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group (外事领导小组)[29]
- Central Military Commission (中央军事委员会)
- Central Special Commission (中央专业委员会)
- Informal

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[26]When missing, the agenda of one-on-one informal meetings with military officers and/or diplomats was inferred based upon their functional bureaucratic focus.

[27]Meetings of the Central Committee (中全会), Party/People's Congresses (全国代表大会/人民代表大会), work conferences (工作会议), symposia (座谈会议), diplomatic exchanges and other ceremonial activities are excluded from the sample.

[28]Only periods where the Secretariat could be considered an advisory/decision-making body (1949–1956 and 1980–1987).

[29]Some meetings in Li Peng's diary are assessed to be FALSG sessions based upon context.

`type`:

- (0) regular session
- (1) expanded (扩大) session
- (2) standing committee (常委) session

`information`:

- (0) no record of information provision from participant(s) to chairman[30]
- (1) record of information provision from participant(s) to chairman

`leader`: supreme leader did/did not participate

- Mao Zedong (1949–1976)
- Hua Guofeng (1976–1978)
- Deng Xiaoping (1978–1989)

`coordinator`: senior foreign policy coordinator(s) did/did not participate

- Zhou Enlai (1949–1976)
- Deng Xiaoping (1956–1966)

`attendee`:

- Military Only: only People's Liberation Army officials participated
- Diplomat Only: only Foreign Ministry or International Liaison Department officials participated
- Both: military and diplomatic officials participate
- Neither: neither military nor diplomatic officials participated

2.2.3 Sources

- Pang Xianzhi and Feng Hui, eds., *Mao Zedong nianpu, 1949–1976 [Chronicle of Mao Zedong, 1949–1976]*, 6 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013): 1949–1976.[31]

- Li Ping and Ma Zhisun, eds., *Zhou Enlai nianpu, 1949–1976 [Chronicle of Zhou Enlai, 1949–1976]*, 3 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997): 1949–1976.

- Liu Chongwen and Chen Shaochou, eds. *Liu Shaoqi nianpu, 1898–1969 [Chronicle of Liu Shaoqi, 1898–1969*, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1996): 1949–1966.

- Wu Dianyao, ed. *Zhu De nianpu, 1886–1976 [Chroncile of Zhu De, 1886–1976]*, 3 vols. (Beijing: Zhonyang wenxian chubanshe, 2006): 1949–1953.

- Wang Yan, ed. *Peng Dehuai nianpu [Chroncile of Peng Dehuai]* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe): 1952–1959.

- Li De and Shu Yun, eds. *Lin Biao riji [Diary of Lin Biao]* (Carle Place, NY: Mingjing chubanshe, 2009): 1959–1971.

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[30]Information provision coded based on keywords: 报告, 汇报, 听取, or 交换意见.

[31]The range of dates examined during the coding process are reported after the citation.

- Huang Yao and Zhang Mingzhe, eds., *Luo Ruiqing zhuan [Biography of Luo Ruiqing]* (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo chubanshe, 1996): 1959–1966.

- Zhang Zishen, ed., *Yang Chengwu nianpu, 1914—2004 [Chronicle of Yang Chengwu, 1914—2004]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 2014): 1966–1968.

- Liu Shufa, ed., *Chen Yi nianpu [Chronicle of Chen Yi]* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1995): 1958–1972.

- Xu Zehao ed., *Wang Jiaxiang nianpu, 1906–1974] [Chronicle of Wang Jiaxiang, 1906–1974]* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2001): 1949-1962.

- Liu Jijian et al., eds., *Ye Jianying nianpu, 1897–1986 [Chronicle of Ye Jianying, 1897–1986]*, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2007), 1970–1982.

- Li Yinren and Xu Xiaoyan, eds., *Xu Xianqian nianpu [Chroncile of Xu Xiangqian]*, 2 vols. (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 2016): 1976–1982.

- Zhou Junlun, ed., *Nie Rongzhen nianpu [Chronicle of Nie Rongzhen]*, 2 vols. (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999): 1949–1968; 1977–1986.

- Yang Shengqun and Yan Jianqi, eds. *Deng Xiaoping nianpu, 1904–1974 [Chronicle of Deng Xiaoping, 1904-1974*, 3 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2009): 1956–1966.

- Leng Rong and Wang Zuoling, eds. *Deng Xiaoping nianpu, 1975–1997 [Chronicle of Deng Xiaoping, 1975–1997]*, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2004): 1976–1989.

- Wang Weicheng, ed., *Li Xiannian nianpu [Chronicle of Li Xiannian]*, 6 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2011): 1976–1988.

- Ma Yunfei and Sun Yi, eds., *Jiang Zemin sixiang nianbian, 1989–2008 [Chronicle of Jiang Zemin Thought, 1989–2008]* (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2010).

- Sheng Ping and Wang Zaixing, eds., *Hu Yaobang sixiang nianpu, 1975–1989 [Chronicle of Hu Yaobang Thought, 1975–1989]*: 1980–1987. Draft manuscript available in the Fung Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

- Zhang Xianyang and Shi Yijun, eds. *Zhao Ziyang Zhongnanhai shinian jishi, 1980–1989 [Ten-Year Chronicle of Zhao Ziyang in Zhongnanhai, 1980—1989]*, 2 vols. (Hong Kong: Shijie kexue jiaoyu chubanshe, 2005): 1978–1989.

- Jiang Weimin, ed., *Liu Huaqing nianpu, 1916–2011 [Chronicle of Liu Huaqing, 1916–2011]*, 3 vols. (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 2016): 1987–1989.

3 Coding China's International Crisis Performance

3.1 A Strategy for Measuring International Crisis Performance

The analysis in the main text examines patterns of China's crisis performance. In support of this analysis, I identified all of China's international crises from 1949 to 2012. Following the existing literature,

I define an international crisis as a specific act, event, or situational change that leads decision-makers in one or more states to perceive (1) a threat to their basic values, (2) time pressures for a response, and (3) a heightened probability of military hostilities.[32] I build a sample of China's international crises using several types of sources. First, I consulted the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) dataset, which identify sixteen crises that were included in the sample.[33] Two ICB "near crises" that featured a major military component (1986–1987 Sino-Indian border crisis and the 2001 EP-3 reconnaissance aircraft incident) were included as well.[34] Second, I reviewed the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MIDs) dataset. Seven militarized incidents not included in the ICB, such as the Sino-Indian border clashes in 1967 and the Sino-Vietnamese border skirmishes in the early 1980s, also met the definition's components.[35] Finally, I reviewed the secondary literature discussing China's use of force and crisis management.[36]

For each case, I code China's goal(s) before the crisis began. Where possible, the codings privilege the consensus in the existing literature on Chinese foreign policy in order to guard against coder bias. I consulted primary sources when the existing literature is divided. At least one goal was identified for each crisis. Many crises featured multiple goals, in which case I identified the goal that the available evidence suggests was most important to Chinese decision-makers. Next, I coded if China was successful in achieving each goal. Coding success and failure of many crisis goals, such as territorial seizure or compelling a policy change, were relatively straightforward. In other cases, China's goal was to shape an adversary's behavior. In these cases, I reviewed primary and secondary sources from the target country (e.g., United States, Soviet

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[32]Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, *A Study of Crisis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 3.

[33]Two points are worth noting. First, the ICB dataset divides the Korean War into multiple crises. The first pertains to North Korea's decision to initiate the conflict and is thus excluded from the sample. The second and third distinguish between China's decision to enter the war and its initiation of new battlefield campaigns to bring the war to an end. Second, recent scholarship suggests that the 1987 Sino-Vietnamese border clashes listed in the ICB are better conceptualized as a gradual continuation of battlefield pressure from the 1984 crisis, rather than a new crisis in which decision-makers perceived a new threat to values or time pressure for response. See Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 156–161. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for identifying this point.

[34]The sample excludes six near crises, which did not involve a major military dimension: (1) the 1959 China-Indonesia Dispute; (2) the 1963 Xinjiang Crisis; (3) the Sino-Soviet split; (4) the 1966 Macau 123 Incident; (5) the 1997 North Korean Defection; and (6) the 2005 Chunxiao Gas Field Incident.

[35]The sample excludes three sets of MIDS that did not meet the criteria of threat to basic values or time pressure: (1) the 1975 Sino-Indian border clash at Tulung (MID 358); (2) border clashes between China and the Soviet Union in the late 1970s and 1980s (MIDs 2716/2017/2718); and (3) border clashes with North Korea in 1993 (MID 4018).

[36]These sources included Allen S. Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," *International Security* 26, no. 2 (2001): 103–131; Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*; Thomas J. Christensen, "Windows and War: Trend Analysis and Beijing's Use of Force," in *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, ed. Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); Zhang Tuosheng, "The Sino-American Aircraft Collision: Lessons for Crisis Management," in *Managing Sino-American Crises: Case Studies and Analysis*, ed. Michael D. Swaine, Zhang Tousheng, and Danielle F.S. Cohen (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006); Jessica Chen Weiss, *Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protest in China's Foreign Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). See especially Table 1.5, Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 64–65.

Union, India, and Vietnam) to assess whether the goal was achieved. Goals to demonstrate resolve were coded as a success only when there was evidence that they shaped adversary beliefs or behavior as China intended. While crises by definition allow states to demonstrate their willingness to run risks, it cannot be taken for granted that an action will cause an adversary to change beliefs or behavior. Similarly, long-term effects (i.e., goals that might have been achieved after the crisis ended) are coded as a success only when there is clear evidence that China's action in the crisis were responsible for a change in adversary behavior. That is, there must be evidence that the adversary's decision was directly linked to China's crisis behavior.

Next, I document whether there is evidence of an inaccurate assessment in China's decision-making prior to the onset of the crisis. To be included, an inaccurate assessment must be connected to at least one of China's crisis goals in one of three ways: the projected costs and benefits from achieving those goals; the anticipated adversary response to China's crisis actions; or the trends motivating China's perceived need to act (e.g., China assessing that a defense treaty was imminent prior to the First Taiwan Strait Crisis). Finally, I record the costs of the crisis as measured by battlefield casualties.

3.2 Coding Justifications

3.2.1 Coastal Island Seizures

- Crisis ID: MID 633/2052

- Year: 1950–1955

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Improve control of offshore islands - Successful

- Discussion: The goal of this prolonged crisis was to seize islands off the mainland coast.[37] China initiated six successful seizures of coastal islands from 1950 to 1955 (Shengsi Island, July 1950; Pishan Island, July 1950; Dongtou Islands, January 1952; Yangyu Island, May-June 1953; Jigushan Island, June 1953; Dongji Islands, May 1954).[38] China also successfully defended against six Nationalist attacks on coastal islands during this period (Nanri Island, December 1951; Meizhou Island, January-February 1952; Baishashan Island, March 1952; Huangjiao Island, June 1952, Nanri Island, October 1952, Dongshan Island, July 1953). Nationalist forces were only successful in seizing the Dongtou Islands in July 1950, which were later taken by Chinese forces in January 1952.

- Inaccurate Assessments: None observed.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success

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[37] Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 230–233.
[38] The successful seizure of Yijiangshan Island is discussed in Section 3.2.4.

- Goal Success Rate: 1/1 goals achieved
- Costs: 4,500+ casualties

3.2.2 Korean War (Entry)

- Crisis ID: ICB 132/133; MID 51

- Year: 1950

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Prevent U.S. military presence above 38th Parallel - Successful
    - Goal #2: Deter U.S. military advance north of 38th Parallel - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #3: Maintain the Communist regime in North Korea - Successful

- Discussion: Two objectives featured centrally in China's decision to intervene in the Korean War.[39] The first was to ensure that American forces remained below the 38th Parallel dividing North and South Korea (Goal #1). If China did not enter the war, Chinese leaders feared that American military would reach the Yalu River. As Mao described "such a situation would be very unfavorable to us and it would be even worse for the Northeast [of China]."[40] It is likely that this was China's primary goal. As Christensen summarizes, "Mao eventually decided to enter the Korean War reluctantly and largely because of the perceived long-term threat that would be posed by the permanent stationing of U.S. forces in North Korea."[41] China first attempted to achieve this goal through deterrence, signaling to the United States that it would enter the war if the United States crossed the 38th Parallel (Goal #2). Finally, some scholars suggest that China's goals were not entirely driven by its security interests, noting that another goal was to preserve Communism in the Korean peninsula (Goal #3). Chinese sources suggest that in early October 1950 the CCP Politburo reached a consensus that the issue was not simply a matter of maintaining a buffer zone, but also, as Chen summarizes, that the conflict "had become the focus of the confrontation between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp in the East, perhaps even the world." As such, the goal of intervention was "not only to rescue Korea" but also "to defend and promote an Asian and world revolution."[42]

    China was successful in achieving the first and the third of its goals by the end of the war. China's signals were unsuccessful in deterring the U.S. offensive, although China was still ultimately successful in using brute force to prevent U.S. military presence above the 38th Parallel. Finally, it is worth noting that, after China's initial battlefield victories, Mao adopted an additional goal of compelling the U.S.-led United Nations forces to withdraw from the Korean peninsula entirely. Yet it is not clear that this was a central goal prior to China's entry.

- Inaccurate Assessments: Mao was pessimistic about that Chinese signals would deter an advance across the 38th Parallel. As Chen notes, "Mao and his fellow Beijing leaders [...] tended to believe that the UN advance would not stop at the 38th parallel."[43] This may have been one reason why Mao ordered military preparations well before China's deterrence strategy failed. In addition, the available evidence suggests that while Mao believed that a victory of some kind was possible, he

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[39] Sources: Christensen, "Windows and War," 54–58; Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

[40] Ibid., 202.

[41] Christensen, "Windows and War," 54.

[42] Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 184.

[43] Ibid., 164.

did not initially envision China to be able to drive United Nations forces from the peninsula. Before China gained tactical momentum, Mao's language regarding "victory" was vague. As Chen notes, Mao adjusted China's "operational plans and war aims" after the Soviet Union informed China that it would not provide air support.[44] Mastro notes that before China's entry Mao "considered that [pushing the UN forces off the Korean Peninsula] may not be possible and that instead China would find itself in a protracted war [...]."[45] Christensen similarly describes that during deliberations, "Mao was hardly confident of success" and did not believe that "China clearly had the upper hand in the near term."[46]

- Codings:

  - Primary Goal: Success
  - Goal Success Rate: 2/3 goals achieved
  - Costs: 535,600 casualties[47]

3.2.3 Korean War (Termination)

- Crisis ID: ICB 133; MID 51

- Year: 1953

- Objectives:

  - Goal #1 (primary): Secure agreement under which PRC/DPRK prisoners of war would either be repatriated or delivered to a third-party country - Successful

- Discussion: China and North Korea triggered a new international crisis in the spring 1953 by initiating a major offensive against United Nations forces.[48] The primary objective of the fighting appears was to terminate the war on favorable terms (Goal #1). By 1953, negotiations were deadlocked over how to handle Chinese and North Korean prisoners of war (POW) after the conflict ended. The crux of the issue was that the United States claimed that many Chinese and North Korean POWs did not wish to return to their home country—and did not wish to repatriate them against their will. Chinese leaders questioned whether these POW preferences were genuine and suggested that they might be different once they were no longer POWs. China's "bottom line" was for the transfer of at least 90,000 POWs..[49] In March 1953, Zhou released a statement with a proposal that combined features of both: POWs who wished to be returned would be exchanged, whereas POWs who did not wish to be would be handed over to "a neutral state so as to ensure a just solution to the question of their repatriation."[50]

  China was generally successful in achieving this goal. 75,801 Chinese and North Korean POWs were repatriated in Operation Big Switch. An additional 22,604 Chinese and North Korean soldiers were turned over to a five-nation Neutral National Repatriation Commission.[51] As Chen notes, "When the

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[44]Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 204.

[45]Mastro, *The Costs of Conversation*, 42n49.

[46]Christensen, "Windows and War," 55.

[47]Xu Yan, "Korean War: In View of Cost-Effectiveness," Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in New York, October 21, 2003.

[48]Sources: Rosemary Foot, *A Substitute for Victory: The Politics of Peacemaking at the Korean Armistice Talks* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, Chapter 4.

[49]Ibid., 109.

[50]Foot, *A Substitute for Victory*, 168.

[51]Ibid., 190.

war ended, Mao and his fellow Beijing leaders could claim that they had been successful in reaching both their domestic and their international aims—although the price had been heavy."[52]

- Inaccurate Assessments. None observed.

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 1/1 goals achieved

3.2.4   Taiwan Strait Crisis (1954)

- Crisis ID: ICB 146; MID 50

- Year: 1954–1955

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1: Seize coastal islands (Dachens and Yijiangshan) - Successful
    - Goal #2 (primary): Deter treaty between the United States and Taiwan - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #3: Probe scope of U.S.-ROC alliance - Successful
    - Goal #4: Decrease U.S. support to KMT military actions against mainland - Successful

- Discussion: Central Military Commission (CMC) instructions to the East China Military Region in July 1954 specified that Chinese military forces would "use the navy and air force to bomb the Dachens and use the army to seize Yijiangshan Island" (Goal #1).[53] The orders also specified that the use of military force was aimed at "the American-Chiang mutual defense plot" (Goal #2). This goal was likely the primary goal for China. Chinese historian Xu Yan argues that Mao's "first consideration was the international strategic situation's influence on the question of reunification of the motherland."[54] The CMC instructions also stated that another goal was to probe American commitment to defend the offshore islands without escalating the conflict (Goal #3). In June 1954, Mao similarly noted that he sought to "avoid direct conflict [with the United States] to the best of our ability."[55] Finally, Fravel notes that China sought to end harassing attacks upon the mainland (Goal #4).[56]

  China was unable to deter Washington and Taipei from signing a mutual defense treaty. By the end of the crisis, however, China had successfully improved its control of the coastal islands (Yijiangshan, Dachens, Beiji, and Nanji islands). It had also probed the American position on the offshore islands without direct military engagement with the United States. As Fravel notes, in addition to "achieving a long-standing goal of securing the Zhejiang coast, the Yijiangshan campaign also probed the [Mutual Defense Treaty's] scope."[57][58]

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[52]Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 117.

[53]Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 233–241; Zhang Shu Guang, *Deterrence and Strategic Culture: Chinese-American Confrontations, 1949–1958* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 189–224; Christensen, "Windows and War," 58–61.

[54]Quoted in Christensen, 'Windows and War," 61.

[55]Zhang, *Deterrence and Strategic Culture*, 190.

[56]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 239.

[57]Ibid., 240.

[58]Xu Yan suggests that one of China's secondary objectives may have included domestic mobilization, but both Christensen and Fravel find little evidence to support that claim.

- Inaccurate Assessments: China may have mistakenly concluded that the United States and Taiwan were closer to signing a mutual defense treaty than they actually were.[59] China's initiation of the crisis may have instead helped to push the United States and Taiwan into signing such a treaty.[60]

- Codings:

  - Primary Goal: Failure
  - Goal Success Rate: 3/4 goals achieved
  - Costs: 1,420+ casualties[61]

3.2.5 Taiwan Strait Crisis (1958)

- Crisis ID: ICB 166; MID 173

- Year: 1958

- Objectives:

  - Goal #1 (primary): Mobilize support for the Great Leap Forward - Successful
  - Goal #2: Probe the scope of Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and Taiwan - Successful

- Discussion: It is likely that the primary objective in the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis was domestic political mobilization during the Great Leap Forward (Goal #1).[62] For example, Mao noted that "to have an enemy in front of us, to have tension, is to our advantage."[63] China also saw the crisis as a means of probing the scope of the U.S. defense treaty with Taiwan, particularly whether it covered the offshore islands of Jinmen and Mazu (Goal #2). For example, Mao noted that the goal of the "shelling was [...] to reconnoiter and test the American resolve."[64] As with the 1954 Taiwan Strait Crisis, China sought to probe the American position without provoking a direct military clash with American forces.

  China was successful achieving both goals. As Christensen notes, China was successful in using the crisis to mobilize Chinese society during the Great Leap Forward. China also was able to successfully probe the American position regarding the offshore islands without provoking the United States to attack.[65] China's precautions to ensure that probing operations would not inadvertently strike American forces were risky but ultimately successful.

- Inaccurate Assessments. Some scholars suggest that Mao inaccurately assessed the American response both to the shelling itself and to China's decision to create the impression that the Soviet Union supported the operation.[66] Yet there is also evidence that Mao believed that the shelling was

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[59]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 240.

[60]Christensen, "Windows and War," 60.

[61]Fravel notes that there were 1,420 casualties associated with the PRC seizure of Yijiangshan Island and an unknown number of PRC casualties during the shelling. Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 233–234.

[62]Sources: Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947–1958* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), Chapter 6; Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, Chapter 7; Christensen, "Windows and War," 61–63; Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 241–252; Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith*, 150–157.

[63]Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 180.

[64]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 248.

[65]Christensen, *Useful Adversaries*, 205.

[66]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 249; Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith*, 155.

intended to test American defense commitments, which suggests he was unsure how the United States would react and used the crisis to gain more information. Mao also accurately anticipated that the crisis would have diplomatic costs for China.[67] Thus, while it is possible that Mao inaccurately assessed the American response to the shelling, it appears that Mao did not necessarily believe that the shelling would compel an evacuation of Jinmen and Mazu.[68]

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 2/2 goals achieved
    - Costs: 460 casualties[69]

3.2.6 Sino-Indian Border Clashes (Longju and Kongka Pass)

- Crisis ID: ICB 171; MID 203

- Year: 1959

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Seal Tibet's borders - Successful
    - Goal #2: Secure Xinjiang-Tibet highway - Successful

- Discussion: The 1959 clashes between Chinese and Indian forces at Longju and Kongka Pass resulted from a broader strategy of addressing domestic unrest in Tibet.[70] China sought to secure the Tibetan border (Goal #1) through increased patrols, including in disputed territory claimed by India. As Zhou Enlai noted, China's aim was to prevent "remnant armed Tibetan rebels from crossing the border back and forth."[71] A second, related component was to secure a new Chinese highway connecting Xinjiang and Tibet, which ran through territory also claimed by India (Goal #2).[72] China was successful in achieving both objectives.[73]

- Inaccurate Assessments: None observed.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 2/2 goals achieved

- 1 killed[74]

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[67]Christensen, *Useful Adversaries*, 240. This interpretation is supported by the fact that when U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles began moving toward a settlement in which the KMT would evacuate the islands in exchange for an agreement not to use force, Mao objected on grounds that such a deal was unacceptable.

[68]Ibid., 229–233.

[69]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 242.

[70]Source: ibid., 75–83, 176–177.

[71]Ibid., 82.

[72]Ibid., 81–82.

[73]Available evidence does not suggest that China initiated the 1959 border clashes as part of a strategy to coerce India to make bargaining concessions on the ongoing border dispute. Once the crisis began, however, China did attempt to reach a diplomatic settlement with India.

[74]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 84.

3.2.7 China-Nepal Border Clashes

- Crisis ID: MID 148

- Year: 1959

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Seal Tibet's borders - Successful

- Discussion: In 1959, China mobilized its military in order to seal its borders in the wake of the Tibetan uprising (Goal #1).[75] Nepalese parliamentarians stated that the "presence of a huge Chinese army on the immediate border of Nepal and the infiltration of a large number of active Chinese intelligence [agents] among the Nepalese population is surely a great danger to Nepal's security."[76] A border clash near Mustang in June 1960 resulted in one Nepalese officer killed and over a dozen prisoners taken.[77] A Nepalese government spokesperson described the situation as "gravely delicate."[78] China ultimately achieved its objective of sealing the border—and reached an agreement with Nepal to restrict cross-border movement and prevent its support for Tibetan rebels.[79] It also successfully reached an agreement with Nepal to form a joint commission to demarcate the border, which resulted in a border pact signed on October 1, 1961.[80]

- Inaccurate Assessments: None observed.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 1/1 goals achieved
    - Costs: No casualties

3.2.8 Nationalist Invasion Scare

- Crisis ID: ICB 192; MID 172

- Year: 1962

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Deter Kuomintang offensive against mainland - Successful
    - Goal #2: Limit U.S. support to KMT military actions against mainland - Successful

- Discussion: See discussion in main text.

- Inaccurate Assessments. See discussion in main text.

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[75]Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 71–72, 91–93; "Peiping Said to Put Pressure on Nepal," *The New York Times*, December 24, 1959; P.K. Padmanabhan, "Chinese Reds Attack Nepalese Border Town," *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1960; "Nepal Moves Troops," *The New York Times*, July 4, 1960; "Nepal Urges China to Withdraw Army," *The Times*, July 8, 1960; "Nepalese Report New Incursions," *The New York Times*, July 24, 1960; "Chinese Leave Nepal Border," *The Washington Post*, August 1, 1960.

[76]"Nepalese Report a Chinese Threat," *The New York Times*. December 27, 1959.

[77]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 93.

[78]"Reds Slay Nepali Officer, Size Troops," *The Washington Post*, June 30, 1960.

[79]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 91.

[80]Ibid.

- Codings:

  - Primary Goal: Success
  - Goal Success Rate: 2/2 goals achieved
  - Costs: No casualties

3.2.9 Sino-Indian War

- Crisis ID: ICB 194; MID 199

- Year: 1962

- Objectives:

  - Goal #1: Deter Indian forward policy - Unsuccessful
  - Goal #2 (primary): Compel India to abandon its "forward policy" - Successful
  - Goal #3: Demonstrate military strength though punishment - Successful
  - Goal #4: Destroy Indian outposts along the border - Successful
  - Goal #5: Facilitate a negotiated settlement to the dispute - Unsuccessful

- Discussion: China's decision to use military force against India in 1962 was aimed at deterring and compelling India to abandon the its "forward policy"—a plan to increase Indian military presence along the border (Goals #1 and #2).[81] After the 1959 Sino-Indian border clashes, China improved its military position along the border, establishing dozens of new outposts along the eastern and western sectors of the India-China border by the fall of 1961. In November 1961, India approved a policy—commonly referred to as the "Forward Policy"—in which India would improve its control over contested territory by increasing the frequency of Indian border patrols and opening new border outposts. The clearest evidence supporting this as China's primary goal is from an enlarged meeting of the Politburo on October 18, when Mao noted that: "our counterattack is only to warn and punish, only to tell Nehru and the Indian government that they cannot use military means to resolve the border problem."[82]

  Second, China sought to demonstrate military strength to India through effective battlefield performance (Goal #3). Chinese decision-makers believed that India had concluded that China was "weak and easily bullied." Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai described, "when you have no room for retreat and you do not counterattack, that is really showing weakness and they will believe that you are easily cowed."[83] Third, China sought to destroy Indian outposts along the border while maintaining its own (Goal #4). The Central Military Commission's operational orders noted that one of the war's objectives was to "protect the stability of the homeland's frontiers" and to attack "reactionaries."[84] Finally, there is some evidence that China sought to improve prospects for a negotiated settlement with India

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[81]Sources: Allen S. Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina* (University of Michigan Press, 1975), Chapters 3–4; John W. Garver, "China's Decision for War with India in 1962," in *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, ed. Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 174–197; Cheng Feng and Larry M. Wortzel, "PLA Operational Principles and Limited War: The Sino-Indian War of 1962," in *Chinese Warfighting: The PLA Experience since 1949*, ed. Mark A. Ryan, David M. Finkelstein, and Michael A. McDevitt (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 143–197.

[82]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 196.

[83]Ibid., 195.

[84]Ibid., 194.

(Goal #5). For example, some sources suggest that Chinese decision-makers believed that the military operation would help create conditions for negotiated settlement.[85]

China's decisive battlefield victory was successful in achieving the three of its five objectives. The battlefield success clearly demonstrated Chinese military strength and, in the immediate aftermath of the war, India abandoned the Forward Policy. India also lost control of territory it had attempted to contest during the period in which it had pursued that policy. Rather than facilitating a negotiated settlement, however, the war may have made Indian leadership less open to diplomatic negotiations.[86]

- Inaccurate Assessments: Chinese assessments regarding its ability to use military force in order to compel India to give up its forward policy appear to have been accurate.[87] There is insufficient evidence to conclude that Mao believed that war would yield successful diplomatic talks. Mao was cognizant of the "many difficulties and dangers" associated with the international fall-out of the war, including the fact that Nehru would be helped by the international status and respect that he enjoyed, as well as possible assistance from the United States and Soviet Union. Garver suggests that Mao's assessment was that these "costs were more than offset" by the "long-term gains of inflicting a sever if limited defeat on India."[88]

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 3/5 goals achieved
    - Costs: 2,419 casualties[89]

3.2.10 Vietnam War

- Crisis ID: MID 611

- Year: 1964–1968

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1: Deter American bombing of North Vietnam - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #2: Deter American ground invasion of North Vietnam - Successful
    - Goal #3: (primary): Outmatch Soviet Union influence in Southeast Asia - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #4: Compel the United States to leave Vietnam - Successful

- Discussion: In 1965, China deployed military units to North Vietnam to support its escalating conflict with the United States.[90] At peak levels, some 170,000 PLA troops were deployed; 1,500 were

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[85]Garver, "China's Decision for War with India in 1962," 116.

[86]Mastro, *The Costs of Conversation*, Chapter 4.

[87]Garver agrees that China's perceptions regarding the fundamentals of its strategy were "substantially accurate." He suggests, however, that its perceptions of Indian intentions regarding Tibet were inaccurate. Yet there is no doubt that India intended to improve its control over border territory contested by China, which was the central consideration in China's decision to escalate the crisis. See Garver, "China's Decision for War with India in 1962," 87.

[88]Ibid., 118.

[89]Feng and Wortzel, "PLA Operational Principles and Limited War," 188.

[90]Sources: Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," 113–116; James G. Hershberg and Chen Jian, "Reading and Warning the Likely Enemy: China's Signals to the United States about Vietnam in 1965," *The International History Review* Vol. 27, no. 1 (2005): 47–84; Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 207–229; Stephen J. Morris, *The Soviet-Chinese-Vietnamese Triangle in the 1970s: The View from Moscow* (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1999); Christensen, "Windows and War," 66–69; Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith*, 167–188.

killed and 4,200 were wounded.[91] These deployments included anti-aircraft artillery units, which were responsible for downing and damaging thousands of American aircraft.[92]

Early scholarship on China's decision-making emphasized two security goals.[93] First, China aimed to deter the United States from bombing North Vietnam (Goal #1) or attempting a ground invasion (Goal #2). Shortly after the Gulf of Tonkin incident in August 1964, China ordered the Kunming and Guangzhou military regions, as well as other air force and naval units, to increase unit readiness—and to "be ready to cope with any possible sudden attack."[94] The same month, four air divisions and one anti-aircraft division along China's border were mobilized. China's aim in taking these actions was to deter American escalation. When Vietnamese General Secretary Le Duan expressed concerns that the United States might attack North Vietnam, Mao reassured him by saying "If the United States attacks the North, they will have to remember that the Chinese also have legs, and legs are used for walking."[95] Mao noted that he planned to deploy anti-aircraft artillery divisions to its southern border "openly," suggesting that the mobilization was intended to deter American escalation. These signals were received by the American intelligence community, who concluded that China was ready to provide support to North Vietnam if the United States attacked.[96]

While neither its mobilization nor its subsequent deployments of anti-aircraft artillery were successful in deterring an American bombing campaign against North Vietnam, these deployments were successful in shaping American decision-making regarding ground invasion.[97]

More recent scholarship has emphasized that China's primary motivation in the Vietnam War was ideological competition with the Soviet Union (Goal #3). As Christensen notes, "strategies consistent with realpolitik expectations did not dominate [China's] approach to the Vietnam War."[98] The most compelling evidence stems from the fact that China lobbied to keep Vietnam from accepting Soviet military aid, which would have increased Vietnam's odds of winning the war. As Chinese historian Li Danhui notes, "conditions in Sino-Soviet relations would come to produce a decisive effect on the principle of aiding Vietnam" during the war.[99]

China was generally unsuccessful in achieving this goal. From 1965 to 1969, relations between China and Vietnam deteriorated, while the Soviet Union won more influence with Vietnam. Morris notes that by the late 1960s, Vietnam had "titled from a position of neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute towards partial alignment with the Soviet Union."[100]

Finally, China's military assistance was part of a broader strategy aimed at compelling the United States to leave Vietnam (Goal #4), which was ultimately successful. China began providing support to North Vietnam—and encouraging North Vietnamese decision-makers to pursue a more aggressive position in the insurgency—before it was clear that the United States would intervene. In June 1964, two months before the Gulf of Tonkin crisis, Mao Zedong told North Vietnamese Chief of Staff Van Tien Dung that the two countries should be united in their struggle against the United States,

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[91]Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," 115.

[92]Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 229.

[93]Gerald Segal, *Defending China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 158–175.

[94]Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 213.

[95]Ibid.

[96]Hershberg and Jian, "Reading and Warning the Likely Enemy," 62.

[97]Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," 115n43.

[98]Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith*, 184.

[99]Cited in Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith*, 184.

[100]Morris, *The Soviet-Chinese-Vietnamese Triangle*, 9.

noting that "[T]he more you fear the Americans, the more they will bully you [...] You should not fear, you should fight [...]." The following month, Mao told Vietnam's ambassador that "If they [the Americans] start bombing or landing operations [against North Vietnam], we will fight them [...] If the United States attacks North Vietnam, that is not just your problem. The Americans can dispatch their troops. Cannot we Chinese also dispatch our troops?" In July, Chinese Premier told Vietnamese and Cambodian leaders that "if the United States takes one step, China will respond with one step; if the United States dispatches its troops [to attack the DRV], China will also dispatch its troops."[101]

- Inaccurate Assessments. Mao incorrectly assessed whether the United States would escalate in Vietnam— an assessment that provided the basis for encouraging North Vietnam to escalate the insurgency in South Vietnam. Christensen notes that Mao "did not expect direct U.S. attacks on North Vietnam [...] Mao believed that the United States was spread too thin and would have to rely on intermediate allies, such as Japan and West Germany, to take the fight on land to communist countries other than the Soviet Union."[102] Chen similarly argues that China's policy of supporting the insurgency was aimed at unification before the United States could escalate the conflict.[103] The US bombing campaign after the Pleiku crisis thus "came as an unpleasant surprise to [China's] leaders. Mao and his comrades were forced to reconsider the implications of American actions in Vietnam and, accordingly, formulate Chinese strategies to deal with the worsening crisis."[104] In addition, contrary to China's expectations, Vietnam's reunification left China with less influence in the region. Vietnam developed a close relationship with the Soviet Union, solidified by the Soviet-Vietnamese defense treaty signed in November 1978. This outcome negatively affected China's security, as discussed below in the sections on the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War and subsequent border clashes.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Failure
    - Goal Success Rate: 2/4 goals achieved
    - Costs: 5,700 casualties[105]

3.2.11 Sikkim Ultimatum

- Crisis ID: MID 623

- Year: 1965

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1: Deter Indian invasion of Pakistan - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #2 (primary): Compel India to accept ceasefire - Successful
    - Goal #3: Liberate Kashmir from Indian control - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #4: Increase Chinese influence with Pakistan - Unsuccessful

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[101] This paragraph draws from Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 209.

[102] Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith*, 183.

[103] Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 215–216.

[104] Ibid., 216. Emphasis added.

[105] Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," 115.

- Discussion: China's primary goal was to deter an Indian attack on Pakistan in the wake of Pakistan's gambit in Operation Gibraltar (Goal #1).[106] As Garver notes, "China was apparently using its national strength to deter India from attacking Pakistan."[107] Newly available records confirm that Chinese leaders made defense commitments to Pakistan in early 1965. Mao Zedong told Ayub Khan during a meeting in March 1965 that "Our two countries are friendly countries and take care of each other's interests."[108] Liu Shaoqi more directly told Ayub that "If India attacks Pakistan, China can copy India's maneuver and advance on Delhi."[109] By August 1965, however, Garver notes that "it became increasingly apparent that China's deterrent support for Pakistan might fail" and, as the conflict began to escalate, "China weighed in to try to deter India" through further public statements by Foreign Minister Chen Yi and *People's Daily*.[110] China was unsuccessful in this regard; Garver directly notes that "India was not deterred by Chinese warnings."[111]

  Second, after India escalated the conflict, China sought to compel it to end hostilities and accept a ceasefire (Goal #2). This was most likely China's primary goal. On September 17, China issued an ultimatum demanding that "the Indian government dismantle all its military works for aggression on the Chinese side of the China-Sikkim boundary [...] within three days [...] Otherwise, the Indian government must bear full responsibility for all the grave consequences arising therefrom."[112] Scholars believe that this ultimatum was actually aimed at shaping India's decision-making regarding the war with Pakistan—and that China's coercive threats shaped India's decision to accept the ceasefire rather than continuing the conflict.[113] Newly available primary sources, including the diary of the Indian Defence Minister Y.B. Chavan, support this conclusion.[114]

  Garver suggests two additional goals. It is possible that one of China's goals was to liberate Kashmir from Indian control (Goal #3). This goal would have been congruent with China's increasing support for foreign insurgencies. If this was China's goal, it was ultimately unsuccessful. It is also possible that China simply wanted to increase influence with Pakistan by demonstrating goodwill (Goal #4). China may not have achieved this goal. According to one Chinese scholar, the "limited effect of China's diplomatic and military support" prompted Pakistan to change its diplomatic posture, which decreased Chinese influence and increased that of the United States and Soviet Union.[115]

- Inaccurate Assessment: Cheng argues that the "outbreak of the Second India-Pakistan War went beyond the expectations of the Chinese government."[116] According to one first-hand account, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai had considered support for Pakistan in repeated discussions with the senior military leadership. The group concluded that some kind of support was possible, but did not reach a

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[106]Sources: John W. Garver, *Protracted Contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 194–204; Tanvi Madan, *Fateful Triangle: How China Shaped US-India Relations during the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2020), 181–185.

[107]Garver, *Protracted Contest*, 196.

[108]Pang, *Mao Zedong nianpu*, Vol. V, 483.

[109]Cheng Xiaohe, "Di er ci YinBa zhanzheng zhong Zhongguo dui Bajisitan de zhiyuan [Chinese Support to Pakistan during the Second India-Pakistan War]," *Waijiao pinglun [Diplomatic review]* 3 (2012): 74.

[110]Garver, *Protracted Contest*, 199.

[111]Ibid., 200.

[112]Ibid., 202.

[113]Ibid., 203; Madan, *Fateful Triangle: How China Shaped US-India Relations during the Cold War*, 183–185.

[114]R.D. Pradhan, *1965 War The Inside Story: Defence Minister Y.B. Chavan's Diary of the India-Pakistan War* (New Delhi: Atlantic, 2007), 65–78.

[115]Cheng, "Di er ci YinBa zhanzheng zhong Zhongguo dui Bajisitan de zhiyuan," 74, 87.

[116]Ibid., 86.

determination regarding how China might do so.[117] One Chinese scholar interprets this as an indication that the group was "unable to come up with a set of effective recommendations."[118] A final decision was not made until Zhou brought up the topic with Mao Zedong at the Second Annual National Games in early September. Mao stated that "if we want to send troops, it would be good to do so at the spot closest to Pakistan's border," which was interpreted as his support for military coercion against India.[119]

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 1/4 goals achieved
    - Costs: No casualties

3.2.12 Sino-Indian Border Clashes (Nathu La and Cho La)

- Crisis ID: MID 1715

- Year: 1967

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Deter Indian military presence along border - Unsuccessful

- Discussion: In the fall of 1967, Chinese and Indian forces clashed at Nathu La and Cho La.[120] The Chinese attack was aimed at India's growing military presence and increasingly assertive actions along the China-India border. Unlike the 1962 Sino-Indian War, however, the Chinese strategy was unsuccessful. China's military attack on September 11 triggered a three-day confrontation at the end of which Chinese positions at Nathu La were destroyed. China's actions had no appreciable effect on India's military presence or activities along the border.

- Inaccurate Assessments: While documentation regarding the 1967 border clashes is thin, Fravel suggest that "Chinese leaders likely magnified the potential threat from India and concluded that a forceful response was required."[121] Poor battlefield performance similarly suggests that Chinese military assessments were inaccurate. It is unlikely (though possible) that Chinese military leaders anticipated poor performance and launched the operation anyway. A more likely explanation is that the attack was not thoroughly analyzed by the central government, which was in the middle of the Cultural Revolution. This interpretation is supported by the fact that China did not establish a frontline headquarters or issued rules of engagement prior to the onset of the fighting.[122]

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Failure
    - Goal Success Rate: 0/1 goals achieved
    - Costs: 32+ killed[123]

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[117]Yang Gongsu, *Cangsang jiushi nian: yi ge waijiao teshi de huiyi [The Vicissitudes of Ninety Years: Recollections of a Diplomatic Envoy]* (Haikou: Hainan chubanshe, 1999), 283.

[118]Cheng, "Di er ci YinBa zhanzheng zhong Zhongguo dui Bajisitan de zhiyuan," 83.

[119]Yang, *Cangsang jiushi nian*, 283.

[120]Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 197–199.

[121]Ibid., 198.

[122]Ibid., 198–199.

[123]Fravel notes that 32 Chinese soldiers were killed in the Nathu La clash, while an unknown number of Chinese were killed in the Cho La clash. Ibid., 197.

3.2.13 Sino-Soviet Border Conflict

- Crisis ID: ICB 231; MID 343/349

- Year: 1969

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Deter Soviet attack/escalation - Unsuccessful

    - Goal #2: Deter Soviet military build-up along border - Unsuccessful

    - Goal #3: Seize Zhenbao Island - Successful

    - Goal #4: Mobilize domestic support for restored political order - Unsuccessful

- Discussion: See discussion in main text. It is worth noting that some of Mao's comments suggest that he may have seen the conflict as beneficial for domestic political purposes.[124] At one point, for example, Mao commented that "we should let [the Soviets] come in, which will help us in our mobilization."[125] As other scholars note, however, the evidence supporting this conclusion is thin. Chinese propaganda immediately after the fighting began continued to emphasize American, rather than Soviet, imperialism. Moreover, the political report of the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969—which was reviewed by Mao—continued to describe China's main enemy as the United States rather than the Soviet Union.[126]

  Even if domestic mobilization was one of China's crisis goals, there is mixed evidence that the strategy was successful. As Yang notes, Chinese directives issued during the summer of 1969—after the crisis began—were ineffective in restoring domestic order.[127] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals similarly note that "anarchy still prevailed" in many of China's provinces. Despite the Sino-Soviet tensions, the Ninth Party Congress thus "failed to halt internecine struggles" throughout the country.[128] While Yang suggests that China's domestic mobilizations in the fall of 1969 may have been more successful "to an extent," he sees this as an "unexpected consequence" of the crisis—as Mao did not expect the Soviet Union to escalate in reaction to the Chinese ambush.[129]

  Finally, it is also worth noting that an alternative motivation for the crisis could have been to facilitate US-China rapprochement. Yet there little evidence that Mao viewed the crisis as a means of improving US-China relations *before* the crisis began. Yang thus similarly describes improved US-China relations as an "unexpected consequence" rather than an intended goal of the border clashes.[130]

- Inaccurate Assessments. See discussion in main text.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Failure

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[124]See Li Danhui, "Zhengzhi doushi yu dishou: 1960 niandai ZhongSu bianjie guanxi [Political Fighters and Rivals: Sino-Soviet Border Relations in the 1960s]," *Shehui kexue [Social Sciences]* 2 (2007); Yang Kuisong, "The Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969: From Zhenbao Island to Sino-American Rapprochement," *Cold War History* 1, no. 1 (2000): 21–52; Lyle J. Goldstein, "Return to Zhenbao Island: Who Started Shooting and Why It Matters," *The China Quarterly*, no. 168 (2001): 985–997.

[125]Yang, "The Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969," 30.

[126]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 214–215.

[127]Yang, "The Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969," 41–42.

[128]Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 316–317.

[129]Yang, "The Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969," 41–42.

[130]Ibid., 42. See also Christensen, "Windows and War," 71.

- Goal Success Rate: 1/4 goals achieved

- Costs: 91 casualties[131]

3.2.14 Paracel Islands Seizure

- Crisis ID: MID 355

- Year: 1974

- Objective:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Improve territorial control in the Paracel Islands - Successful

- Discussion: China's primary objective of the Paracel Island crisis was to improve China's control over disputed territory in the South China Sea.[132] Scholars disagree as to whether China's original goal was to seize control of Crescent Group of the Paracels—or if that goal emerged South Vietnamese forces performed poorly during initial clashes. In either case, China was successful in achieving its objectives. South Vietnamese forces retreated from Robert and Money islands—and South Vietnamese troops on Pattle Island surrendered.[133] China has retained control of the Crescent Group since the crisis.

- Inaccurate Assessments: Fravel suggests that Chinese decision-makers may have not expected South Vietnam to escalate in response to its more assertive posture regarding the Paracels and Spratlys—or at least assessed that Vietnamese escalation would not happen until a later date. Specifically, Fravel notes that before the morning of January 19, "China was not prepared to launch an attack and [...] apparently *did not expect one*."[134] Fravel notes that, there were not PLA Navy vessels "on patrol in the Crescent or Amphitrite groups" at the time of the diplomatic statement. Those that China initially deployed were "ill equipped to defend these islands against larger RVN ships."[135] In fact, when South Vietnam escalating the tensions, senior military leaders in Hainan were "attending a training meeting" rather than "preparing to strike in the Paracels."[136] Finally, Fravel suggests that, given the minimal South Vietnamese presence prior to the diplomatic statement, China might have been able to improve its control over the Paracel Islands simply seizing the islands and presenting a fait accompli to South Vietnam.[137]

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success

    - Goal Success Rate: 1/1 goals achieved

    - Costs: 85 casualties[138]

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[131]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 201. There may have been additional Chinese casualties during the border clashes in August. See John W. Garver, *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 281.

[132]Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 280–285; Toshi Yoshihara, "The 1974 Paracels Sea Battle: A Campaign Appraisal," *Naval War College Review* Vol. 69, no. 2 (2016): 41–65.

[133]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 283.

[134]Ibid., 285.

[135]Ibid., 284.

[136]Ibid., 285.

[137]Ibid., 284.

[138]Yoshihara, "The 1974 Paracels Sea Battle," 50.

3.2.15 Sino-Vietnamese War

- Crisis ID: ICB 298; MID 3007

- Year: 1979

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1: Deter Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia - Unsuccessful

    - Goal #2 (primary): Demonstrate PRC military strength against DRV - Unsuccessful

    - Goal #3: Compel DRV withdrawal from Cambodia - Unsuccessful

    - Goal #4: Curtail Soviet influence in the region - Unsuccessful

    - Goal #5: Temporarily seize territory in northern Vietnam - Successful

- Discussion: The Sino-Vietnamese War was an outgrowth of the strategic rivalry between China and the Soviet Union. In addition, China was caught between an emerging military conflict between Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, which China had helped to seize power. Khmer Rouge forces carried out harassment attacks and probing military operations along its border with Vietnam throughout the late 1970s. Heavy fighting erupted between Cambodia and Vietnam in 1977 and Vietnam militarily intervened to topple the Khmer Rouge in 1978. In parallel to these escalating tensions, Chinese and Vietnamese forces clashed along the border.[139]

In the early stages of the crisis, China hoped to deter a Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia (Goal #1). Once deterrence failed, Chinese leaders believed the invasion would demonstrate the costs that China could impose militarily if Vietnam did not alter its behavior in Southeast Asia (Goal #2). Demonstrating military strength would instill fear in Vietnam of a second invasion, prompting it to make concessions that China desired. Prior to the war, for instance, China's leaders repeatedly compared their military offensive to the 1962 Sino-Indian Border War, in which the Chinese military had performed well.[140] A third goal was to compel Vietnam to withdraw its forces from Cambodia and end clashes along the Sino-Vietnamese border (Goal #3).[141] Fourth, China sought to curtail Soviet influence in the region (Goal #4).[142] As Christensen notes, China sought to "send a coercive message to Hanoi that its pro-Soviet and anti-Chinese behavior was unacceptable and would be costly."[143] Finally, China sought to seize territory in the northern part of Vietnam (Goal #5).

Most scholarship characterizes the Sino-Vietnamese War as a failure for China.[144] Segal describes the war as "China's most important foreign poilcy failure since 1949."[145] Ross suggests that "Chinese foreign policy toward Vietnam from 1975 to 1979 ended in failure," although suggests that China

[139]Sources: Harlan W. Jencks, "China's 'Punitive' War on Vietnam: A Military Assessment," *Asian Survey* 19, no. 8 (1979): 801–815; Segal, *Defending China*, 211–230; Robert Ross, *The Indochina Tangle: China's Vietnam Policy, 1975–1979* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," 119–120; Christensen, "Windows and War," 71–75; Edward C. O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War: The Last Maoist War* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*.

[140]Andrew Scobell, *China's Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 125.

[141]See Deng Liqun, *Deng Liqun guoshi jiangtanlu [Record of Deng Liqun's Lectures on National History]* (2000), 353.

[142]Li Min, *ZhongYue zhanzheng shinian [Ten Years of War between China and Vietnam]* (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 1993), 16.

[143]Christensen, "Windows and War," 74.

[144]Jencks, "China's 'Punitive' War on Vietnam: A Military Assessment."

[145]Segal, *Defending China*, 211.

options during this time were severely constrained.[146] Whiting argues that "Vietnamese resistance proved stubborn" and that "the PLA performed poorly," concluding that "coercive diplomacy failed to accomplish anything substantive."[147] Christensen argues that "Neither result [of China's intended goal's] was achieved."[148] O'Dowd also sees the war as a failure for China.[149] Li notes that China "failed to punish Vietnam" through the war.[150]

It is worth discussing in detail why scholars have generally come to this conclusion. First, and most important, China's military performed poorly on the battlefield. Instead of the quick and decisive battles for which it aimed, the Chinese military instead faced a "series of slow, indecisive operations" in which the Chinese military "proved incapable of using its masses of troops effectively."[151] The effect of the war on Vietnam's estimates of China's strength and willingness to make concessions to China was thus the opposite of what Chinese decision-makers intended. Shortly after the conflict ended, Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong noted that, "it was not them who gave us a 'lesson', but it was we who gave them a 'lesson.'"[152] Vietnamese General Secretary Le Duan similarly commented that China "suffered a setback" in its invasion, such that even with an invasion force of a million troops, China would not be able to "gain a foothold" past the area along the border.[153] Even China's leaders conceded that Vietnam's leaders were "not yet in enough of a difficult position to accept a political solution."[154]

The war was also unsuccessful successful in compelling Hanoi to take a different position in diplomatic negotiations or make concessions regarding its military occupation of Cambodia.[155] Finally, rather than reducing Soviet-Vietnamese cooperation, the war increased it. In July 1979, Brezhnev noted that the threat China posed to Vietnam obliged the Soviet Union "not to weaken in the slightest manner our support and our help" for Vietnam.[156] One Vietnamese diplomat recalled that the Soviet Union "exploited" the war "to strengthen its position in Southeast Asia" and "expanded its political, economic, and military presence in the area."[157] Soviet military presence in Southeast Asia increased after the war.[158]

Recently, one analysis has argued that the war's outcome was more favorable for China than previous scholarship suggested.[159] One of the central documents on which this argument is based is a speech

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[146]Ross, *The Indochina Tangle*, 264.

[147]Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," 120.

[148]Christensen, "Windows and War," 74.

[149]O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War*, 8.

[150]Xiaobing Li, *A History of the Modern Chinese Army* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 258.

[151]O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War*, 46.

[152]Conversation between Jambyn Batmunkh and Pham Van Dong, December 2, 1979, Wilson Center History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Mongol Ulsyn Zasgiin Gazryn Arkhiv: fond 1, tov'yog 28, kh/n 19 (1980 on), khuu 21–55. Obtained and translated by Sergey Radchenko with the assistance of Onon Perenlei.

[153]Comrade B on the Plot of the Reactionary Chinese Clique Against Vietnam, 1979, Wilson Center History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, People's Army Library, Hanoi. Obtained and translated by Christopher Goscha.

[154]Memorandum of Conversation, Beijing, August 27, 1979. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977–1980, Volume 8, China*, Document 264.

[155]Wang Taiping, ed., *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiao shi [Diplomatic History of the People's Republic of China]* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1998), 287–289.

[156]Transcript, Meeting of East German leader Erich Honecker and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, July 28, 1979, Wilson Center History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Obtained and translated by Christian Ostermann.

[157]Huynh Anh Dung, *Ghi chep ve Campuchia (1975–1991) [Notes on Cambodia (1975–1991)]*, trans. Merle Pribbenow (1995), 24.

[158]Ian Storey and Carlyle A. Thayer, "Cam Ranh Bay: Past Imperfect, Future Conditional," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 23 (2001): 456.

[159]Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 120–123.

given by Deng Xiaoping on March 16, at the end of the war, in which the Chinese leader claimed victory. Given the timing of the speech, however, it is difficult to take Deng's characterizations at the end of the war, as well as his own assessment of its successes and failures, at face value. It seems unlikely, particularly given Deng's intimate connection with the war's planning and implementation, that he would present the war as a failure—and might alternatively be read as an ex post justification of a failed strategy. Finally, while Vietnam eventually withdrew from Cambodia, factors other than the war shaped this decision (see discussion in §3.2.17). On the contrary, the available evidence suggests that the immediate effect of the war was to strengthen Vietnam's resolve.

For example, Deng claimed that the war had enabled China to focus on the Four Modernizations. If the war had successfully curbed Soviet influence in the region, one might make the case that the war reduced the level of international threat and thereby allowed Deng to focus on economic modernization. Yet Soviet military cooperation with Vietnam increased after the war. Deng also claimed that the war had boosted China's prestige and influence in the world and improved its relations with the United States. The evidence in support of Deng's assertion, however, is weak. Shortly before the Chinese invasion, President Carter told Deng Xiaoping that "it would be a serious mistake" to launch a "punitive strike" against Vietnam.[160] US-China cooperation persisted in spite of Carter's objections, not because it appealed to Carter's wishes. Deng also claimed that the war helped to give the Chinese military professional experience. Yet there is limited evidence prior to the conflict that Deng viewed the war as a training exercise. Deng recognized the military was professionally deficient, but it is not clear that he saw the war as a means to address this problem until after the war.

- Inaccurate Assessments: The available evidence suggests that Deng Xiaoping held inaccurate assessments about the ability of the campaign to shape Hanoi's decision-making. On January 29, 1979, shortly before the war, Deng commented that "some punishment [against Vietnam] *over a short period of time* will put restraint on Vietnamese ambitions." He also suggested that China would not face "too much difficulty" in achieving its objectives.[161] On March 1, 1979, Deng was optimistic that the war would "damage the Soviet's strategic deployments."[162] Ruan argues that Deng felt that the "offensive would be as easy as the one Mao launched against India in the 1960s, unfolding as planned and winning the approval of all Chinese people."[163] Christensen suggests that the party elite "probably perceived" Vietnam as "weaker" than it proved to be.[164] Vogel notes that Deng envisioned a "quick decisive campaign" akin to China's invasion of Indian in 1962.[165] As Segal summarizes, "the failure of policy [during the Sino-Vietnamese War] can be attributed to China' incorrect assessment of the link between the political and military dimensions of war."[166]

- Codings:

  - Primary Goal: Failure
  - Goal Success Rate: 1/5 goals achieved

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[160]Oral Presentation by President Carter to Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping, Washington, January 30, 1979. *FRUS, 1977–1980, Vol. XIII, China*, Document 206.

[161]Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, January 29, 1979. *FRUS, 1977–1980, Vol. XIII, China*, Document 205. Emphasis added.

[162]Deng Xiaoping fu zongli tan Yuenan wenti [Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping Discusses the Vietnam Issue], March 1, 1979. Fujian Provincial Archives, File 222-12-287.

[163]Ming Ruan, *Deng Xiaoping: Chronicle of an Empire* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 54.

[164]Christensen, "Windows and War," 75.

[165]Ezra F. Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 527.

[166]Segal, *Defending China*, 211.

– Costs: 31,000 casualties[167]

3.2.16 Sino-Vietnamese Border Clashes (Luojiapingda, Faka, Kuolin Mountains)

- Crisis ID: MID 3102/3614

- Year: 1980 (Luojiapingda), 1981 (Faka and Koulin)[168]

- Objectives:

    – Goal #1 (primary): Compel DRV withdrawal from Cambodia - Unsuccessful
    – Goal #2: Deter Soviet presence in Southeast Asia - Unsuccessful
    – Goal #3: Seize border territory - Successful

- Discussion: In 1980 and 1981, China launched a series of military operations along its border Viet-nam.[169] These border clashes are best viewed as continuations of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War, primarily aimed at coercing Hanoi to withdraw from Cambodia (Goal #1). Another broader aim of the operation was to deter Soviet influence in Southeast Asia (Goal #2).[170] Finally, China aimed to seize contested territory along the border (Goal #3).[171]

    The military campaigns did not compel a change in Vietnamese behavior. Military offensives in 1980 and 1981 had little effect on Vietnam's military operations in Cambodia.[172] Vietnam's decisions regarding withdrawal from Cambodia (discussed in the next section) were made in the mid-1980s and were not linked to the fighting in 1980 and 1981. Soviet-Vietnamese military cooperation continued after the clashes. For example, Zhang suggests that part of the motivation for the 1984 offensive on Lao Mountain was that Chinese leaders realized that "China's military pressures along the border had not in fact worked well enough to deter Vietnam's aggressions in Cambodia."[173]

- Inaccurate Assessments: After the 1979 war, decision-makers in China began thinking about the outcome of their goals over a longer time period. However, the available evidence suggest that China continued to hold an overly optimistic views about their ability to achieve their goals in the timeline specified. Zhang notes that Deng felt in 1979 that the military operations would "inflict substantial hardship" within three to five years.[174] In private discussions with American officials in 1979, Chinese military officers spoke "in terms of a three to five-year campaign"—putting the expected endpoint approximately between 1982 and 1984.[175] One senior Chinese diplomat described in 1980 that it would not "take long to force a Vietnamese pull-out in Cambodia."[176] Yet Zhang notes that by 1985 Deng Xiaoping had become "convinced that Hanoi had not been constrained and was continuing to use all of Vietnam's armed might to indulge in wars of aggression."[177]

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[167]Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 119.

[168]Note that while the 1980 and 1981 clashes are grouped together for purposes of coding crisis performance, the analysis treats them as separate observations. Codings take on the same values for both observations in the medium-N analysis.

[169]Sources: O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War*, 89–107; Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 217–218; Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, Chapter 6.

[170]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 65.

[171]Ibid., 218.

[172]See O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War*, 89–107.

[173]Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 149.

[174]Ibid., 143.

[175]Telegram from the Department of State to All East Asian and Pacific Diplomatic Posts, Washington, September 11, 1979. *FRUS, 1977–1980, Volume 8, China*, Document 270.

[176]O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War*, 92.

[177]Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 156.

- Codings:

  – Primary Goal: Failure

  – Goal Success Rate: 1/3 goals achieved

  – Costs: Luojiapingda - 107 casualties; Faka/Koulin - 276 casualties[178]

3.2.17 Sino-Vietnamese Border Clashes (Lao Mountain)

- Crisis ID: ICB 352

- Year: 1984

- Objectives:

  – Goal #1 (primary): Compel DRV to announce withdrawal from Cambodia - Unsuccessful

  – Goal #2: Begin talks on normalization of Sino-Vietnamese relations - Unsuccessful

  – Goal #3: Pressure Vietnam to maintain military presence along border - Successful

  – Goal #4: Seize Lao Mountain - Successful

  – Goal #5: Improve military modernization - Successful

- Discussion: In 1984, China attacked Vietnamese forces on Lao Mountain along the Sino-Vietnamese border.[179] It is likely that the offensive was linked to broader efforts to compel Vietnam to announce a withdrawal from Cambodia (Goal #1) and to normalize relations with China (Goal #2). China's diplomacy at the time helps to illustrate this point. In December 1982, China's primary goal in negotiations with the Soviet Union was to "seize on the Cambodian issue and have the Soviets urge Vietnam to withdraw its troops from Cambodia."[180] In March 1983, China publicly announced a Five Point Proposal, which included demands for Vietnam to declare unconditional troop withdrawal, begin withdrawing troops; and begin the process of normalizing Sino-Vietnamese relations.[181] During a visit to the Sino-Vietnamese border in 1985, Hu Yaobang stated that China would continue to fight until Vietnam withdrew from Cambodia.[182]

  Available sources offer little evidence that the 1984 crisis shaped Vietnam's decision-making regarding these first two goals. Regarding Cambodia, one Vietnamese source suggests that Vietnam's intention to withdraw was "clear" by late 1982—well before the Lao Mountain offensive—but that decision-makers needed reassurances regarding "maintaining the status quo in Cambodia."[183] In January 1985, Hanoi publicly announced its intention to withdraw its forces from Cambodia by 1990. Vietnamese sources emphasize two factors as proximate to this decision. The first was conditions within Cambodia, which Vietnamese decision-makers perceived as improving. In 1984, Vietnam and Cambodia reviewed progress in Cambodia since the invasion. Vietnamese diplomats suggest that

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[178]Sun Cuibing, ed., *Yunnan shengzhi: junshi zhi [Yunnan Provincial Gazetteer: Military Affairs]*. Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 1997), 424–425.

[179]Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 65, 217–218; O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War*, 89–107; Li, *A History of the Modern Chinese Army*, 260; Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, Chapter 6.

[180]Wang Weicheng, ed., *Li Xiannian nianpu [Chronicle of Li Xiannian]* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2011), Vol. VI, 174.

[181]Donald E. Weatherbee, ed., *Southeast Asia Divided: The ASEAN-Indochina Crisis* (New York: Routledge, 1985), Document 10.

[182]Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 157.

[183]Huynh, *Ghi chep ve Campuchia*, 30.

Cambodian leaders were "self-confident." Perceptions of successful military operations, along with improved border fortifications, thus provided permissive conditions to announce unilateral withdraw of its forces by 1990.[184] The second was diplomatic pressure from the Soviet Union to "reach a political solution."[185] American intelligence in October 1985 concluded that Vietnam was confident of its ability to "absorb and contain costs China imposes on its Cambodian policy."[186]

Regarding normalization of relations with China, the Vietnamese Politburo passed Resolution 32—which approved the idea of peaceful coexistence with China, ASEAN, and the United States—in 1986. Vietnamese sources are explicit that diplomatic pressure from the Soviet Union, rather than the border fighting, participated the policy shift. As one Vietnamese source notes, "The thing that had the largest and the most direct effect on the Cambodian problem was Sino-Soviet détente. It is no accident that Politburo Resolution 32 [...] stating that we had to achieve a political settlement to the Cambodian problem and to begin normalizing relations with China [...] was issued just a few days before Gorbachev's 28 July 1986 speech at Vladivostok in which Gorbachev announced the broad outlines of a new Soviet Policy toward the Asia Pacific region."[187]

It is possible that China had three additional goals as well. China may have intended to pressure Vietnam to maintain its military presence along its northern border with China (Goal #3).[188] American intelligence reports from December 1985 reported no new efforts to "move additional Vietnamese divisions" to the border, which suggests that the 1984 offensive did not directly shape troop deployments.[189] It is possible, however, that China's military presence along Vietnam's northern border may have indirectly contributed to Vietnam's perception that it needed to maintain higher force levels and defense budgets. For example, Vietnamese Chief of General Staff Le Duc Anh remembers that the threat that Chinese forces along the border restricted Vietnam's ability to reduce the size of the military and defense budget.[190]

China may have simply wanted to seize territory along the border (Goal #4).[191] China was successful in seizing Lao Mountain, although Vietnam continued to contest them throughout the 1980s and possession reportedly "changed hands several times" between 1984 and 1986.[192] Zhang notes that "it is difficult to say who won" on the battlefield.[193] China may have also wanted to provide opportunities for combat experience to Chinese military units that rotated through assignments along the border (Goal #5).[194] Zhang suggests that the campaign was successful in this regard.[195]

- Inaccurate Assessments: Zhang argues that the offensive "unexpectedly" locked China and Vietnam into a "deadlier border confrontation for the remainder of the decade."[196] It is clear that by at the end of the offensive, Chinese leaders foresaw several more years of fighting. In February 1985, Hu

[184] Huynh, *Ghi chep ve Campuchia*, 31–32.

[185] Ibid., 29.

[186] *National Intelligence Estimate 14.3-85 (Cambodia: Vietnamese Strategy and the New Realities)* (October 1985).

[187] Tran Quang Co, *Hoi Ky Tran Quang Co [Tran Quang Co: A Memoir]*, trans. Merle Pribbenow (2003), Chapter 3.

[188] Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 142.

[189] Central Intelligence Agency, *Chinese Thorns Along the Vietnamese Border: Means to Many Ends* (December 1985).

[190] Le Duc Anh, *Cuoc doi va su nghiep cach mang: Hoi ky [My Life and My Revolutionary Cause: A Memoir]*, trans. Merle Pribbenow (Hanoi: Nha Xuat Ban Chinh Tri Quoc Gia, 2015), 303–304.

[191] Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 218.

[192] O'Dowd, *Chinese Military Strategy in the Third Indochina War*, 101.

[193] Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 168.

[194] Ibid., 146.

[195] Ibid., 168.

[196] Ibid., 149.

Yaobang noted that the border fighting would persist another three to five years.[197]

- Codings:

  - Primary Goal: Failure
  - Goal Success Rate: 3/5 goals achieved
  - Costs: 939 killed[198]

3.2.18 Sino-Indian Border Standoff (Sumdurong Chu)

- Crisis ID: ICB Near Crisis 62; MID 2102

- Year: 1986–1987

- Objectives:

  - Goal #1 (primary): Deter Indian military presence along border - Unsuccessful
  - Goal #2: Improve territorial control in Sumdurong Chu valley - Unsuccessful

- Discussion: China's primary goal was to deter Indian military presence along the border (Goal #1) and to occupy Sumdurong Chu (Goal #2).[199] Newly available Chinese sources confirm this account. In June 1986, the Tibet Border Guard was ordered to establish an outpost in the vicinity of Tawang "in order to defend [Chinese] sovereignty and stop the Indian military's encroachments." According to Chinese sources, the Indian military "immediately adjusted its deployments" and "increased its troop levels," establishing more than fourteen strongholds in the area facing Cuona.[200] The Indian and Chinese foreign ministries publicly protested the other sides actions during the border incident. From July 21 to 23, China and India held talks in Beijing, but failed to make progress regarding the border issue. Both sides increased the frequency of their border patrols.[201]

  By October 1986, India had airlifted forces into key mountaintops overlooking the Chinese position.[202] Indian military forces deployed troops to disputed areas along the border. As Ji notes, "India had basically recovered the outpost positions it had occupied in June 1962"—that is, before the Sino-Indian War.[203] India deployed infantry divisions from its western border to the area and launched a large-scale military exercise, entitled Operation Chequerboard. By April 1987, India established seven outposts and seized additional passes in the Tawang area.[204]

  The crisis ended with a nominal return to the status quo before the crisis began, although both sides only partially disengaged.[205] On the contrary, as Ji notes, "After the border crisis in 1987, the Indian government decided to push a number of mountain troops forward near the border, build fortifications

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[197]Zhang, *Deng Xiaoping's Long War*, 157.

[198]Li, *A History of the Modern Chinese Army*, 260.

[199]Sources: John W Garver, "Sino-Indian Rapproachement and the Sino-Pakistan Entente," *Political Science Quarterly* 111, no. 2 (1996): 337–343; Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 199–201; Ji Wenbo, "1987 nian ZhongYin bianjie weiji huigu yu fansi [The 1987 Sino-Indian Border Crisis in Retrospect]," *Nanya yanjiu [South Asian Research]* Vol. 1 (2018), M. Taylor Fravel, "China and the Border Dispute with India after 1962," in *Routledge Handbook of China–India Relations*, ed. Kanti Bajpai, Selina Ho, and Manjari Chatterjee Miller (New York: Routledge, 2020), Chapter 9.

[200]Wang Xuedong, *Fu Quanyou zhuan [Biography of Fu Quanyou]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 2015), Vol. I, 477.

[201]Ji, "1987 nian ZhongYin bianjie weiji huigu yu fansi," 72.

[202]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 200.

[203]Ji, "1987 nian ZhongYin bianjie weiji huigu yu fansi," 75.

[204]Ibid., 75–76.

[205]Fravel, "China and the Border Dispute with India after 1962."

and station them all year round. Before this, India's mountain troops were not deployed so far, but were stationed in the rear areas far from the border."[206]

- Inaccurate Assessments. Poor tactical preparations of the Chinese position in the summer of 1986 suggest that Chinese decision-makers did not anticipate a major military response from India. As Fravel notes, China "had not fortified its position and was exposed to Indian forces dominating the high ground."[207] Chinese sources note that Indian forces not only controlled the heights surrounding the Chinese position, but also enjoyed a numerical advantage over Chinese forces.[208] In December 1986, the Chengdu Military Region submitted a report to the Central Military Commission, entitled "Report on the Struggle to Strengthen Tibetan Border Defense," which analyzed the military situation in the ongoing conflict with India. At a subsequent meeting chaired by Chief of General Staff Yang Dezhi, Fu Quanyou described China's position along the border as unfavorable, noting that "the first line of defense has gaps, the second line is weak, and the third line is too far away."[209]

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Failure

    - Goal Success Rate: 0/2 goals achieved

    - Costs: No casualties

3.2.19 Spratly Islands Clashes

- Crisis ID: ICB 384

- Year: 1988

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Gain control of features in the Spratly Islands - Successful

- Discussion: The crisis was precipitated by naval clashes between China and Vietnam as both positioned for control over features in the Spratly Islands (Goal #1).[210] China defeated Vietnam in tactical military engagements, at the end of which China occupied Johnson Reef. While China's territorial claim remains contested, China has occupied reef since the crisis.

- Inaccurate Assessments: None observed.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success

    - Goal Success Rate: 1/1 goals achieved

    - Costs: Some casualties[211]

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[206]Ji, "1987 nian ZhongYin bianjie weiji huigu yu fansi," 89–90.

[207]Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 200.

[208]Wang, *Fu Quanyou zhuan*, Vol. I, 480.

[209]Ibid., Vol. I, 466.

[210]Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 287–296; Lu Ning, *Flashpoint Spratlys!* (Singapore: Dolphin Trade Press, 1995), 87–101.

[211]Ibid., 91.

3.2.20 Mischief Reef Seizure

- Crisis ID: ICB 414; MID 4027

- Year: 1994–1995

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Occupy Mischief Reef - Successful

- Discussion: Available evidence suggests that the primary goal of the operation was to seize control of the reef, perhaps in response to actions taken by the Vietnam and Philippines in the early 1990s.[212] China was successful establishing features on the reef and has retained control since the crisis.

- Inaccurate Assessments: None observed.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 1/1 goals achieved
    - Costs: No casualties

3.2.21 Taiwan Strait Crisis (Lee Teng-hui Visit)

- Crisis ID: ICB 415; MID 4064

- Year: 1995

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1: Deter Lee Teng-hui's visit to the United States - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #2: (primary): deter U.S. support for Taiwan independence - Successful
    - Goal #3: Compel the United States to sign a fourth communiqué - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #4: Compel the United States to change its policy on visits from Taiwan officials - Unsuccessful

- Discussion: During the first part of the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait Crisis, China attempted to deter Lee Teng-hui's visit to the United States (Goal #1). After deterrence failed, China used military exercises and missile tests in the Taiwan Strait for coercive purposes. China's primary objective was to deter the United States from supporting Taiwan independence. This was composed of several explicit Chinese demands: publicly commit the United States to opposing Taiwan independence (Goal #2); issue a fourth communiqué addressing US. policy (Goal #3); and restrict its policy allowing Taiwan officials to travel to the United States (Goal #4). Finally, China sought to deter the United States from supporting similar actions in the future.[213]

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[212]Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 296–298; Andrew Chubb, "PRC Assertiveness in the South China Sea: Measuring Continuity and Change, 1970–2015," *International Security* 45, no. 3 (2020): 109–110.

[213]Sources: Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 254–262; Robert S. Ross, "The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation: Coercion, Credibility, and the Use of Force," *International Security* 25, no. 2 (2000): 87–123; Michael D. Swaine, "Chinese Decision-Making Regarding Taiwan, 1979–2000," in *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000*, ed. David M. Lampton (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 319–327; Shelley Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan: Voting for Democracy* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 174–177; Robert L. Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen: The Politics of US-China Relations 1989–2000* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 251–292; Garver, *China's Quest*, 607–633.

The outcome of the crisis was mixed. Ross, for instance, describes the crisis as "unnecessary and avoidable" but that both sides achieved their primary objectives.[214] China may have been successful in using the crisis to extract an assurance from the United States in August 1995 that it did not support Taiwan independence, a two-China policy, or membership in international organizations requiring statehood. Nevertheless, Chinese leaders were reportedly unsatisfied with Clinton's reassurances, possibly because they generally reaffirmed the U.S. policy prior to the crisis.[215] China was unsuccessful in pressuring the United States to sign a fourth communiqué or restrict visits from Taiwan officials. During the crisis, the United States maintained that Taiwan visits would continue to be "unofficial, private, and rare" and, in January 1997, Washington approved a transit visa for Taiwan Vice President Lien Chan.[216]

- Inaccurate Assessments: None observed.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 1/4 goals achieved
    - Costs: No casualties

3.2.22 Taiwan Strait Crisis (1996 Elections)

- Crisis ID: ICB 415

- Year: 1996

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1: Compel Lee Teng-hui to abandon independence activities - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #2 (primary): Influence 1996 elections in Taiwan - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #3: Coerce the United States into a more public and determined stand against Taiwan independence - Unsuccessful

- Discussion: The 1996 presidential elections in Taiwan triggered a new crisis in March 1996.[217] Unlike the crisis in 1995, which was aimed primarily at the American position on Taiwanese independence, China's justifications for military exercises shifted in late 1995 to center on Taiwan's leaders and the general public. As Ross notes, there were several goals with regard to Taiwan: to compel Taiwan leaders to "abandon their independence activities" (Goal #1); to shape the election (Goal #2); and to coerce the United states into a more determined stance against Taiwan independence (Goal #3).[218] These goals derived from the fact that while Lee Teng-hui was expected to win the elections, it was not clear whether his party would capture a majority in the National Assembly elections.[219] If Lee failed

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[214]Ross, "The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation," 90.

[215]Ibid., 96. Upon entering office, the Clinton administration initiated a review of its policy toward Taiwan and, in September 1994, revised American policy on government contacts with Taiwan. Yet it is not clear that this signaled a fundamental shift in policy. For instance, the White House and bureaucracy had opposed Lee Teng-hui's visit—and only acquiesced after a vote in Congress forced its hand.

[216]Ibid., 99, 112.

[217]Guo Xiangjie, *Zhang Wannian zhuan [Biography of Zhang Wannian]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 2011), 249. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for raising this point. Sources: see §3.2.21.

[218]Ross, "The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation," 110.

[219]Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan*, 174.

to win a majority, he would face greater domestic political resistance. China thus issued warnings prior to the election that voters should reject Lee.[220]

China's intervention in the elections was unsuccessful and likely counterproductive. According to Rigger, "the PRC's threats helped strengthen Lee Teng-hui, as Taiwanese voters demonstrated their defiance by supporting their much-maligned leader. Lee met his target, capturing a solid majority: 54 percent of the vote."[221] Swaine notes that China "did not achieve one of its key purposes—a reduction in public support for Lee Teng-hui."[222] DPP performance in the National Assembly elections was consistent with past averages. In addition, China was unsuccessful in compelling Lee to end pro-independence activities. Shortly after the election, Lee continued pushing for Taiwan's entry into the United Nations. In 1999, Lee requested another visa to transit through the United States and described Taiwan's relationship with the mainland as a "special state-to-state relationship."[223]

It is worth considering whether China's demonstration of resolve during the crisis might have led the Clinton administration to *publicly* affirm the "Three No's" policy during high-level visits in 1997 and 1998.[224] According to Ross, while Clinton's statements "contained nothing new regarding actual U.S. policy toward Taiwan," they did shift from what was a private assurance during the crisis to a public one thereafter.[225] Yet there is little evidence that the crisis was directly linked to this decision. First, in his memoirs, NSC staff member Robert Suettinger suggests that the United States agreed to public affirmation of the Three No's as part of negotiations over a broad range of issues, not in response to Chinese coercion.[226] At the time, while Suettinger noted that "China clearly wants the U.S. to reiterate the Taiwan policy that enabled us to keep relations on a even keel this past year" the "[k]ey questions are whether the [United States] should continue to push both sides to resume a dialogue that neither appears to want at the moment, and what new pressures we should expect from Taiwan."[227]

Second, during the crisis, American policymakers did not believe that the military exercises signaled a willingness to use force against Taiwan. US Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord recalls that neither the United States or Taiwan "had any intelligence that the PRC was going to use force at the time against Taiwan" and that while the United States was "annoyed with what Beijing had done" it was not prepared to "change [its] policy."[228] NSC papers from November 1996 suggest that Washington perceived that the Taiwan issue was "quiescent in the last couple months" and China showed "no signs of undertaking new military exercises in the Taiwan Strait."[229]

Third, a more plausible explanation is that US decision-makers saw publicizing the Three No's as a means by which to, in Ross' terms, make "important gains on arms proliferation, human rights, and other issues" during this period.[230] Records for preparatory meetings in advance of Clinton's 1998

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[220]Ross also notes that Chinese decision-makers worried that merely holding elections would move Taiwan toward independence, although available evidence does not suggest that China aimed to compel Taipei to cancel the elections.

[221]Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan*, 176. See also Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen*, 286.

[222]Swaine, "Chinese Decision-Making Regarding Taiwan," 327.

[223]Ross, "The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation," 115–116.

[224]Suettinger also suggests that that the 1997–98 Three No's more explicitly withheld support for Taiwan's membership in international organizations beyond the United Nations. Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen*, 348–349.

[225]Ross, "The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation," 115.

[226]Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen*, 344.

[227]Memorandum from Robert Suettingger to Anthony Lake: Principals Committee Meeting on China, November 5, 1996. Clinton Presidential Library. FOIA 2015-0221-M.

[228]Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *China Confidential: American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations, 1945–1996* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 485, 488.

[229]Memorandum from Robert Suettinger to Anthony Lake: Principals Committee Meeting on China, November 5, 1996. Clinton Presidential Library.

[230]Ross, "The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation," 114.

visit, for example, suggest that the United States was focused on making progress on negotiations on human rights, nonproliferation, economic issues, and the strategic dialogue.[231]

- Inaccurate Assessments: It is likely that Chinese decision-makers believed that this crisis would allow China to achieve its goals. Garver notes that the assumptions underlying China's strategy "turned out to be wrong."[232] Garver also suggests that the crisis was a "deep shock" to Chinese decision-makers.[233] Swaine notes that "Beijing's actions actually drove Taiwan voters to back Lee in *unexpectedly* high numbers. Moreover, this approach also prompted an *unexpectedly* vigorous US response and suggested that Washington might increase its military support for Taiwan."[234] It is likely that China's assessments were based in part on information provided by the Chinese military, which seems to have assessed that coercion would be a more effective than diplomacy in dealing with unfavorable trends in Taiwan. Chinese intelligence shortly after the 1996 exercises appears to have also been inaccurate, reporting that the "separatist activities" of Taiwan independence had been "greatly reduced."[235]

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Failure

    - Goal Success Rate: 0/3 goals achieved

    - Costs: No casualties

3.2.23 EP-3 Reconnaissance Aircraft Incident

- Crisis ID: ICB Near Crisis 82; MID 4280

- Year: 2001

- Objectives:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Deter American reconnaissance flights - Unsuccessful

    - Goal #2: Compel the United States to bear responsibility for the collision - Unsuccessful

    - Goal #3: Compel the United States to apologize (道歉) for the collision - Unsuccessful (see discussion in main text)

    - Goal #4: Improve relations with the United States - Unsuccessful

- Discussion: See discussion in main text.

- Inaccurate Assessments: See discussion in main text.

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Failure

    - Goal Success Rate: 0/4 goals achieved

    - Costs: 1 killed (prior to crisis)

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[231]Summary of Conclusions for Meeting of the NSC Principals Committee, April 21, 1998. Clinton Presidential Library. FOIA 2015-0221-M.

[232]Garver, *China's Quest*, 607.

[233]Ibid., 631.

[234]Swaine, "Chinese Decision-Making Regarding Taiwan," 327. Emphasis added.

[235]Wang, *Fu Quanyou zhuan*, Vol. II, 173–174.

3.2.24　Senkaku Islands Nationalization Crisis

- Crisis ID: ICB 467

- Year: 2012

- Goals:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Compel Japan to end nationalization of the Senkaku Islands - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #2: Compel Japan to admit the existence of a territorial dispute - Unsuccessful
    - Goal #3: Contest actual control of the islands - Successful

- Discussion: In response to Japan's announcements that it was considering nationalizing disputed islands in the Senkakus (Diaoyus), China initiated a series of military and non-military activities.[236] The most important component of China's response was the deployment of maritime patrol vessels to the area around the Senkaku Islands.[237] Zhang argues that China aimed to compel Japan to "terminate the action of nationalizing the Senkakus and return to the consensus of tabling disputes" (Goal #1).[238] Another goal was to compel Japan to "at least accept that there was a territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands" (Goal #2). Public statements by the Foreign Ministry, for instance, warned that China would not tolerate encroachments on China's sovereignty and urged Japan to terminate nationalization of the islands.[239] It is also likely that China used the crisis to begin degrading Japan's actual control of the Senkaku Islands (Goal #3). As Weiss notes, China's actions were aimed at "terminating the so-called exclusive actual control of the islands by the Japanese side."[240]

    The outcome of the crisis was mixed. Chinese patrols after the crisis were probably successful in degrading Japan's actual control over the islands, although this was primarily the result of actions that China continued to take after the crisis ended, which might suggest that the crisis was not the proximate cause this outcome. China was unsuccessful in compelling Japan to abandon nationalization or admit the existence of a territorial dispute. Moreover, it is possible that China's actions prompted U.S. President Barack Obama to clarify that American defense treaty obligations to Japan covered the Senkaku Islands—the first sitting U.S. president to do so.[241]

- Inaccurate Assessments: Green et al. suggest that China may have inaccurately assessed that China's actions would "at least delay Japanese plans."[242] The success of Chinese post-crisis patrols might possibly suggest that Chinese decision-makers understood that even if Japan failed to heed its warnings, it could implement a policy that improved its position after the confrontation ended.

- Codings:

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[236]Sources: Weiss, *Powerful Patriots*, Chapter 6; M. Taylor Fravel, "The PLA and National Security Decisionmaking: Insights from China's Territorial and Maritime Disputes," in *PLA Influence on China's National Security Policy-Making*, ed. Phillip C. Saunders and Andrew Scobell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015); Michael Green et al., "Countering Coercion in Maritime Asia: The Theory and Practice of Gray Zone Deterrence" (Washington, DC), 2017, 124–147; Ketian Zhang, "Calculating Bully: Explaining Chinese Coercion" (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2018), 282–290.

[237]There were two military components to the crisis. First, a PLA Navy task force entered the contiguous zone in waters between Yonagunijima and Iriomotejima, which are located roughly 150 kilometers south of the Senkakus. Second, the PLA Navy participated in a "rights defense" joint exercise in the East China Sea, which sought to "deter challenges to China's patrols around the islands." See Fravel, "The PLA and National Security Decisionmaking," 268.

[238]Zhang, "Calculating Bully," 284.

[239]Ibid., 283.

[240]Weiss, *Powerful Patriots*, 206.

[241]Green et al., "Countering Coercion in Maritime Asia," 167.

[242]Ibid., 141.

- Primary Goal: Failure
- Goal Success Rate: 1/3 goals achieved
- Costs: No casualties

3.2.25 Scarborough Shoal Crisis

- Crisis ID: ICB 467; MID 4703

- Year: 2012

- Goals:

    - Goal #1 (primary): Improve control over the Scarborough Shoal - Successful
    - Goal #2: Deter states from threatening Chinese interests in South China Sea - Unsuccessful

- Discussion: Zhang argues that the "direct goal was to stop the Philippines from controlling the shoal" (Goal #1) and that the "broader goal was to stop other states from viewing China as weak and engaging in 'confrontational' actions threatening Chinese interests in the South China Sea" (Goal #2).[243]

  China was clearly successful in seizing control of the Scarborough Shoal. At the end of the crisis, Chinese vessels "remained or quickly returned" to the Shoal, which resulted in a "de facto seizure of control by Beijing."[244] The behavior of China's neighbors does not suggest that the crisis was successful in advancing its deterrence goal. The following year, the Philippines filed for international legal arbitration under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) contesting China's sovereignty claims.[245] The Philippines signed a new defense pact with the United States in 2014.[246] Vietnam's assertive behavior during the 2014 Oil Rig Crisis similarly supports this point.[247]

- Inaccurate Assessments: Insufficient evidence

- Codings:

    - Primary Goal: Success
    - Goal Success Rate: 1/2 goals achieved
    - Costs: No casualties

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[243]Zhang, "Calculating Bully," 200.

[244]Green et al., "Countering Coercion in Maritime Asia," 95.

[245]Ben Dolven et al., *Arbitration Case between the Philippines and China under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2016, 1).

[246]U.S. Embassy Manila, *Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) Fact Sheet*. March 20, 2023.

[247]Susan Shirk, *Overreach: How China Derailed Its Peaceful Rise*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023), 214.

4 Case Study Materials

The three case studies in the main text (1962 Nationalist invasion scare, 1969 Sino-Soviet border conflict; and the 2001 EP-3 reconnaissance aircraft incident) draw upon a range of primary and secondary source documents. These include diplomatic cables from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives, as well as documents from the Jilin provincial archives. All archival documents cited are available to scholars at the Fung Library at Harvard University. The principal advantage of official materials is that the editors and research teams typically had firsthand access to party archives that remain closed to researchers—or were able to interview senior officials now deceased. One potential disadvantage associated with these materials is they are subject to party censorship, which may bias inferences toward the party's historical narrative. To address these limitations, I consulted memoirs and histories published outside party channels, typically through Hong Kong.

I collected data from China's adversary in each crisis as well. For the 1962 Nationalist invasion scare, I examined the *Foreign Relations of the United States*, documents available in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, excerpts from Chiang Kai-shek's diary, and meeting records available in the Academia Historica archive in Taipei.[248] For the 1969 Sino-Soviet border conflict, I relied on a collection of documents from the Russian archives, archival documents from the Wilson Center Digital Archive, Leonid Brezhnev's diary, accounts by Russian historians, the *Foreign Relations of the United States*, and documents collected from the Richard Nixon Presidential Library.[249] Finally, for the 2001 EP-3 incident, I draw U.S. archival documents released from the U.S. State Department, Central Intelligence Agency, and George W. Bush presidential library under Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.[250]

5 Personalism and China's International Crises

As discussed in the main text, one alternative interpretation of the analysis emphasizes the level of "personalism" inside the Chinese political system. Geddes et al. define a personalist regime as a dictatorship

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[248]*FRUS 1961–1963 Volume XXII, Northeast Asia*; Lu Fangshang, ed., *Jiang Zhongzheng xiansheng nianpu changbian [Chronicle of Chiang Kai-shek]* (Taipei: Guoshiguan, 2014).

[249]Shen Zhihua, ed., *Selection of Declassified Russian Archival Documents: Sino-Soviet Relations [Eluosi jiemi dang'an xuanbian: ZhongSu guanxi]* (Shanghai: Dongfang chubanshe, 2015); Leonid Brezhnev, *Rabochie i dnevnikovye zapisi [Work and Diary]* (Moscow: IstLit, 2016); Sergei Goncharov and Victor Usov, *O Kitae Srednevekovom i Sovremennom: Zapiski Raznykh Let [On Medieval and Modern China: Notes from Various Years]* (Novosibirsk: Nauka, 2006).

[250]See FOIA F-2010-07070, State Department Virtual Reading Room; CIA FOIA F-2018-01240, CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room; Stephen J. Hadley, ed. *Hand-Off: The Foreign Policy George W. Bush Passed to Barack Obama* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press).

in which "the leader has concentrated power at the expense of his closest supporters."[251] They argue that the defining formal feature of personalism is that the leader has "personal discretion and control over the key levers of power in his political system" including that power to "appoint, promote, and dismiss high-level officers and officials, and thus to control the agencies, economic enterprises, and armed forces the appointees lead." In the study of international relations, this concept has been applied by scholars, such as Weeks, who similarly defines a personalist regime as one in which "the leader has eliminated potential rivals and personally controls the state apparatus."[252] Below, I analyze three different measures of personalism in order to explore the extent to which personalism may explain China's crisis decision-making and performance.

5.1   Three Measures of Personalism

In the existing literature, personalism is typically measured through a series of questions about the nature of power in the regime. The original battery of questions was developed by Geddes.[253] These questions were incorporated into the study of international conflict by Weeks.[254] Recently, these codings have been updated in Geddes and coauthors.[255] The questions used by Weeks are reported in Column 3 of Table 6. The questions used by Geddes and coauthors are reported in Column 4 of Table 6.

These questions can be divided into three conceptual categories. The first deals the leader's power to make policy unilaterally. For example, one of the features of personalist regimes is that they often either lack functioning decision-making bodies (e.g., politburo, executive committee)—or decision-making bodies are a rubber stamp for the leader's decisions. The second category deals with the nature of political power (promotion, appointment, and the leader's own political party). In personalist regimes, leaders enjoy the power to make appointments unilaterally and tend to make appointments based upon personal loyalty. The third category deals with the nature of the leader's power over the state's coercive institutions, such as the military. Personalist rulers are those with the ability to appoint subordinates unilaterally, those that tend to appoint individuals based upon loyalty, those that tend to have specialized units to ensure their personal security, and those that punish military leaders as they see fit.

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[251]Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, *How Dictatorships Work* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 70.

[252]Jessica L. Weeks, "Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict," *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2 (2012): 327.

[253]Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003).

[254]Weeks, "Strongmen and Straw Men," 336n38.

[255]A Measure of Personalism in Dictatorships," Online Codebook, October 9, 2017, 2.

Table 6: Summary of Codings for Personalism in the People's Republic of China

Category	Concept	Weeks (2012) Wording	Geddes et al. (2017) Wording	Weeks Coding*	Geddes Coding	Original Coding
Decision-Making Power	Decision-Making Bodies	Is the politburo or equivalent a rubber stamp for the leader's decisions?	Is the party executive committee absent or simply a rubber stamp for the regime leader's decisions?	1950–1980	1966–1968	1966–1976
	Military Marginalization	If the leader is from the military, has the officer corps been marginalized from decision-making?	Not included	Missing	Not included	Not included
Political Power	Political Promotion	Does access to high government depend on the personal favor of the leader?	Does access to high office depend on personal loyalty to the regime leader?	1950–1976	1967–1973; 1976	1949–1976
	Political Appointment	If there is a supporting party, does the leader choose most of the members of the politburo?	Does the regime leader control appointments to the party executive committee?	Missing	1955–1959; 1968–1973	1949–1976
	Political Party	Not included	Did the regime leader create a new support political party after seizing power?	Not included	No	No
Coercive Power	Military Control	Does the leader personally control the security forces?	Does the regime leader personally control the security apparatus?	Missing	1965–1971	1949–1978; 1982–2002; 2004–2012
	Military Appointment	Was the successor to the first leader or his heir apparent a member of the same family, clan, tribe, or minority ethnic group?	Does the regime leader promote officers loyal to himself or from his ethnic, tribal, regional, or partisan group, or are there widespread forced retirement from other groups?	No	1967–1976; 1990–1994	1965–1976; 1982–1987
	Military Hierarchy	Has normal military hierarchy been seriously disorganized or overturned, or has the leader created new military forces loyal to him personally?	Does the regime leader create paramilitary forces, a president's guard, or new security force loyal to himself?	1950–1976	1966–1968	1953–1976
	Military Purge	Have dissenting officers or officer from different regions, tribes, religions, or ethnic groups been murdered, imprisoned, or forced into exile?	Does the regime leader imprison/kill officers from groups other than his own without reasonably fair trial?	Missing	1967–1976; 1990–1994	1953–1954; 1959–1960; 1966–1976

Notes: * - Weeks' codings begin in 1950. Original codings use the wording of questions in Geddes et al. (2020).

Figure 1: Measures of Personalism in China, 1949-2012
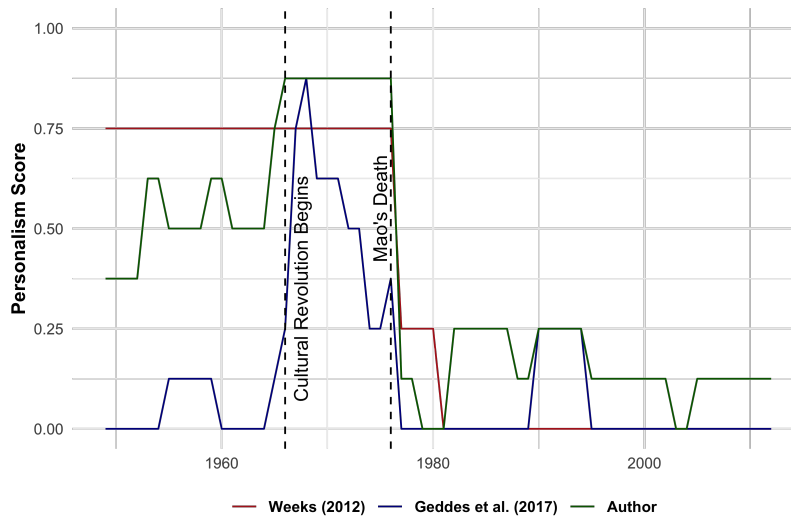
Finally, in parallel to these existing measures, I consulted the existing literature on Chinese elite politics to develop a set of original codings. My codings generally replicate existing measures, but are closer to Weeks than Geddes and coauthors for the early Mao period:

- *Is the party executive committee absent or simply a rubber stamp for the regime leader's decisions?*

  - Mao Zedong - Yes (1966–1976). The Politburo and Politburo Standing Committee were deliberative during the first decade of Mao's rule. As Teiwes notes, Mao's "general practice in the early and mid-1950s was to arrive at policies through wide-ranging discussions where the opinions of all relevant officials were valued for the contributions they could make to informed decisions. [...] Mao chose to observe the principle of minority rights, whereby dissenters within the leadership could retain their views and even reiterate them at a future date without fear of punishment."[256] The Politburo was formally disbanded in 1967. While it was restored in 1969, Mao rarely attended Politburo meetings during the last years of his life.[257]

  - Post Mao - No (1977–2012). Most sources suggest that the Politburo and Politburo Standing Committee played an important role after the death of Mao. Much of the routine decision-making during the 1980s was delegated to the Secretariat, but major decisions were still considered at the Politburo level.[258]

- *Does access to high office depend on personal loyalty to the regime leader?*

  - Mao Zedong - Yes (1949–1976). At the time of the founding of the People's Republic of China, roughly 70% of the Central Committee had personal connections to Mao Zedong—and this share remained above 50% until the time of Mao's death in 1976. No other CCP Secretary General or

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[256]Frederick C. Teiwes, "The Establishment and Consolidation of the New Regime, 1949–1957," in *The Politics of China: Sixty Years of the People's Republic of China*, 3rd ed., ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 14.

[257]See Figure 1 in the main text. See also MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, 295–296.

[258]Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China*, 24–32; Lu, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China*, 9–10.

Party Chairman has enjoyed as high a level of personal connections among the party elites.[259] Even when Mao retreated to the "second line" in the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward, Mao chose to do so voluntarily to allow cadres to address the economic disaster. In the process, Mao removed powerful party cadres, such as Peng Dehua, who had offered a modest criticism of the Great Leap Forward to Mao in private.

– Post-Mao - No (1977–2012). In contrast, under the tenure of Hua Guofeng, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, and Hu Jintao, the share of Central Committee members with personal connections to these leaders ranged between approximately 20% and 35%.[260]

• *Does the regime leader control appointments to the party executive committee?*

– Mao Zedong - Yes (1949–1976). Mao maintained control over senior appointments and dominated the process of selecting and promoting Politburo members. According to Teiwes, Mao "reserved the right to insist on his own way in matters of prime concern" and deliberation within the party "did not mean simple majority rule."[261] In addition, beginning in March 1943, Mao technically enjoyed the formal authority to act unilaterally in routine Politburo decision-making.

– Post-Mao - No (1977–2012). Most accounts suggest that senior political appointments (e.g., to the Politburo) were determined through bargaining among senior party officials.[262]

• *Did the regime leader create a new support political party after seizing power?*

– No (1949–2012). The CCP has been the ruling party in China since 1949.

• *Does the regime leader personally control the security apparatus?*

– Mao Zedong - Yes (1949–1976). Scholars of Chinese politics routinely emphasize that one of the most important positions that Chinese leaders can hold is as Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), which is the supreme body overseeing the People's Liberation Army. Mao held this position for the duration of his tenure.

– Post-Mao - Generally yes (1977–1978; 1982–2002; 2004–2012). Nearly all leaders have held the position of CMC Chairman for the duration of their tenure, with two exceptions: (1) Deng Xiaoping did not become CMC Chairman until 1981; and (2) Hu Jintao did not become CMC Chairman until 2004.

• *Does the regime leader promote officers loyal to himself or from his ethnic, tribal, regional, or partisan group, or are there widespread forced retirement from other groups?*

– Mao Zedong - Yes (1965–1976). There was widespread removal of military officers during the Cultural Revolution.[263]

– Post-Mao - Yes (1982–1987). There were widespread retirements from the Chinese military during the 1980s.[264]

[259] Shih, Shan, and Liu, "Gauging the Elite Political Equilibrium in the CCP," 90.

[260] Ibid.

[261] Teiwes, "The Establishment and Consolidation of the New Regime," 14.

[262] For example, see Richard Baum, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 143–149, 215–218; Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping*, 240, 247, 570; Miller, "The PLA in the Party Leadership Decisionmaking System," 66–74. Deng Xiaoping may have exerted more influence over appointments than Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. See Torigian, *Prestige, Manipulation, and Coercion*.

[263] Victor Shih, *Coalitions of the Weak: Elite Politics in China from Mao's Stratagem to the Rise of Xi* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022), Chapters 3–5.

[264] Baum, *Burying Mao*.

- *Does the regime leader create paramilitary forces, a president's guard, or new security force loyal to himself?*

  - Mao Zedong - Yes (1953–1976). Guo argues that Mao's establishment of a central security force, the Central Guard Regiment (CGR), in 1953 was an "attempt to establish an armed unit over which he had direct control."[265] similarly notes that Mao oversaw how these individuals were selected and that he was "successful in nurturing and controlling a small but efficient personal security force" through the head of the CGR.[266] When Mao grew suspicious of security personnel in the CGR, he was easily able to remove them unilaterally.[267] Guo summarizes, "The security apparatuses of Zhongnanhai, the Central Guard Bureau, and Unit 8341, were institutionally subordinate to the Central General Office, the Ministry of Public Security, and the PLA General Staff Department, but none of these organize had real authority to command the CGB or Unit 8341."[268]
  - Post-Mao - No (1977–2012). Guo notes that Deng "did not have a personal security force like Mao," although he had strong social connections to those in charge of the security forces.[269] Neither Deng nor his successors *created* a new coercive institution, as stipulated in the coding rules. Guo further notes that China's security forces were "increasingly institutionalized" during the post-Deng era.[270]

- *Does the regime leader imprison/kill officers from groups other than his own without reasonably fair trial?*

  - Mao Zedong - Yes (1953–1954; 1959–1960; 1965–1976). Mao was able to remove military officers who he personally felt had deviated from the party line on several occasions, including the purge of Gao Gang and Rao Shushi (1953), as well as the purge of Peng Dehuai and Huang Kecheng after the Lushan Conference (1959).[271] Military officers were detained and harmed in the lead-up to and during the Cultural Revolution on a much wider scale.
  - Post Mao - No (1977–2012). I find no evidence that military leaders were systematically imprisoned or physically harmed without trial from 1977 to 2012.

Column 5 of Table 6 reports the answers to the coding questions used by Weeks. Column 6 of Table 6 reports the answers to the coding questions Geddes and coauthors.[272] Column 8 of Table 6 reports the original codings generated for this article. Figure 1 visualizes change in personalism over time by plotting the share of affirmative answers both measures. These existing measures suggest two points of agreement: (1) the level of personalism in China decreased substantially after Mao's death; and (2) that personalism in China peaked during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. However, the two measures disagree on

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[265]Guo Xuezhi, *China's Security State: Philosophy, Evolution, and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 152.

[266]Ibid., 158.

[267]Ibid., 160.

[268]Ibid., 175.

[269]Ibid.

[270]Ibid., 183.

[271]Gao and Rao's status as either civilian or military leaders is not clear. Both were appointed to the Central Military Commission and had military backgrounds.

[272]Scores for 1949 and from 2011 to 2012 are imputed based upon values in 1950 and 2010 respectively.

the level of personalism that Mao exhibited during his early years. The coding in Weeks is high throughout Mao's tenure, whereas the coding by Geddes and coauthors sees Mao's personalism as beginning in the mid-1960s.

5.2   Analysis

Using the Geddes et al. measure, I find no statistically significant relationship between personalism and inaccurate assessments during crisis (ANOVA test p=0.358) or the rate of achieving China's primary crisis goal (ANOVA test p=0.579). Using Weeks' continuous measure, I find a no statistically significant relationship between personalism and inaccurate assessments during crisis (ANOVA test p=0.350) and a weak negative relationship between personalism and the rate of achieving China's primary crisis goal (ANOVA test p=0.090). Using the measure of China's level of personalism developed for this article, I find neither a statistically significant relationship between personalism and inaccurate assessments (ANOVA test p=0.863) or between personalism and the achieving China's primary crisis goal (ANOVA test p=0.210). These analyses should be interpreted with caution given the small sample size.