

Electoral Proximity and Security Policy

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Prepared for ANU 2016

January 14th, 2016

Goal of our Project

- Does electoral proximity affect security policy?
- Why should it?
- Goal: develop theoretical mechanisms and test on empirically applicable case - troop commitments to the war in Afghanistan

Literature

- Traditional IR Theory
 - Material capabilities, threat, intentions
 - Institutional commitments (alliances)
 - Shared norms
- Domestic Institutions and Crisis Bargaining
 - Democratic politics provide information about or constrain the behavior of leaders
 - Electoral vulnerability in democracies increases their credibility
 - Recent work has also explored how party politics affects how presidents frame policy
- Diversionary War

Time Inconsistency of Security Policy and Competency

- Some security policies have time inconsistent costs (casualties) and benefits (national security goals)
- High casualties without security achievements signal incompetence
- **Argument:** During electoral periods, governments underinvest in the type of security policy that pays off only in the long run
- Note: few casualties might indicate a government achieving national security goals effectively *or* strategically underinvesting to seem more competent. Rational voters cannot distinguish between the two.



Cross-section of Data

stateabb	year	month	electionapproach6	electionapproach12	ntroops	trpspcap
...						
USA	2004	7	1	1	17300	59
USA	2004	8	1	1	15800	54
USA	2004	9	1	1	16600	57
USA	2004	10	1	1	16100	55
USA	2004	11	0	0	17200	59
USA	2004	12	0	0	17300	59
USA	2005	1	0	0	19000	64
USA	2005	2	0	0	19500	66
...						

Absolute Troop Levels

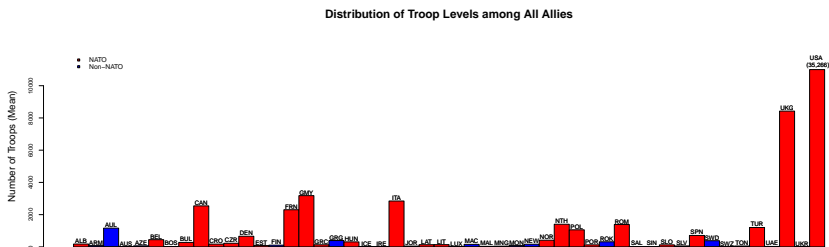


Figure: Distribution of average number of troops per month for all contributors to Afghanistan from October 2001 through October 2011. United States contribution not shown to scale. All allies sent 67,031 troops, on average, each month (63,815 from NATO, 3,216 from

Troops Per Capita

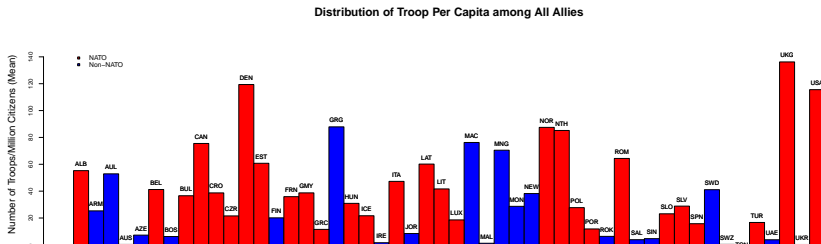
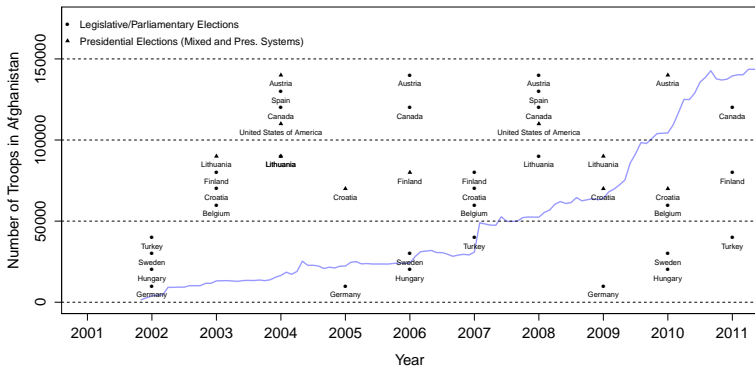


Figure: Distribution of average number of troops per month/million citizens for all contributors to Afghanistan from October 2001 through October 2011. All allies sent 2,380 troops/million, on average, each month (1,368 from NATO, 1,012 from non-NATO).

Exogeneity of Election Timing

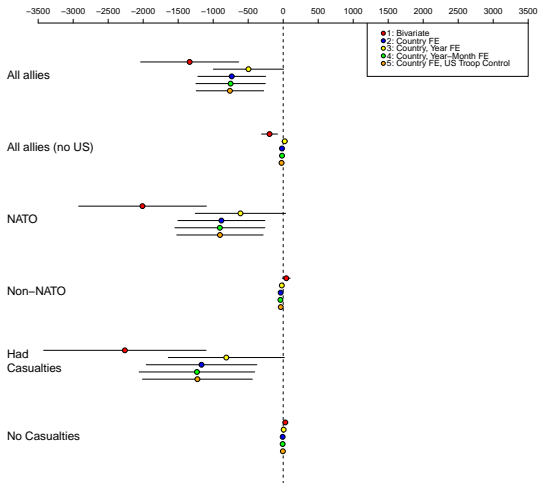
Troops in Afghanistan vs. Year



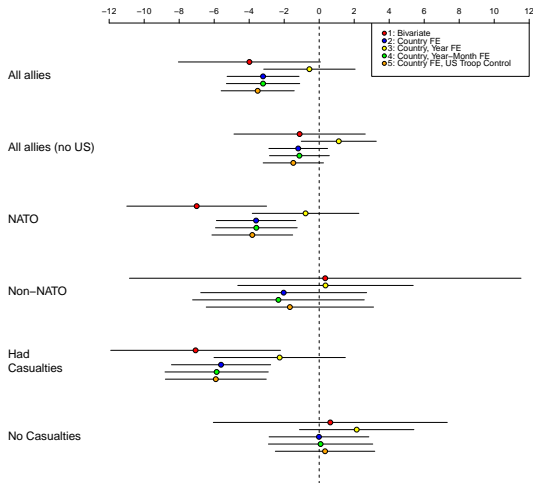
Results from Basic T-tests

	Mean Troops in Election Period	Mean Troops out of Election Period	Difference of Means	N1	N2	p-value
All allies (troops)	1234	2570	-1336	2138	946	0.000
All allies (troops per capita)	43	47	-4	2138	946	0.021
Had Casualties (troops)	1947	4209	-2262	1271	560	0.000
Had Casualties (troops per capita)	51	58	-7	1271	560	0.001
No Casualties (troops)	199	169	31	867	386	0.066
No Casualties (troops per capita)	32	32	1	867	386	0.808

Absolute Troop Levels



Troops Per Capita



Recap

- The best security policy made near elections is probably not far from the realist no variation “ideal”
- Our findings point out to potentially suboptimal security choices around elections
- Short-term costs of a security policy could affect the type of policy chosen before elections
- Incumbents want to signal competency by avoiding casualties for policies with only long-term benefits near elections
- Next steps
 - Provide evidence to support competence/time inconsistency mechanism underlying finding
 - Large-N: negative association between support and casualties; leftist governments more sensitive to casualty concerns
 - Mini-case studies (Canada 2011, Poland 2011, Belgium 2010)

This research Design Benefits from NELDA

- Existing data by Hyde and Marinov
the National Elections Across and Democracy Dataset
(3000+ events 1945-2012 with 50+ variables)
is our starting point and source of data
- I am using NELDA in many projects

NELDA is also helpful for Book in progress on Election Wars

When do states intervene in support of processes, and when - of candidates, given competing objectives and the strategies of others?

- Like hybrid wars, propaganda, cyberattacks, election interventions are another way in which states look out for their interests

What does this matter for IR?

- Democracy is turning into the only game in town around the world
- Research in IR has focused on:
 - measuring electoral integrity and developing international standards to hold governments accountable
 - the civil war-electoral nexus, election-related violence
 - autocratic drift, color revolutions and the role of IGOs
- We know the international community matters:
 - international commitment to free elections helps democracy,
 - but this commitment is not always there,
 - possibly because of clash with illiberal powers

Broader agenda

- My published and completed research:
 - includes survey-evidence of the effects of interventions on the attitudes of respondents,
 - includes work on how international forces have changed coups, and work on election observers.
- Outside powers jockeying for influence in domestic politics builds on my dissertation on economic sanctions and leadership instability