Spring 2015

U.S. Military Aid and the Role of Foreign Armies in Civil Politics

Jennifer Jones Cunningham
Old Dominion University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/gpis_etds
Part of the Defense and Security Studies Commons, and the International Relations Commons

Recommended Citation
Cunningham, Jennifer J., "U.S. Military Aid and the Role of Foreign Armies in Civil Politics" (2015). Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), dissertation, International Studies, Old Dominion University, DOI: 10.25777/8nhf-w224
https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/gpis_etds/34

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Program in International Studies at ODU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Program in International Studies Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ODU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@odu.edu.
U.S. MILITARY AID AND THE ROLE OF FOREIGN ARMIES IN CIVIL POLITICS

by

Jennifer Jones Cunningham
B.A. May 1994, United States Naval Academy
M.A. December 2011, Old Dominion University

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
May 2015

Approved by:

Simon Serfaty (Director)

David Earnest (Member)

Robert Antis (Member)
ABSTRACT

U.S. MILITARY AID AND THE ROLE OF FOREIGN ARMIES IN CIVIL POLITICS

Jennifer Jones Cunningham
Old Dominion University, 2015
Director: Dr. Simon Serfaty

The recent expansion of the Egyptian military’s role in civil politics has led to uncertainty regarding the relationship between U.S. military aid and democratization. However, studies focusing on the link between foreign aid and democratization often exclude military aid from their analyses. This omission is particularly problematic given that civilian control over the military is a vital precondition for democratic consolidation, and a high percentage of U.S. military aid recipients are not yet consolidated democracies. Proponents of military aid point to the role security cooperation can play in diffusing democratic norms of professionalism. Critics worry military aid strengthens an institution that has the power to supplant elected governments using force. The civil-military relations literature suggests U.S. military aid should discourage military participation in civil politics by mitigating the external threats to recipients’ security, providing political support for civilian leaders, and contributing to the professionalization of the armed forces. This dissertation tests these propositions by examining the evolution of civil-military relations from the end of World War II through 2014 in three military aid recipients: South Korea, Turkey, and Egypt. The findings suggest that even when military aid improves a state’s security, dominant regimes are tempted to choose a strategy of “deliberate politicization,” granting reserved domains to officers in exchange for loyalty. In addition, weak democratically-elected leaders are more likely to adopt a policy of “acquiescence,” accepting the military’s institutional prerogatives in exchange for approval. Efforts to professionalize foreign militaries focus primarily on improving their competence, with less impact on their coherency, mission exclusivity, and respect for civilian political authority. I argue that while military aid aims to facilitate the democratization process by building armies that support democratic governance, military aid provides incentives for dominant regimes to co-opt the military, and enhances the institutional power of the military vis-à-vis the elected government in transitioning democracies.
For Julia, Katharine, and Lucy
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to offer my deepest appreciation to my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Simon Serfaty, who admirably guided me through this process despite my mid-dissertation move to Europe. Professor Serfaty’s wisdom, attention to detail, and candor challenged me and drove me to find my own voice, “one word at a time.” I would also like to thank Dr. David Earnest, who taught me everything I know about international political economy, and Dr. Robert Antis from the National Defense University’s Joint Advanced Warfighting School, for serving on my dissertation committee and providing useful advice on how to improve this study. I am also indebted to the esteemed faculty of Old Dominion University’s Graduate Program in International Studies, particularly the director of GPIS, Dr. Regina Karp, as well as Dr. Steve Yetiv and Dr. Kurt Gaubatz, for sharing their expertise in and passion for international politics with me for the past five years.

I am truly grateful for the good humor and camaraderie of my GPIS classmates, especially Katerina Oskarsson, Sara Hoff, Christina Slentz, Beyza Unal, Claudia Risner, and Wiebke Lamer. I also thank my Naval Academy classmates, Rebecca Haase, Tara McFeely, and Jennifer Donahoe, for their friendship and moral support. I owe a debt of gratitude to the men and women of the United States Armed Forces, including my grandfather, author John Boeman, my father, John Jones, my brothers, Elliot, Jeremy and Trevor, my sister Jessica, and my husband, Don Cunningham, whose professionalism and dedication inspired this examination of civil-military relations. I also want to recognize my parents, John and Vicki Jones, for their emphasis on the importance of education, discipline, and hard work. Finally, I could not have finished this study without the unconditional love and support of Don and my daughters, Julia, Katharine, and Lucy.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERVIEW: U.S. MILITARY AID</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LIBERAL-DEMOCRATIC MODEL OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. MILITARY AID AND THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN ARMIES IN CIVIL POLITICS</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. SOUTH KOREA: U.S. MILITARY AID AND THE ROAD TO OBJECTIVE CIVILIAN CONTROL</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEETING THE EXTERNAL THREAT: THE U.S. Commits to ROK SECURITY</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE POLITICAL AUTHORITY OF PRESIDENT RHEE</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE KOREAN MILITARY: FROM CONSTABULARY TO THE LARGEST STANDING FORCE IN EAST ASIA</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE PARK ERA: THE MILITARY’S ROLE IN KOREA’S TRANSFORMATION</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARK’S PRESIDENCY AND THE AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO KOREA’S DEFENSE</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPONDING TO THE EXTERNAL THREAT: THE CENTRALIZATION OF PARK’S AUTHORITY</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR PARK CHUNG HEE</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES UNDER PARK</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE POST-PARK ERA OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMERICAN POLITICAL SUPPORT AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL POWER AFTER PARK</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILITARY PROFESSIONALISM DURING KOREA’S TRANSITION</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. TURKEY: CAN THE GUARDIANS OF THE REPUBLIC FOLLOW THE LIBERAL-DEMOCRATIC MODEL?</strong></td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. MILITARY AID AND TURKEY’S POSTWAR SECURITY</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. POLITICAL SUPPORT AND TURKEY'S MULTI-PARTY POLITICS</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. MILITARY AID AND THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE TAF</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSERTIVE GUARDIANSHIP AND AN UNSTABLE ALLIANCE, 1960 – 1980</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPECTATIONS, BILATERAL RELATIONS, AND MILITARY INTERVENTION</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCONTINUITIES AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONALISM OF THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORDER, ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND AN ALLIANCE IN TRANSITION, 1980 – 2000</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. MILITARY AID AND TURKEY'S SECURITY CHALLENGES</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLITICAL STABILITY AND ECONOMIC CHANGE</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF TURKISH MILITARY GUARDIANSHIP</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIVIL MILITARY RELATIONS TRANSFORMED?</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERDOGAN AND THE SUBORDINATION OF THE GENERAL STAFF</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKEY'S POST-SEPTEMBER 11 SECURITY CHALLENGES</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKEY'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. EGYPT: MILITARY AID AND THE CONTEST FOR INFLUENCE IN EGYPTIAN POLITICS</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE NASSER ERA</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVERGENT THREAT PERCEPTIONS: U.S. VERSUS SOVIET MILITARY AID</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR NASSER</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE POLITICIZATION OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADAT'S PURSUIT OF U.S. MILITARY AID, WESTERN POLITICAL ALIGNMENT, AND THE SUBORDINATION OF THE EGYPTIAN MILITARY</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADAT'S SHIFT: SEEKING U.S. MILITARY AID FOR EXTERNAL DEFENSE</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADAT BUILDS DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SUPPORT</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MARGINALIZATION OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MUBARAK ERA: U.S. MILITARY AID, POLITICAL STABILITY, AND THE EAF</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. MILITARY AID AND EGYPT'S NATIONAL SECURITY</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUBARAK'S POLITICAL LONGEVITY</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. MILITARY AID AND THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE EAF</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEYOND MUBARAK: THE MILITARY REEMERGES AS A POLITICAL ACTOR</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTERNAL THREATS AND MILITARY INTERVENTION AFTER MUBARAK</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST-MUBARAK POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LIMITATIONS OF U.S. MILITARY AID ON THE EAF’S PROFESSIONALISM</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTERNAL THREATS AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. POLITICAL SUPPORT AND ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVE CIVILIAN CONTROL</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONALIZATION AND THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN CIVIL POLITICS</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE POTENTIAL – AND LIMITATIONS – OF U.S. MILITARY AID</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECURITY THREATS AND OBJECTIVE CIVILIAN CONTROL</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTERNAL POLITICAL SUPPORT – A NECESSARY, IF NOT SUFFICIENT, CONDITION</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. MILITARY AID AND MILITARY PROFESSIONALISM IN FOREIGN ARMIES</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINAL THOUGHTS AND PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE STUDY</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When Egyptian citizens successfully forced the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak in February, 2011, Pentagon officials expected that after three decades of cooperation with the Egyptian armed forces, its generals would play a stabilizing role in Egypt’s transition to democracy. The military demonstrated its inclination to return to the barracks after supervising the election of Egypt’s first civilian president, Mohamed Morsi, in June, 2012. Yet just twelve months later, the military was pulled into politics again, as the defense minister General Abdul-Fattah el-Sisi warned Morsi that the generals would impose their own roadmap out of Egypt’s economic and political crises if his government did not meet the demands of the people in the streets. The military has since expanded its role in Egypt’s civil politics, and Sisi himself won 97 % of the vote in a presidential election observers reported fell short of international standards.

These events highlight Washington’s potential and limitations when leveraging military aid to shape the behavior of foreign armies. Foreign aid is considered a vital instrument of American foreign policy, credited with facilitating Europe’s postwar recovery and free world defense against Communist expansion, but its record in promoting political development has been mixed, particularly in those countries that receive large outlays of U.S. military aid. While the mission of development assistance is to support developing countries as they try to “build the economic, political, and social institutions that will improve the quality of their lives,” military aid is potentially inimical to political development, as it strengthens an institution that has the power to supplant the government using force. Since one of the most important objectives of American foreign policy since the end of the Cold War has been to encourage the

---

2 David D. Kirkpatrick and Kareem Fahim, "Morsi Faces Ultimatum as Allies Speak of Military 'Coup'," ibid., July 1, 2013.
transition to democratic regimes, the mechanisms by which military aid may undermine or promote democratization deserve greater attention.

Democratic consolidation requires that the military recognize the supremacy of civilian political authority. A state's civil-military relations are not only affected by the balance of power between civilian and military elites, but also by the military's internal character and organization, as well as society's attitude toward the military and the government. These factors, which interact to shape the military's role in civil politics, are altered when another state commits to providing military assistance. In a state where the norm of civilian control over the military has been firmly established, military aid that increases the professionalism of foreign armies should have a positive impact on the recipient's civil-military relations. This study will examine the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of the recipient's military in civil politics in three states that, while committed in varying degrees to democracy, struggled with both civilian and military elites' inclination toward authoritarianism. In doing so this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between U.S. foreign aid and democratization, particularly as most existing studies exclude military aid from their analyses.

The intent of this study is not to provide a critique of American foreign policy, which involves balancing multiple global strategic interests and values, but rather to examine the mechanisms through which U.S. military aid may undermine, or enhance, a government's ability to establish objective civilian control over its military, defined by Samuel Huntington as, "that distribution of political power between military and civilian...

---

5 Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan write that democratic consolidation has been accomplished when all political actors "become subjected to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflict within the specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by the new democratic process." Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 6.

6 There is consensus among civil-military relations and democracy scholars that civilian control over the military is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for democratic consolidation. For example, Charles Tilly wrote, "So long as military forces retain extensive political autonomy, democratization does not advance." Contention and Democracy in Europe, 1650-2000 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 200. See also Samuel E. Finer, The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics (London: Pall Mall, 1962), 25; Eric A. Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 12-15.

7 In his discussion of Samuel Huntington's work on civil-military relations, Zoltan Barany notes "the correlation between higher levels of professionalism and fewer instances of political meddling hold only for consolidated democracies." The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 28.
groups which is most conducive to the emergence of professional attitudes and behavior among the members of the officer corps. As Huntington explains, "The antithesis of objective civilian control is military participation in politics: civilian control decreases as the military becomes progressively involved in institutional, class, and constitutional politics." In doing so, this study should contribute to the ability of the academic and policy-making community to make better-informed judgments when considering the role of military aid and security cooperation in promoting transitions to democracy.

In the last decade, studies of the relationship between foreign aid and political development have been divided over the question of whether or not aid supports or undermines democratization. In particular, scholars have debated the extent to which aid creates a "moral hazard." Critics assert aid, by providing non-tax revenue to governments, encourages rent-seeking behavior, diminishes the need for political accountability to constituencies, promotes the expansion of the public sector at the expense of the private sector, and enhances authoritarian leaders' chance of political survival by providing resources to pay for patronage networks.

Defenders of aid to developing countries insist it can play a positive role in political development, as aid includes non-fungible aspects such as technology transfer and policy advice that can influence attitudes, and is less vulnerable to corruption; in addition, they argue, the risk of moral hazard is mitigated when donor countries send personnel to administer aid. Recent attempts to disaggregate democracy assistance from these studies point to the importance of distinguishing the type of aid delivered. While

---

few have attempted to isolate military aid,\textsuperscript{12} which would be particularly useful for those cases in which military aid outweighs development assistance, some have noted that aid may be less successful when security interests weaken the donor’s commitment to political reforms.\textsuperscript{13} The presence of foreign aid from authoritarian regimes that may be less likely to press for political reforms may also undermine democratic donors’ aims.\textsuperscript{14}

Military aid intends to improve the capabilities of the coercive apparatus of the state, which has implications for civil-military relations that could potentially impede a transition to democracy.\textsuperscript{15} For example, an authoritarian leader may use the military to suppress his political opposition, or the military may use force to remove a democratically-elected government. A state’s armed force, as a highly-organized and disciplined corporate entity, can be a powerful domestic political actor, one that may be perceived by civilian elites as an attractive strategic partner or potential rival.

American policymakers believe military aid can have a positive impact on democratization. For example, one of the objectives of U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF), which provides grants for friendly nations to acquire American defense articles, services and training, is to “maintain support for democratically-elected governments that share values similar to the United States for democracy, human rights, and regional stability.”\textsuperscript{16} Another component of U.S. military aid, International Military Education and Training (IMET), which provides grants for foreign military and civilian defense personnel to attend military schools in the U.S., aims to expose students to “the important roles democratic values and internationally recognized human rights can play in governance and military operations,” particularly as these future leaders may play a

\textsuperscript{12} A notable exception is the 2008 report by Steven E. Finkel et al of 165 aid recipients between 1990 and 2004, which found the statistically significant, positive effects of democracy assistance on democratization were diminished in those states that receive large outlays of U.S. military aid. "The evidence suggests that, to the extent that USAID democracy assistance is provided in settings where U.S. geo-strategic concerns constitute a priority for bilateral relations, the effectiveness of democracy programs will decline."\textsuperscript{47}


\textsuperscript{15} Bermeo, "Democracy Assistance and the Search for Security."

\textsuperscript{16} "Foreign Military Financing," www.state.gov/t/pm/65531.htm.
"pivotal role in supporting, or transitioning to, democratic governments."17 By
contributing to the professionalism of foreign militaries and exposing them to democratic
values, FMF and IMET are expected to encourage foreign militaries to support
democratic governance and minimize their interference in civil politics.

What is the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of foreign armies
in civil politics in those cases in which democratic norms have not yet been firmly
established? This question is particularly relevant given that of the 73 countries that
received FMF in 2013, more than 67% were ranked only "partly free" or "not free" by
Freedom House.18 Many U.S. military aid recipients are stuck in what Thomas Carothers
calls a political "grey zone," characterized by diverse but entrenched political patterns
that fall short of well-functioning democracies.19 This study will examine the relationship
between U.S. military aid and the role of foreign armies in civil politics in three cases in
which political institutions were underdeveloped when military aid was established:
South Korea, Turkey and Egypt. While these three countries have since achieved
divergent levels of economic, political, and human development,20 each emerged from
the Second World War vulnerable to external threats, with weak political institutions,
populations of approximately 21 million,21 and modest natural resources.22 Over the next
six decades, their civil-military relations would evolve in unexpected ways, with at times
decisive impacts on the ability of democratically - elected leaders to establish objective

---

17 "International Military Education and Training (IMET)," U.S. Department of State,
www.state.gov/t/pm/65533.htm.
18 "Foreign Military Financing Account Summary," U.S. Department of State,
www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/sat/c14560.htm; "Freedom in the World Country Ratings and Status," in Freedom
that rather than follow a predictable transition model, states tend to become stuck with "feeble pluralism,"
or "dominant rule." In both cases the state is weak, political participation is shallow, and the economy is
underperforming.
20 For example, according to the United Nations Human Development Report, in 2012 South Korea had
achieved "Very High Human Development," ranking 16th out of 187 countries included; Turkey is ranked
69th and placed in the "High Human Development" category, while Egypt is ranked 108 overall, with
"Medium Human Development." "Human Development Reports: Human Development Index Trends, 1980
21 "United States Census Bureau: Countries and Areas Ranked by Population: 1950,"
www.census.gov/population/international/data/countryrank/rank.php.
22 Egypt is the largest non-OPEC oil producer in Africa and the second-largest dry natural gas producer in
Africa; however, while Egypt has been a member of the Organization of Arab Oil Exporting States since
1973, and plays a key role in energy security because of its control of the Suez Canal, it does not have
resource wealth comparable to that of the wealthy Persian Gulf oil producers."U.S. Energy Information
civilian control over their armed forces. Table 1 below gives an overview of the military assistance to these three countries from 1946 through 2012.

Table 1: Military Assistance Obligations in Millions, current $US

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1,785.1</td>
<td>7,114.1</td>
<td>8,911.7</td>
<td>6,429.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>553.2</td>
<td>1,463.4</td>
<td>10,900.3</td>
<td>12,985.7</td>
<td>7,175.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>42,131.5</td>
<td>42,131.5</td>
<td>37,581.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Overview: U.S. Military Aid

During World War II, the U.S. provided nearly $50 billion in military supplies and other assistance to thirty countries through Lend-Lease agreements. In response to Great Britain’s cessation of military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey, President Truman, concerned about Soviet expansionism, announced the United States’ commitment to providing assistance to democracies facing internal or external security threats. In 1949, Congress authorized the Military Assistance Program (MAP) and the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, which would facilitate the acquisition of American-made defense articles, services and training. From 1949-1952, foreign assistance was primarily allocated under the Marshall Plan, and the Mutual Security Act

---

regulated U.S. foreign aid from 1953 until 1961. Since 1961, foreign aid has been
governed by the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA). Traditionally, the U.S. State Department
determines which countries are eligible to receive military assistance, while the
Department of Defense executes the programs.

Currently, the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs'
Security Assistance Team (SAT) formulates military assistance policy in consultation
with the Director of Foreign Assistance, the Secretary of Defense, the Defense Security
Cooperation Agency, and U.S. regional combatant commanders.\(^2\)\(^5\) The SAT manages
three programs: International Military Education and Training (IMET), Foreign Military
Financing (FMF), and Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). The funds designated for PKO
compensate for UN funding shortfalls by enabling states with few indigenous capabilities
to participate in multilateral peacekeeping, humanitarian, counterterrorism and regional
stability operations, as well as post-conflict security sector reform. Because PKO is a
relatively new program, and constitutes a small share of overall military aid, this study
will focus on the military aid provided through FMF and IMET.

FMF packages consist of a mix of grants and loans that enable foreign countries to
acquire defense articles, services, and training through the Foreign Military Sales
program. The Arms Export and Control Act (AECA) of 1968, establishes the terms and
conditions for sales of defense articles and services. For example, Section 4 requires U.S.
defense articles and services be used only for "internal security" or "legitimate self-
defense," and to allow recipients to participate in regional or collective security
arrangements in support of international peace and security, consistent with the United
Nations Charter.\(^2\)\(^6\)

A primary purpose of FMF is to build a foreign army's capacity to meet external
threats by providing not only modern weapons, but also equipment used for other
defense-related purposes such as transportation, communication, and logistics. When
foreign armies purchase these items they also often purchase training on how to use,
maintain, and repair the equipment. This creates a community of operators and
maintainers familiar with U.S. military doctrine, which ideally facilitates American

---
\(^2\)\(^6\) Ian F. Fergusson and Paul K. Kerr, "The U.S. Export Control System and the President's Reform
efforts at coalition-building by improving interoperability. FMF funds aim to establish an indigenous maintenance capability through technical training, but also include options for contracting American services until that capacity is realized. For example, aid recipients may need to use FMF funds to bring American technicians to their country to maintain and repair existing U.S.-manufactured equipment. The financing structures for FMF-funded acquisitions, demand for American technical expertise, and dependence on American replacement parts for existing equipment creates a "shadow of the future," that ideally contributes to the stability of bilateral relations, even when a state "graduates" from the FMF program and purchases defense articles and training through the Foreign Military Sales program.

In 1976, the International Security Assistance Act established a separate grant program, IMET, to provide professional military education to friendly countries unable to purchase training through the FMS program. At the time, emphasis was placed on the ability of IMET to improve bilateral relations and increase foreign armies' self-sufficiency. In 1978, IMET's purpose was expanded to include increasing foreign officers' awareness of "basic issues involving internationally recognized human rights." IMET offers more than 4,000 courses, which take place at 150 military schools and installations; between six and seven thousand foreign students attend these schools annually. While the focus is predominately on professional military education for potential leaders among commissioned and non-commissioned officers, IMET funds are also used for English language classes and technical training such as flight school.

IMET provides just one of several means for foreign countries to take advantage of American military schools; foreign governments have been able to purchase military education and training or use FMF funds to acquire training through the Foreign Military Sales program as early as 1949. Thus it is important to recognize that while critics and advocates alike often focus their analyses on IMET specifically, IMET reports do not reflect all of the foreign personnel attending U.S. military schools. For example, in 1999, 82 Egyptian students were trained through IMET, while 2145 students participated in

training through the FMF program. Regardless of how foreign governments acquire the training, military and civilian defense personnel are sitting in the same classes alongside their American peers. Even IMET and FMF reports cannot capture the full scope of participation in U.S. military training; the Department of Defense funds myriad training programs that fall outside of those purchased through the Foreign Military Sales program, such as regional centers for security studies, drug interdiction activities, disaster response, counter-terrorism, and humanitarian demining. Training can take the form of a joint exercise, on-the-job training between American forces and foreign military personnel, or formal classroom instruction. In fiscal year 2012, Congress appropriated approximately $18.8 billion to fund “various security cooperation and assistance programs that supply military equipment and training to more than 100 partner countries.” For this reason this study refers to military education and training mindful of the fact that not all of the efforts to improve the capabilities of foreign militaries and establish mutually beneficial relations with foreign defense personnel are captured by looking at the annual appropriations for the IMET and FMF programs.

Critics of IMET point to the difficulty in proving program effectiveness, as well as the role some recipients of U.S. military training have played in human rights abuses and military coups. For example, the U.S. Army School of the Americas, originally established in 1946 to provide security training in Spanish for cadets, officers, and non-commissioned officers of Latin American militaries in the U.S.-controlled Panama Canal Zone, faced intense criticism when some of its training manuals were released by the DOD in 1996, revealing counter-insurgency techniques that included blackmail, torture,

---

and execution. Military aid may promote an increased role for the military in internal security and development, encouraging foreign military personnel to assume a greater nation-building role at the expense of civilian actors. Other critics suggest American policymakers are over-optimistic about the ability of Western military officers to shape the character of foreign militaries.

To address some of these concerns, Congress mandated in 1991 that IMET include coursework that focused on human rights, democratic values, civilian control over the military, and military justice system reform. "Expended IMET" (IMET-E) was thus established, and students include civilian personnel such as legislators interested in military matters. The courses offered under IMET-E include instruction on civil-military operations, democratic sustainment, and civil affairs. Some of the courses are available at U.S.-based institutions like the National War College, the Army, Navy, and Air Force War Colleges, and the Center for Civil-Military Relations, while others are conducted by U.S. instructors in foreign countries via a "mobile education and training team." IMET-E aims to improve civilian officials' ability to manage defense resources and maintain control over the military. In 2001, Congress passed the IMET accountability act, requiring State and Defense to more closely monitor the professional progress of IMET graduates. Congress also mandated that the Department of State and Department of Defense jointly prepare an annual report that details the foreign policy justification for all military training provided to foreign military personnel.

Advocates of American military education and training programs point to the socialization process that occurs when personnel from foreign militaries study and train alongside American defense professionals, and propose a transfer of values occurs that should facilitate a transition to a liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations. For example, Huntington credited U.S. military schools like the George C. Marshall Center in 34 Richard F. Grimmet and Mark P. Sullivan, "U.S. Army School of the Americas: Background and Congressional Concerns," (2001), 3. Under pressure from Congress, the school closed in 2000, and reopened a year later under a different name, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, located in Fort Benning, Georgia.
37 FY 1991 Foreign Operations Act (PL 101 - 513)
38 Cope, International Military Education and Training, 44.
39 "Foreign Military Training."
Bavaria with "diffusing democratic norms of military professionalism and civilian control," which facilitated defense reforms in transitioning democracies, particularly at the end of the Cold War.\textsuperscript{40} They argue American military education can play a stabilizing role in transitioning democracies,\textsuperscript{41} for example by facilitating communication with and access to foreign military and political elites who may be in a position to promote political reform,\textsuperscript{42} and introducing American political values such as respect for human rights.\textsuperscript{43}

In an effort to institutionalize exposure to American values, the DOD established the "International Program" in the 1960s, which required each U.S. military training facility to have an International Military Student Officer (IMSO) to coordinate activities that would familiarize foreign military students with American life.\textsuperscript{44} The program has since been renamed the U.S. Field Studies Program for International Military and Civilian Students and Military Sponsored Visitors, and aims to impart foreign students with "an understanding of the responsibilities of governments, militaries, and citizens to protect, preserve, and respect the rights of every individual" with the goal of "promoting an understanding of U.S. society, institutions, and ideals and the way in which these elements reflect U.S. commitment to basic principles of internationally recognized human rights."\textsuperscript{45} The guidance requires foreign students be assigned sponsors, and encourages exposure to local government institutions, the free market system, education, media, and the diversity in American life.

The idea of socialization is not limited to education and training, however. For example, for decades Egypt and the United States have conducted yearly exchanges, alternating between Cairo and Washington, D.C., to give senior officers, including the chief of staff of the Egyptian armed forces and the American chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, an opportunity to discuss what type of American-made equipment the Egyptians

\textsuperscript{43} Cope, \textit{International Military Education and Training}, 44.
\textsuperscript{44} Taw and McCoy Jr, "International Military Student Training: Beyond Tactics," 9.
would like to purchase through the Foreign Military Financing program.\footnote{Bumiller, "Pentagon Places its Bet on a General in Egypt."} During these visits, officers may bring along their families, and U.S. officials schedule non-defense related activities like shopping or ballgames to give the visitors a sense of American culture. In addition, while the Department of State funds IMET and FMF, the Department of Defense may fund activities that increase the scope and depth of foreign military exposure and training, such as service-sponsored activities like service-academy exchanges or the aviation leadership program.\footnote{ "U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Defense: Foreign Military Training and DOD Engagement Activities of Interest in Fiscal Years 1999 and 2000."} While these activities are reported to Congress annually, it is difficult to capture all of the meetings, phone calls, emails, conferences, and workshops that often accompany the planning process for any type of activity in which two or more foreign militaries participate. This study cannot possibly discuss every activity, but does wish to make the point that for DOD officials in particular, the process of planning a training exercise or joint activity is often considered just as valuable as the activity itself, reflecting the mindset that these interpersonal relationships will contribute to mutual understanding and improved communication and interoperability in the future. In other words, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the positive effects of interaction between American and foreign military personnel.

While this study will resist claiming that military education and training has a decisive impact on foreign military personnel’s respect for civilian control over the military, it can be safely assumed that these programs increase the competence, or expertise, of military personnel, which is an important aspect of professionalization. Still, a foreign military’s participation in professional military education courses may reflect the government’s desire to professionalize its military, and the general staff’s desire to participate in the community of democratic armies.

The Liberal-Democratic Model of Civil-Military Relations

This study makes the normative assumption that objective civilian control over the military is preferable to a military’s presence in civil politics, based on the convincing arguments of both civil-military relations and democracy scholars that civilian control of
the military is a vital precondition for democratic consolidation. However, the assumption that contributing to the professionalism of foreign armies will discourage military interference in civil politics depends upon a clear definition of what constitutes a "professional" military. Huntington's discussion of military professionalism in his seminal work, *The Soldier and the State*, focuses on the military's competence, or expertise in the management of violence, its cohesiveness, or loyalty to "fellow-practitioners," as well as the need for mission exclusivity, meaning a military cannot be experts at external defense while assuming internal roles in politics, statecraft, or internal security. Finer later argues these qualities alone are not enough to guarantee a military will refrain from intervening in politics: "The fact is... if the armed forces are not to intervene, they must believe in an explicit principle – the principle of civil supremacy."

This study will conceptualize professionalization as a process in which the armed forces work toward achieving the highest levels of competency, cohesiveness, mission exclusivity, and respect for civilian political authority. Competency is a product of both the quality of personnel entering the military service, and their education, training, and experience, while cohesiveness is the extent to which military personnel act as one corporate body and respect the military hierarchy. Mission exclusivity is the extent to which the armed forces focus on defense from external threats rather than economic interests, internal policing, domestic intelligence or governance. Respect for civilian political authority includes the recognition that the civilian political leadership has the final say in foreign and national security policymaking, and the legislative body retains the right to oversee promotions and the allocation of funds for defense. Defining military professionalism in this way allows for an analysis of how U.S. military aid might contribute to one aspect of military professionalism while undermining another. For

---


example, in the early years of U.S. military aid, junior and mid-level officers may be more receptive to U.S. military doctrine and education than senior officers who have their own experiences and may be influenced by education from another foreign military. Thus while U.S. military aid may contribute to the competency of the foreign officer corps, at the same time it may be undermining the officers' cohesiveness by creating tension between junior and senior officers.

A fully “professional army” as conceived by American policymakers should be synonymous with a “democratic army,” or one that will support democratic governance rather than a particular party. Carl Saxer refers to this type of army as one that submits to “democratic control.” As Zoltan Barany notes, “The crucial challenge for politicians is to ensure the unconditional obedience of the military while at the same time allowing it sufficient autonomy to successfully discharge its functions and execute its missions.” In the “liberal-democratic” model of civil-military relations, civilian control of the military is shared by the executive and legislative branches, which oversee defense spending and have the final word in foreign and national-security policymaking. As such the military’s top officer, the chief of the general staff, is subordinate to the civilian defense minister, who is a member of the cabinet.

Civilian control does not necessarily reflect “professional” patterns of civil-military relations. An authoritarian leader may “ politicize” the military to minimize competition from ambitious, outspoken, independently minded officers. In doing so the political authority may establish competing security agencies, award top posts based on loyalty rather than merit, assign non-defense related duties, purge experienced officers, or take other measures that undermine the competency, coherency, and mission exclusivity of the armed forces for the sake of subordinating the armed forces. In the liberal-democratic model, however, civilians recognize the expertise of military officers and grant them a certain degree of autonomy in managing military affairs, and respect their legitimate corporate interests, such as fair pay, reasonable deployment schedules, housing allowances, health benefits, and opportunities for education. Society also plays a role in

51 “Generals and Presidents: Establishing Civilian and Democratic Control in South Korea,” 384.
53 For more discussion of the liberal model of civil-military relations, see Baranyibid., 25-39; Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments, 12-15.
civil-military relations, one that intensifies as a country becomes more democratic, and the media and nongovernmental organizations have more freedom to weigh in on debates regarding defense matters.

An explicit purpose of U.S. military aid is to contribute to the professionalization of allied and partner armed forces, which should facilitate the establishment of democratic control over the military. Even though the process can potentially impede democratic consolidation, by improving one aspect of professionalism while undermining another, Huntington warns that a fragmented military is far more dangerous. Not only will it be less capable of defending against external attack, in the absence of objective civilian control, civilian groups may try to maximize their power over other civilian groups by “breaking the officer corps up into competing units, establishing party armies and special military forces, or infiltrating the military hierarchy with independent chains of command.” A professional military that is not only well-trained but also cohesive, focused on external defense, and respects civilian political authority complicates political elites’ ability to co-opt, corrupt, or mobilize the military against their political opposition.

While U.S. military aid aims to promote the liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations, recipients have nevertheless intervened in civil politics, either directly via coup d'état, or indirectly, by expanding their “reserved domains” at the expense of the state and society. Reserved domains are informal or institutionalized privileges beyond those agreed upon by state and society that, for example, may give members of the military establishment a more prominent role in government, national security policymaking, and the civil sphere, and may insulate the military from civilian oversight. Reserved domains may be taken by military elites while in positions of political power or granted by political elites in exchange for loyalty. Military interference in civil politics exercised through these reserved domains not only undermines military readiness, but also society’s confidence in civilian democratic institutions.

What are the conditions under which U.S. military aid is more likely to support the ability of political leaders to establish democratic control over the military? While some experts focus on the internal character of the armed forces in explanations of how

---

professionalization can lead to intervention, others suggest that a military's inclination to interfere in civil politics is the result of interaction between these endogenous variables, which may "push" the military into politics, and exogenous variables that "pull" the military into civil politics, such as external threats or weak political leadership. For example, in the presence of an external security threat, the government will likely divert funds to expand the military at the expense of other sectors, and society may be more willing to accept the legitimacy of a military role in the civil sphere. As the external threat diminishes, civil society may be less tolerant of military interference and demand a "return to the barracks." Weak civilian political leaders will be more vulnerable to military influence, while civilian leaders with an active political base, distributional coalition, and/or patronage network will be more capable of limiting the political options for military interference in civil politics.

U.S. Military Aid and the Role of the Foreign Armies in Civil Politics

In considering how U.S. military aid might influence these endogenous and exogenous factors, particularly the level of external threat, the political strength of civilian leaders, and the professionalism of the military, one might develop some relatively positive expectations about the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of foreign armies in civil politics.

The purpose of U.S. military aid is, first and foremost, strategic. By improving the capabilities of the recipient states' military, the U.S. is enhancing that state's ability to deter and defend itself from external threats. For example, equipment, training, and education provided by the U.S. can bolster a friendly state's ability to control access to strategic waterways, patrol its borders, manage its airspace, and monitor transnational flows of goods and people. In addition, U.S. military aid accompanied by mutual defense treaties, nuclear umbrellas, and American military personnel improve the recipient's

---

security environment. Thus U.S. military aid should be expected to mitigate the external threat to the recipient state’s national security. Since a diminished national security threat decreases the government’s dependence on the armed forces and lowers society’s tolerance for military interference in civil politics, U.S. military aid should render it less likely the military would use an external threat to justify expanding its role in civil politics.

U.S. military aid is also an expression of political support for foreign governments. Military aid is provided not only to enhance a recipient’s defense capabilities, but also to encourage the recipient’s political alignment, so Washington can count on the recipient’s support for U.S. policy preferences, which increase the force of U.S.-led initiatives such as coalition-building or imposing sanctions against a hostile regime. Washington provides political support to the civilian leadership of the partner country not only to promote domestic and regional stability, but also because an opposition party might choose to alter the state’s political alignment in the future. The political support that accompanies U.S. military aid should contribute to the strength of the political leadership, thereby minimizing the options for the military to interfere in civil politics.

U.S. military aid directly contributes to the professionalization of the recipient state’s armed forces, which is a precondition for establishing objective civilian control. Education and training increase the competence, or expertise, of individual military personnel; modernization programs not only introduce sophisticated weaponry to the recipient’s military, but also contribute to communications, logistics, and transportation capabilities. The equipment, education and training allow for force reductions, and a smaller, highly-skilled force means better pay and also increased competition for billets, resulting in a higher quality service, improved morale, and lower incidences of corruption. In addition, interaction and close cooperation with U.S. military and defense personnel, during training, joint exercises, and military campaigns, may contribute to a transfer of American political values conducive to the liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations. By contributing to the professionalism of foreign militaries, U.S. military aid should render military intervention in civil politics less likely.

Despite these positive expectations, some foreign armies that have received U.S. military aid have assumed a more prominent role in civil politics, either through direct
intervention or by expanding their institutional prerogatives, or reserved domains, at the expense of civilians. For example, more than ten years after receiving U.S. military aid and fighting alongside American troops in the Korean War, the South Korean military intervened to remove a democratically - elected civilian government in 1961. Turkey's military did the same in 1960, and intervened again in 1971, 1980, and 1997. Egypt's recent intervention to remove the democratically - elected President Mohamed Morsi came after more than three decades of substantial U.S. military aid.

This dissertation will examine these three cases in search of explanations for why these military aid recipients deviated from our expectations. In each case, the study begins in the post-World War II period, even in the case of Egypt, which rebuffed efforts to enter a formal defense arrangement with the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s, but moved toward political realignment in the 1970s. A study of Egyptian civil-military relations during the 1950s and 1960s provides a valuable comparative opportunity, as U.S. officials struggled to maintain relations in the absence of military aid by providing political support to Egypt's president, even while he sought Soviet military aid. While the case study on South Korea will end during the 1990s, when President Kim Young Sam, who successfully implemented civil-military reforms, peacefully transferred power to long-time democracy activist Kim Dae Jung, the studies of Turkey and Egypt extend through 2014. Turkey has been a multiparty democracy since 1950, but its military assumed an active guardianship role from the coup in 1960 through the 1990s. While in the last decade Turkey's elected civilian leaders have implemented dramatic civil-military reforms that reversed the institutional gains made through the 20th century, the coercive means through which civilian elites have subordinated the military fall short of satisfying the ideal liberal-democratic model. Egypt's case study is extended through 2014 to include a discussion of the recent military intervention, as well as the subsequent decision of former defense minister and coup-leader Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to run for president.

Each case study will be divided into three or four time periods, which allows for an examination of how a particular foreign government might influence civil-military relations despite continuity in U.S. military aid. During each period, the relationship between U.S. military aid and three factors that influence a military's inclination to
interfere in civil politics will be assessed. Specifically, each study will identify ways in which U.S. military aid mitigated the external threats to the recipient’s security, how U.S. support for civilian political leaders might have limited options for military interference, and how U.S. military aid contributed to the professionalization of the military. In those instances where the relationship between U.S. military aid and military intervention in civil politics does not conform to our expectations, this study will examine how the domestic and international political context might have constrained political leaders’ ability to subordinate the military despite external support from the United States.

For example, military officers that intervened might have been motivated less by external security concerns than economic or political crises, such as parliamentary deadlock or political violence. In addition, military aid may not prevent authoritarian elites from linking national security threats with their political opposition; in fact, the presence of U.S. military aid might lend credibility to elite claims that security concerns predominate, justifying an expanded role for the military in the civil sphere.

U.S. military aid may boost the political strength of the recipient’s civilian leaders, ideally facilitating the establishment of objective civilian control over the military. Yet this political support may be characterized by discontinuity between White House and Congressional views, which creates uncertainty and a sense of insecurity within the recipient government. Even when American support is unequivocal, authoritarian elites might not attempt to establish objective civilian control, opting instead to deliberately politicize the military to consolidate their authority and secure their regime. An elected leader who does want to establish objective civilian control may be too weak to reverse the institutional prerogatives of the military right away, and may instead adopt a policy of “acquiescence,” accepting the military’s reserved domains in exchange for tacit approval of their regime.

Finally, U.S. military aid may contribute to some aspects of professionalization more than others. Historically, U.S. military aid has had the greatest impact on foreign militaries’ competency, through modernization programs, education and training, and experience gained during joint operations. This expertise increases the military’s professionalism, but, particularly in lesser-developed countries, may undermine the coherency of the officer corps if some officers are more receptive to new ideas than
others. In addition, while U.S. advisors may try to promote the military’s coherency by encouraging a sense of national unity and responsibility, in the short term it may be difficult for U.S. instructors to overcome regional, kinship, service and/or patronage ties, or the influence of other foreign actors that shaped the identity of the armed services and/or contributed to ideological splits within the military. Increasing an armed forces’ competence may also encourage the military to expand its role in internal security and national development, which undermines the mission exclusivity of the armed forces at the expense of the civil sector. While U.S. schools emphasize the importance of respect for civilian control, education and training may give personnel a feeling of superiority as they outpace their civilian peers, encouraging military officers to expand their "reserved domains," or autonomy from civilian oversight, if given the opportunity.
CHAPTER II

SOUTH KOREA: U.S. MILITARY AID AND THE ROAD TO OBJECTIVE CIVILIAN CONTROL

Introduction

The significance of U.S. military and political support for South Korea emerged in the early postwar period, as American and Soviet occupation forces, tasked with receiving Japanese surrenders, struggled to agree on a political roadmap for a unified Korean provisional government. As Koreans in the south, anxious for a return to self-governance, protested the presence of American troops, the commander of the U.S. military government cautioned that the Soviets were training a North Korean Communist army of at least 150,000, and reorganizing and re-equipping the Chinese Communist army in Manchuria.1 While future president Syngman Rhee appealed to President Truman that South Korea was as strategically significant as Greece, and as such should benefit from the Truman Doctrine,2 Secretary of War Robert Patterson warned the presence of American military personnel was aggravating the “intense desire for Korean independence,” and, believing that the risk of internal problems was greater than the external threat, advised American troops be withdrawn while the U.S. was still in a position to set the terms of their redeployment.3


3"Letter from the Secretary of State to the Political Advisor in Korea, July 2, 1947," in FRUS (U.S. Department of State: University of Wisconsin Digital Collection); "Letter from the Secretary of War to the Acting Secretary of State, April 4, 1947," in FRUS (U.S. Department of State: University of Wisconsin Digital Collection).
forces invaded the Republic of Korea on June 25, 1950, did the American commitment to the nascent state as a bulwark against Communist expansion in Asia crystallize. Once the United States invested blood and treasure to protect the sovereignty of South Korea, it would thereafter possess a strategic interest in providing U.S. military assistance to strengthen its armed forces.

The United States signed a Mutual Defense Treaty on October 1, 1953, which committed the U.S. to helping South Korea defend itself in the event of renewed North Korean aggression. Along with stationing tens of thousands of American Army and Air Force personnel in South Korea, including two divisions that patrolled the three-kilometer wide demilitarized zone that divided north from south, the United States provided billions in training, education, equipment, and weaponry over the next four decades. Washington also provided political support for South Korea, not only to bolster South Korea’s civilian leadership, but also to build the Korean people’s confidence in their future as a viable, self-sufficient, democratic state. American military aid also contributed to the professionalization of South Korea’s armed forces, enabling them not only to defend themselves against possible Communist aggression, but also to serve as a force for stability throughout Asia.4 The Korean military expanded rapidly from a modest constabulary force of 50,000 in 1948, to a standing army of nearly 700,000 during the Korean War, making it by far the most developed institution in Korean society. The close relationship between the Korean military and the U.S. military, which began in the late 1940s, deepened during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

U.S. military aid thus had a significant influence on those factors that might shape a military’s inclination to intervene in civil politics. By mitigating the external security threat, providing political support for Korea’s civilian leaders, and professionalizing its armed forces, U.S. military aid should have rendered military intervention in Korea’s civil politics less likely. However, in the decades following the initial strategic partnership, members of South Korea’s armed forces directly intervened in Korean politics during the coups of 1961 and 1979, acted on political leaders’ behalf by imposing martial law and using force against members of the political opposition, and expanded

---

their participation in Korea's civil sphere throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

This chapter will examine the evolution of South Korea's civil-military relations from 1947 until 1998, in an effort to explain the apparent negative relationship between U.S. military aid and the military's presence in Korea's civil politics. U.S. military aid decisively mitigated the external threats to South Korean security. The South Korean army, which emerged from the Korean war as the largest standing army in the Asian "free world," had a psychological impact not only on the citizens of South Korea, but also on other non-Communist Asian states that were struggling with their own political and economic challenges and felt threatened by the newly Communist China and the Soviet Union. Mutual security programs created a global arc to "resist Communist penetration or domination of the free world." Along with U.S. commitments to the Republic of China, Cambodia, Thailand, the Philippines, Japan and Okinawa, the presence of U.S. forces along with a strong Korean military capability would serve as "a major symbol of determination to resist further Communist expansion in the Far East." Nevertheless, political leaders continued to link the external threat with the domestic political opposition to justify authoritarian behavior and the presence of the military in civil politics. In addition, the military interventions in 1961 and 1979 were reactions to the political weakness of civilian leaders rather than an escalation of the external threat.

Washington also provided political support to Korea's civilian leadership. American prestige during the Cold War was tied to South Korea's successful political development, which included respect for democratic norms such as fair and free elections for civilian leaders, a multi-party political system, and respect for human rights. A democratic South Korea would be a bulwark against the expansion of Communist ideology in East Asia, and provide a liberal democratic model for non-Communist countries in the developing world. Despite American support for Korea's civilian leadership that should have facilitated the establishment of objective civilian control over the military, Korea's presidents from the 1950s through the 1980s instead chose to deliberately politicize factions within the military, to preserve the option of using force against members of their opposition. Until the presidency of Kim Young Sam, those

---

6 "National Security Council: Evaluation of Alternative Military Programs for Korea."
leaders who did want to return to democratic processes and follow a liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations were too weak to implement civil-military reforms, and instead adopted a policy of acquiescence, allowing politicized officers to protect and expand their reserved domains.

Finally, U.S. military assistance had a decisive impact on the competence of the Korean military. The U.S. drove the rapid expansion of the Korean military after the outbreak of the Korean War by establishing numerous military training facilities as well as institutions for professional military education. The military's technical and administrative expertise was also enhanced by exchange programs, on-the-job training, and modernization programs. The presence of an American general as the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command, contributed to the close military-to-military relations between American and Korean military personnel. However, improving the competence of the military during Korea's early stages of development produced powerful incentives to intervene when civilian elites were unable to maintain social order and economic growth. In addition, factions with un-democratic ideologies challenged American efforts to encourage a sense of unity and mold the Korean military into a cohesive institution.

This case study examines the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of the South Korean military in civil politics during three periods: from the beginning of Syngman Rhee's presidency in 1948 until his resignation in May, 1960, from the coup that unseated democratically-elected Prime Minister Chang Myon's government on May 16, 1961, until President Park's assassination in October, 1979, and from the subsequent coup of December 1979, until South Korea established democratic control over its military, which in this case will be defined as the peaceful transfer of power from pro-democracy activist Kim Young Sam to opposition candidate and long-time dissident Kim Dae Jung in 1998, during which the military made no effort to interfere politically despite objecting to many of Kim Dae Jung's more liberal policy preferences. During the first period, President Rhee exploited factional rivalries within the military to maintain control over the armed forces and intimidate his political opposition. Nevertheless, when the public demanded his resignation during the April revolution in 1960, the military refused to intervene on his behalf, and he stepped down.

In the second period, one of the military's factions, led by Park Chung Hee, grew
frustrated with the inability of the elected government of Chang Myon to deal with corruption, economic crisis, and political violence, and organized the country’s first military coup d’etat. Park resigned his commission and won three presidential elections (1963, 1967, and 1971). During this “honeymoon” period in bilateral relations, during which Park enjoyed strong support from both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Park used U.S. military aid and the national security threat to mobilize the Korean public, implementing economic reforms and initiating an impressive period of state-directed economic growth. However, in the context of Nixon’s Guam Doctrine and the American withdrawal from South Vietnam, Park pulled his military deeper into politics to centralize his authority and implement the repressive Yushin constitution, which severely restricted political activity and allowed Park to rule until his assassination in 1979.

In the third period, members of the Hanahoe faction acted against senior military leaders and the acting president to seize power rather than return to constitutional processes, resulting in another coup d’état in December, 1979. Nevertheless, President Ronald Reagan’s resolve to demonstrate anti-Communist solidarity brought with it a reinvigoration of U.S. – Korean relations. By 1987, however, President Chun Doo Hwan was faced with pressure from not only an opposition that now included members of the new middle class, but from Reagan himself, as well as a professionalized military reluctant to use force against Korean society. Thus while President Chun enjoyed strong material and political support from the Reagan Administration, he responded to the demands for reforms in 1987 that provided for direct presidential elections. Chun’s successor and fellow faction member Roh Tae Woo preserved the reserved domains of the military rather than move to establish objective civilian control; yet Roh proved to be an effective transitional figure in that he allowed for the peaceful transfer of power to the democratically-elected Kim Young Sam. Kim won support for sweeping civil-military reforms that finally allowed the government to achieve objective civilian control over the military by the late 1990s.
A Tumultuous Alliance: The U.S., Military Aid, and the President
Syngman Rhee, 1948 – 1960

“When you look at this little finger of South Korea sticking out of mainland Asia, you recall that the statement made by the Joint Chiefs of Staff ten years ago is as true today as it was then – namely, the statement that while Korea is of no military importance to us in general war, it is psychologically and politically of such importance that to lose it would run the risk of the loss of our entire position in the Far East. Accordingly, we have got to carry on in the Far East.”

During the period of President Rhee’s leadership, U.S. military aid shaped several factors that influenced the role of the military in civil politics. The external threats to the Republic of Korea upon its establishment in 1948 were acute. While the end of World War II heralded the peninsula’s emancipation from Japanese colonial rule, the temporary administrative division of Korea along the 38th parallel hardened as tensions rose between the United States and the Soviet Union, and created an economic burden on the isolated Koreans. On August 15, 1948, the Republic of Korea was established; less than a month later the north declared itself the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The peninsula was divided into hostile, ideologically opposed camps, and Communist guerilla fighters were known to penetrate the 38th parallel and instigate violence in the south. The U.S. reluctantly provided political support to the previously exiled, civilian leader Syngman Rhee, a western-educated, staunch anti-Communist who had long fought against Japanese imperial rule. The invasion by North Korea in 1950 would instigate a rapid expansion of training programs to transform the modest Korean defense force into the largest standing army in free East Asia, contributing to its professionalization.

This section is divided into three parts. The first will examine the external threat to South Korea’s security, how U.S. military aid aimed to mitigate that threat, and if the Korean military used the presence of the external threat to justify an expansion of its role in civil politics. The second part will discuss the political strength of President Rhee during his presidency, and ask if American political support for his presidency helped him establish objective civilian control over the military. The final part will look at how

---

7 President Dwight D. Eisenhower in a Discussion of the National Security Council, August 8, 1957, FRUS 23, no. 239.
U.S. military aid contributed to the professionalization of the Republic of Korea's armed forces, and if that professionalization made its intervention in civil politics more or less likely.

Meeting the External Threat: The U.S. Commits to ROK Security

In the immediate postwar period, the U.S. occupation forces intended to reassure a vulnerable Korean population that the U.S. was committed to assisting its transition to an independent, sovereign state. With anti-occupation sentiment growing among the South Korean people, however, U.S. policymakers, mindful of the military and economic burdens of the Truman Doctrine in practice, had decided to withdraw U.S. combat troops from the Korean peninsula. Unlike the Soviets, the Americans, focused on the Soviet threats to American interests in Western Europe and the Middle East, judged the Korean peninsula to be of little strategic significance, and thought an invasion by North Korean forces to be unlikely. When North Korea invaded in the summer of 1950, U.S. military aid had a decisive impact on the survival of the Republic of Korea. The presence of U.S. army, air force, marine and naval troops under UN command, the Mutual Defense Treaty, and millions of dollars in military aid throughout the next decade mitigated the external threat to South Korea's security posed by North Korea and the Chinese Communists.

While the military gained socio-political importance during this period, as an institution it did not use the external threat to justify intervention in civil politics; however, the civilian President Rhee used the external threat to justify his use of the military to intimidate and harass members of the political opposition, thus pulling the military into the civilian political arena.

From 1945 – 1947, the U.S. military government in South Korea, sent to Korea to receive the Japanese surrender at the end of World War II, was focused on helping the Koreans below the 38th parallel maintain internal security until a provisional government could be established to govern an independent, unified Korea. While U.S. efforts were focused on creating a constabulary force during these early days, the U.S. presence was intended to reassure the defenseless Koreans that the U.S. was committed to restoring Korean sovereignty and maintaining its territorial integrity. The American government
created a National Defense Command (NDC) within the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), with the goal of establishing a Korean defense force of approximately 25,000 personnel capable of maintaining internal stability once U.S. combat troops withdrew. Koreans with prior military experience were invited to attend American-led schools that could produce officers capable of communicating with NDC personnel, and become the core of the Korean Constabulary as enlisted recruiting began in the spring of 1946.8

The prevailing sentiment among U.S. officials was that political and economic progress would strengthen the U.S. negotiating position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in the Joint Commission, which was tasked with establishing a provisional government for the whole of Korea. Thus while the U.S. was concerned about Communist subversion, their focus was not yet on establishing an indigenous defense force capable of repelling an outright attack from an outside force. The internal security challenges emanated from Communist insurgents, as well as numerous paramilitary groups opposed to the decision to put the country under joint Soviet-American trusteeship.9

The failure of the Joint Commission, combined with increasing political pressure from extreme right political groups led by Syngman Rhee, led to the referral of the “Korean problem” to the UN, which agreed to monitor public elections for a general assembly in March, 1948. When the South Korean government was established on August 15, 1948, the Republic of Korea’s army absorbed the constabulary, and its forces numbered 50,000.10 While U.S. troops were scheduled to withdraw later that year, General Douglas MacArthur told President Rhee at his inauguration ceremony in August, “If Korea should ever be attacked by the Communists, I will defend it as I would California.”11

Rhee, who had incited anti-American sentiment and repudiated American occupation just a year earlier, sought to delay the planned withdrawal of U.S. forces, particularly in light of the Communist uprising in Yosu just two months after his

9 Ibid., 38.
10 Ibid., 39.
inauguration. Rhee wrote Truman personally to request a delay in troop withdrawal until Korean forces could adequately provide for South Korea's defense. In December, the UN recognized the South Korean government and called for the withdrawal of U.S. troops within 90 days. Rhee made an effort to condition the withdrawal of U.S. troops on a commitment of U.S. military aid, but U.S. officials resisted making any such commitments to the capricious Rhee. The government and the Korean people grew concerned for their security as American troops began to leave; by the end of June, 1949, only the U.S. Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea (KMAG) remained on the peninsula, with a contingent of less than five hundred soldiers and enough equipment to arm 50,000 Korean soldiers.

The attack on the Republic of Korea by Communist North Korean forces, in the context of the Soviet testing of an atomic weapon in 1949, as well as the defeat of the Chinese Nationalists in 1949, forced U.S. policymakers to confront the possibility that the Soviet and Chinese Communists would expand their sphere of influence in Asia by force, with implications for the use of force against U.S. allies in Europe. Communist aggression that went unchecked by the United Nations, the nascent collective security organization conceived to maintain order in the international system, would undermine the credibility of U.S. security guarantees that ameliorated the security dilemma in a recovering Europe and elsewhere.

While skirmishes between North and South Korean military forces along the 38th parallel were not uncommon, the Americans were unprepared for the invasion of South Korea, and the first week of fighting was disastrous for the South Korean army. The South Korean army, which numbered 95,000 men on June 25, could only account for 22,000 by the end of June as troops fled south, abandoning weapons and equipment along the way. The U.S. quickly organized a United Nations coalition of 16 countries to defend South Korea, and drove North Korean forces back across the 38th parallel. General Douglas MacArthur, authorized by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to assume operational control of the U.S. military in Korea, urged President Truman to immediately commit U.S. ground forces, and U.S. troops stationed in Japan were ordered to Korea on June 30th.

---

MacArthur assumed command of the United Nations Unified Command, which was established in Tokyo on July 24th. The UN forces consisted primarily of Korean troops, but included substantial contributions from the United States, the British Commonwealth, and Turkey. NATO allies such as France and the Netherlands, and smaller contingents from the Philippines, Ethiopia, and Thailand also assisted. Mass conscription and accelerated military training ensured that by the end of July, the South Korean army had regained its prewar strength of about 95,000. UN forces assumed defensive positions along the Pusan Perimeter (a 100 mile by 50 mile rectangle in the southeast intended to thwart a North Korean drive for Pusan), regrouped, and prepared to wage a counteroffensive. By the beginning of September, the UN command was 180,000 strong.

While the UN force was successful in driving North Korean troops out of the Republic of Korea’s territorial space, it was unable to fulfill President Rhee’s dream of “liberating” the North from the Communists. After an early successful offensive that reached the Yalu River, the border between North Korea and Communist China, the Chinese entered the war and drove the UN forces back across the 38th parallel. By July 1951, the war had reached a stalemate, with negotiations dragging on for two more years, largely due to disagreements over prisoner repatriation. Yet Rhee was so determined to unify the peninsula during his lifetime that U.S. officials had considerable difficulty convincing him to agree to the armistice that ended the combat phase of the war. American policymakers were concerned Rhee would try to unilaterally unify the peninsula by force, and the U.S., which had already invested heavily to preserve the sovereignty of South Korea, would be put in the difficult position of choosing between an indefinite continuation of hostilities with the concurrent risk of escalation, or withdrawing from the conflict altogether. For this reason the U.S. agreed to a Mutual Defense Treaty, promised military aid, and kept two U.S. Army Infantry divisions in Korea to facilitate American command over the Combined United Nations - ROK forces tasked with defending the country.

---


14 Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Korea, May 15, 1953, FRUS 15, no. 524.
For the remainder of Rhee’s presidency, U.S. officials struggled to balance two imperatives: the need to maintain American control over a Korean force large and capable enough to bolster anti-Communist governments throughout Asia, and the need to reduce the financial burden of maintaining that force on both the American and Korean budgets. Unfortunately, U.S. policymakers and President Rhee disagreed on the best way to meet the external threat. U.S. officials believed normalizing relations with Japan and downsizing the armed forces were necessary preconditions for economic growth, which would provide greater security for South Korea in the long-term.\textsuperscript{15} The Agreed Minute of Understanding between the U.S. and the ROK, signed on November 17, 1954, stated that the total number of ROK military personnel would be adjusted once a reserve force was strengthened; American officials preferred to organize a sizeable reserve force with the capacity to augment a more modest active force in case of emergency.\textsuperscript{16}

Rhee, however, was opposed both to rapprochement with Japan and force reductions, two policies which would be very unpopular with the Korean public. General Chung Il Kwon, the Korean Army’s Chief of Staff, explained the Rhee government was “troubled by Communist China,” which seemed to be steadily increasing its capabilities, and that the downsizing of Korean forces would have an “irreparable effect on public morale.”\textsuperscript{17} President Rhee was so opposed to force reductions he resorted to blackmail tactics to stall U.S. military aid reductions. “While I am aware that there are economic considerations that make a reduction in our armed forces desirable,” Rhee wrote to President Eisenhower, “I seriously question the wisdom of doing so at this time….It is a tragedy indeed when Asian people and countries turn against America. This must not happen in Korea where the friendly sentiment of the people of America provides one of the strongest bulwarks against the further spread of Communism.”\textsuperscript{18} Korean officials insisted any force reductions implemented prior to equipping both Korean and American

\textsuperscript{15} Letter from President Eisenhower to President Rhee, January 31, 1955, \textit{FRUS} 23, no. 8. President Eisenhower, in a personal letter to Rhee, emphasized the importance of a “restoration of a feeling of genuine harmony and friendship between Japan and Korea,” which would facilitate bilateral trade relations and provide a much-needed boost to the South Korean economy.
\textsuperscript{16} Memorandum from the Deputy Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Noel Hemmendinger) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Walter Robertson): Forthcoming JCS Recommendations on Future Force Levels for the ROK Army, October 24, 1955, \textit{FRUS} 23, no. 96.
\textsuperscript{17} Memorandum of Conversation on the Security of the Republic of Korea, \textit{FRUS} 2, no. 59. The Korean armed services at this time numbered 720,000, with 658,000 personnel in the army alone.
\textsuperscript{18} Letter from President Rhee to President Eisenhower, August 2, 1957, \textit{FRUS} 23, no. 238.
forces with the most modern weapons available (something prohibitively expensive even for the United States) would be repeating the mistakes of 1950.

Rhee claimed the Mutual Defense Treaty and the Joint Policy Declaration were not enough to assure Koreans the U.S. would defend South Korea if attacked from the north, insisting the only way to deter a new attack would be a substantial American combat troop presence combined with a strong South Korean military. In 1957, U.S. officials discussed with Rhee a plan to cut 100,000 personnel from the Korean armed forces in exchange for a modernization program that would upgrade transport and communications equipment and provide advanced weaponry. General Lyman Lemnitzer, the Unified Nations Force commander, explained that the U.S. forces in Korea would be equipped with atomic-capable weapons, which would enable the Korean army to reduce its manpower and redirect resources toward economic development.19 President Eisenhower assured Rhee the U.S. was deeply invested in the security of the ROK, but that, “It has become imperative for our own budget... that the costs of maintaining the forces of the Republic of Korea at their present combat power be reduced....I know that you will welcome the increasing effectiveness of our aid program and the expansion to your own economy and over-all strength which will be consequent on these military reductions.”20 President Eisenhower insisted that the current level of aid was unsustainable, put a heavy burden on the Korean economy, and actually weakened Korea’s defensive capabilities because it led to equipment deficiencies.21 The frustrated Americans modified their original proposal to reducing the Korean force level to 660,000, with nearly 600,000 troops dedicated to the Korean army.22 After two difficult years of negotiations, the U.S. and South Korea agreed the U.S. would provide support for 630,000 ROK forces, down from 720,000, for FY1959.23

While the military as an institution did not use the external threat to justify expanding its political role during this period, President Rhee insisted on drawing the military into civil politics to meet the alleged Communist threat posed by his political

19 Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, June 21, 1957, FRUS 23, no. 224.
20 Letter from President Eisenhower to President Rhee, August 23, 1957, FRUS 23, no. 243.
21 Ibid.
22 Telegram from the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command (General George Decker) to the Department of the Army, November 6, 1957, FRUS 23, no. 253.
23 Memorandum of Discussion at the 411th Meeting of the National Security Council: U.S. Policy Toward Korea, June 25, 1959, FRUS 18, no. 277.
opponents. Rhee justified using the armed forces to arrest and detain assemblymen in his bid to amend the constitution in 1952, by accusing his political opponents of Communist subversion. He ordered a military presence outside of the National Assembly in an effort to intimidate his opposition, and claimed Communists were plotting to elect opposition member Chang Myon as president because Chang was willing to form a coalition government that would negotiate with North Korea. A report on Korea's internal security noted, "Political activity in the ROK is characterized by conspiratorial tactics....False allegations of secret alliance with the Communists have often been made by one group against another for political purposes." Later in the decade, Rhee and his Liberal Party used the Communist threat to justify a National Security Law that included "dangerously loose definitions of espionage activity;" Korean citizens could be punished for "disturbing the people by reporting or spreading false facts or distorted news." Rhee's Liberal Party insisted the bill was necessary to meet the threat of Communist subversion, while the opposition Democratic Party recalled the tactics employed by Rhee during the constitutional crisis of 1952.

The Congressional authorization for FY 1960 would not support the force modernization that U.S. officials had promised would compensate for force reductions. The American ambassador to Korea, Walter Dowling, insisted the reduction in the Military Assistance Program "severely retards scheduled development of ROK-self-defense capability," and warned U.S. officials that South Korea's military leaders were worried American interest in the defense of Korea was declining. Dowling argued, "We cannot expect ROK forces to maintain high morale, state of alertness and training standards if cutback in MAP and counterpart support requires maintenance forces at bare subsistence level or less." Thus by the end of Rhee's presidency in 1960, a level of

\[26\] Airgram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, November 26, 1958, *FRUS* 18, no. 249; ibid.
\[27\] Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, September 15, 1959, *FRUS* 18, no. 281.
uncertainty existed regarding the future U.S. commitment to South Korea’s external security.

The Political Authority of President Rhee

The U.S. military government in postwar Korea grew frustrated with Rhee’s efforts to disrupt the negotiations with the Soviet Union regarding the establishment of a provisional government in Korea. As negotiations broke down over the issue of which political parties would be consulted to form the government of a united Korea, U.S. officials were left with little alternative than to back the influential, nationalistic Rhee, who commanded the respect of large swathes of Koreans for his anti-Communism and anti-colonial efforts during Japanese occupation. The United States’ appeal to the international community to defend President Rhee and his government against attack by North Korea’s Communist regime had a decisive impact on the Republic of Korea’s survival. While after the war Rhee continued to antagonize U.S. policymakers, U.S. officials feared withdrawing political support for Rhee would destabilize his government, with implications for U.S. interests in the Far East. As Koreans became increasingly discontent with Rhee’s authoritarianism, U.S. officials encouraged Rhee to resign the presidency, ideally paving the way for free elections and a turn toward more democratic governance. While the military as an institution did not take advantage of Rhee’s declining popularity to intervene in politics, throughout his presidency Rhee deliberately politicized particular senior military personnel by using them to monitor and harass his opposition, fund his political base, and ensure his election. Despite Rhee’s patronage of select senior military officers, at the end of Rhee’s presidency, the armed forces as an institution refused to act on his behalf against growing domestic opposition.

Syngman Rhee would test the patience of both the Truman and the Eisenhower administrations. He made life difficult for the military government in Korea, rallying Koreans around “anti-trusteeship,” publically admonishing the American military government commander, Lieutenant General John Hodge, and staging at times violent anti-American rallies and demonstrations. His antics threatened relations between the Soviet and American negotiators to the point that Secretary of War Patterson warned in
April 1947, "the current situation in Korea is potentially explosive," and advised the U.S. "get out of Korea at an early date." Extreme right-wing groups that rejected the Soviet-American trusteeship and the presence of the U.S. military government dominated the majority of the Legislative Assembly, an interim body established by Hodge to give Koreans experience in political processes.

When Rhee became president, however, he staunchly opposed the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the peninsula, recognizing their absence would put the new Republic of Korea in a vulnerable position. During and after the Korean War, Rhee wanted to preserve the large Korean military as well as U.S. military support to reach his primary goal, the unification of the peninsula, which he thought was only possible through the use of force. The fact that the policy of the U.S. was to reach a political solution to the Korean problem, and that the Eisenhower administration explicitly stated it would not back the Republic of Korea if it initiated a military confrontation with North Korea, was a constant irritant to Rhee and undermined his main political platform, unification. The American effort to reduce the number of active American and Korean military forces after the Korean War threatened Rhee by giving the impression of declining American political support and increasing the insecurity of Korean society. Rhee was even less amenable to rapprochement with Japan, a controversial topic with Koreans that U.S. officials believed was necessary for long-term regional stability and economic growth.

Despite their irritation with President Rhee, American officials understood that Korea's political alignment, which allowed for U.S. command over the more than 600,000 strong Korean armed forces, had important implications for U.S. interests in the Far East. The large military establishment in South Korea had a psychological and political impact on non-Communist regimes in Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines and other Far Eastern countries. The American ambassador to the Republic of Korea, William S. B. Lacy, warned in 1955 that any discussion of force reductions would strain bilateral relations and diminish U.S. influence on Korean affairs, particularly U.S.

---

28 "Letter from the Secretary of War to the Acting Secretary of State, April 4, 1947."
29 Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, May 30, 1955, FRUS 23, no. 54. Ambassador Lacy wrote, "Plans to reduce the ROK armed forces would undoubtedly severely shake ROK morale at all levels of society."
30 Ibid. Lacy wrote, "Korean military establishment is undoubtedly the strongest single stabilizing force in Korea. It is at the same time a highly significant political factor in the general Far Eastern situation."
officials' ability to serve as a restraining influence on the Rhee regime. Since those relations were exercised though the Unified Command, the withdrawal of ROK forces from the UN Command in response to reductions in U.S. military support could render the resumption of North-South hostilities more likely. In addition, since the vast majority of Korean society felt the U.S. military presence was vital for their national security, any appearance of a wavering American commitment might have a destabilizing impact on the Rhee regime ahead of the 1956 elections, rendering him more vulnerable to Communist political subversion.\textsuperscript{31}

American officials thus tried to balance the need to preserve both domestic and regional political stability with the fact that in the long term, U.S. military aid would have to decrease.\textsuperscript{32} White House officials, not wanting to give the impression of declining political support, often emphasized the restraining influence U.S. public opinion and the American Congress had on their ability to provide U.S. military aid. For example, in 1955, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles met with President Rhee and his cabinet to emphasize that many American Congressmen believed that the aid program should be reduced.\textsuperscript{33} Expenditures in Korea were making it more difficult to support the forward deployment of U.S. forces in other parts of the world, which was a vital part of the U.S. strategy to meet the Soviet threat.\textsuperscript{34}

Rhee responded to pressure from the U.S. by stirring up anti-American sentiment within Korean society, accusing the United States of favoring Japan as well as underestimating the strategic value of the Korean peninsula.\textsuperscript{35} He staged riots outside of the American Embassy in Seoul,\textsuperscript{36} and wrote, "Now that our best hope, the United States, is turning towards Russia, Red China, India and Japan for co-existence, which we cannot support, we have to depend upon ourselves for better or worse."\textsuperscript{37} It was clear that the

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} "Letter from President Eisenhower to President Rhee."
\textsuperscript{33} Telegram from the Economic Coordinator in Korea (Wood) to the Department of State: Meeting with ROK Officials, October 8, 1955, \textit{FRUS} 23, no. 91; Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, November 14, 1956, \textit{FRUS} 23, no. 182.
\textsuperscript{34} Memorandum of Discussion at the 197th Meeting of the National Security Council, September 20, 1956, \textit{FRUS} 23, no. 169.
\textsuperscript{35} "Letter from President Eisenhower to President Rhee."
\textsuperscript{36} Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Korea, June 13, 1955, \textit{FRUS} 23, no. 58.
\textsuperscript{37} Letter from President Rhee to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), August 1, 1955, \textit{FRUS} 23, no. 68; ibid.
political objectives of the United States and President Rhee diverged. While the U.S.
wanted to maintain the present territorial integrity of the Republic of Korea and minimize
Soviet gains, Rhee wanted Washington to back him in a bid to reunify the peninsula.
Rhee opposed force reductions and rapprochement with Japan. Rhee believed the United
States should take a stronger stance with the Soviets in response to the Hungarian
uprisings, rather than pursuing "peace at any price."\(^{38}\) Rhee told Eisenhower that until a
"unified, independent and democratic government in Korea" was established, "we feel
compelled to bear the tremendous burden of maintaining the present level of our defense
forces," which would, of course, require large outlays of U.S. military aid indefinitely.\(^{39}\)

Rhee not only relied on the external political support provided by the United
States to maintain his rule; as the Korean War progressed, the military became an
attractive strategic partner. Rhee deftly maintained control over the increasingly
competent and popular military by removing uncooperative officers from the armed
forces and placing loyal officers in key positions.\(^{40}\) For example, in 1948, he named
officers with experience in the Japanese Imperial Army to be the first Army Chief of
Staff and first Chief of General Staff, passing over those with experience in China who
were loyal to Rhee's political rival, Kim Koo.\(^{41}\) Rhee also used a "divide and rule"
strategy, deliberately politicizing factions within the military and using loyal troops to
intimidate his political opposition.

During the Korean War, Rhee co-opted loyal officers to support his constitutional
amendment that would allow for the popular election of the president, which would
circumvent the increasingly anti-Rhee National Assembly. By declaring martial law in
Pusan in May 15, 1952, Rhee politicized elements of the military, which were put in the
difficult position of either acting on behalf of one political party against another, or
refusing to follow the orders of their civilian political leadership. The order to arrest eight
assemblymen was a clear violation of the liberal model of civil-military relations, as was
the presence of military personnel outside the National Assembly to intimidate Rhee's

\(^{38}\) "Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State."
\(^{39}\) "Letter from President Rhee to President Eisenhower."
\(^{40}\) Kim, The Politics of Military Revolution in Korea, 57-59.
\(^{41}\) Ibid., 44-48.
political opposition. The mobilization of the military for political purposes exacerbated ideological divisions within the military organization, as some officers believed the armed forces should remain politically neutral, while others were eager to back the right-wing Rhee.

Rhee also manipulated the organization of the armed forces to exercise greater influence and consolidate his authority. For example, he established a military police unit within the Department of National Defense, rather than within the Army, to monitor the entire military establishment, enabling him to circumvent the agreement between the U.S. and the Republic of Korea in which the Korean Army was subordinate to the United Nations command. The military police unit, headed by a Joint Military Provost Marshal (JMPM), only answered to the civilian Minister of Defense, who reported directly to the President. Rhee assigned a loyal officer to the post as well as to the head of the Counter-Intelligence Corp (CIC), and encouraged rivalry between the two entities. The CIC and JMPM engaged in extralegal and violent tactics, "not excluding the outright murder of politically undesirable people." Rhee also moved the headquarters of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which included the three chiefs of the three service branches, to the rear quarters of his presidential mansion, giving him direct access to all military units.

As the 1950s progressed, Rhee's leadership became increasingly authoritarian as he sought to maintain his dominant role in Korean politics with heavy-handed measures. Undemocratic behavior, such as Rhee's constitutional amendment in 1954 that abolished the two-term limitation, undermined public support for his presidency. Rhee attempted to compensate for this loss by relying more heavily on the military establishment. As one historian put it, "The intensity with which Rhee interfered with the military gained momentum in direct proportion to the attrition of his popularity in the civilian arena."

Rhee was re-elected on May 15, 1956, amidst accusations of electoral fraud. The election of opposition party member Chang Myon (also known as John Chang) as Vice

42 Woo, Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 28; Schumach, "Van Fleet Confers with Rhee on Acts; Arrest of Legislators Prompts Visit - Assembly Votes, 96-3, to End Pusan Martial Law; General Van Fleet Confers with Rhee After Arrest of 8 Assemblmen."
43 Kim, The Politics of Military Revolution in Korea, 72-73.
44 Woo, Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 31.
45 Kim, The Politics of Military Revolution in Korea, 75.
President reflected the declining popularity of Rhee’s Liberal Party. Meanwhile, negotiations between Seoul and Washington grew more contentious; by late 1956, President Eisenhower was “thoroughly fed up” with Rhee’s behavior, and warned, “we will not be blackmailed.” Rhee denounced ongoing U.S. efforts to decrease military aid, warning he was “re-examining relations with the U.S.” and considering unilaterally pursuing unification even at the risk of “committing national suicide.”

As the Korean public became increasingly restive, Rhee and his party increased efforts to co-opt the military into suppressing the opposition. Late in 1958, a draft of a new National Security Law included “dangerously loose definitions of espionage activity;” Korean citizens could be punished for “disturbing the people by reporting or spreading false facts or distorted news.” Ahead of the vote in the National Assembly, Rhee ordered the police director to ban all outdoor gatherings in Seoul, citing a Communist plot to subvert the country. On December 24, opposition assemblymen were forcibly ejected from the assembly hall while LP members passed the National Security Law. The move prompted a stern letter from President Eisenhower on Dec 25, 1958, criticizing the methods through which the law was passed, and warning that such un-democratic behavior could undermine the American and international public support necessary to sustain military aid in the future. “To the extent such doubts are raised we are handicapped in our efforts to muster the strong support we desire for Korea in the United Nations and elsewhere.” Rhee’s response was defensive; he accused U.S. officials of favoring the opposition Democratic Party, and “intimated that anti-American demonstrations might result should the U.S. persist in its views.”

Public worries mounted that the 1960 presidential and vice presidential elections would be manipulated by the ruling party, and that Rhee would not allow for the transfer

---

46 Memorandum of Discussion at the 304th Meeting of the National Security Council, November 15, 1956, FRUS 23, no. 183.
47 “Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State.”
48 “Airgram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State.”; ibid.
49 Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, December 24, 1958, FRUS 18, no. 257.
50 Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Korea: Message from President Eisenhower to President Rhee, December 25, 1958, FRUS 18, no. 259.
51 Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Howard J. Parsons) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Walter S. Robertson): Korean Revised National Security Law, December 12, 1958, FRUS 18, no. 254.
of political power to the Democratic Party through constitutional processes.\textsuperscript{52} In mid-1959, the opposition's concerns that the Liberal Party would restrict freedoms ahead of the 1960 elections were realized when the government closed the principal opposition newspaper, \textit{Kyonghyang Sinmun}. In an effort to discourage such behavior, Assistant Secretary of State Walter S. Roberston publicly linked un-democratic action by Rhee's government and Congressional disapproval of aid for Korea.\textsuperscript{53}

Meanwhile, Rhee's grip on the military was waning. Not only was Rhee unable to secure increased U.S. spending on the military establishment, but he also failed to convince military personnel to use force against protestors during the April Revolution in 1960. While senior military personnel had benefitted from Rhee's patronage, the bulk of the military establishment resented Rhee's efforts to corrupt and politicize the armed forces. Opposition candidates had accused Rhee and his party of electoral fraud during the presidential election in March, and members of the middle class and military personnel joined students and university professors in demonstrations, which started in the Southeastern part of the country and quickly spread to Seoul.

Rhee ordered martial law and brought heavily armed troops into the capital, but the military and the police refused to follow the orders of the martial law commander.\textsuperscript{54} Army Chief of Staff General Song Yo-chan tried to maintain neutrality, and Defense Minister Kim Jung-youn, along with the U.S. ambassador, urged Rhee to resign. While Rhee still had loyal personnel throughout the military and intelligence establishments, the military as an institution refused to be an instrument of Rhee's political party and intervene against members of Korean civil society. The military's decision not to act on behalf of President Rhee had a decisive impact on his authority; Rhee resigned on April 26, 1960.

\textsuperscript{52} Dispatch from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State: Democrats Look to 1960, December 1, 1958, \textit{FRUS} 18, no. 250.
\textsuperscript{53} Memorandum of Conversation between Korean Foreign Minister Cho Chong-hwan, Assistant Secretary Walter S. Robertson, and Director of Northeast Asian Affairs Mr. David M. Bane in Washington, D.C., June 3, 1959, \textit{FRUS} 18, no. 276.
\textsuperscript{54} Woo, \textit{Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization}, 66.
The Korean Military: From Constabulary to the Largest Standing Force in East Asia

U.S. military aid from the postwar period through the end of Rhee’s presidency had a transformational impact on the Republic of Korea’s military’s competence and coherency. The unprecedented scale of Korean mobilization raised the socio-political importance of the military in relation to other sectors of Korean society, as military service became one of the principal means for upward social mobility. Yet despite great progress in becoming a professional fighting force, factions based on prior military experience, regional ties, service and graduating classes form the Korean Military Academy not only persisted, but were exploited by President Rhee, who used a “divide and rule” strategy to maintain control over the top echelons of the military. Rhee’s mobilization of military officers to intimidate the opposition and ensure his electoral victories in 1952, 1956 and 1960 undermined the coherency of the military, violated the principle of mission exclusivity, and led many within the military establishment to resent, rather than respect, the civilian political authority. Rhee’s determination not to downsize the armed forces after the war led to low standards of living, slow promotion rates, and corruption, undermining military readiness and leading to discontent within the ranks.

In the immediate postwar period, the U.S. Army’s Military Government in Korea was anxious to organize an indigenous defense force in anticipation of the restoration of Korea’s sovereignty at the end of American trusteeship. The goal was to raise the level of competency and coherency of the armed forces to more effectively meet South Korea’s security needs. Rather than build a formal army, which State Department officials feared would provoke the Soviets, the military government, under the leadership of General John Reed Hodge, was initially authorized to build a 25,000-man constabulary.

Despite the number of Koreans who had fought with the Japanese army during World War II, at the end of the war Koreans with prior military experience were scattered and disorganized, with some grouped into various ill-equipped militias throughout South

---

Korea's nine provinces. The Americans extended invitations to these groups to attend the Military English Training School, with the goal of creating a cadre of officers who could communicate with the newly established National Defense Command (NDC). The sixty candidates who met in Seoul on December 5, 1945, as part of the first class of the English School, included former Korean independence fighters who had served in China, Koreans who had served in the Japanese Imperial Army, and former police officers.

It was here that Americans trained the officers who would dominate the highest ranks of the South Korean military for the next twenty years. While the primary goal of this school was to teach English language skills, some time was devoted to military training. Students were urged to adopt the "American style of military discipline," rather than the Japanese methods many learned while serving in the Japanese imperial army. The scope of military training was expanded when the South Korean National Defense Officers' Training Academy replaced the Military English Language School on May 1, 1946. U.S. military training manuals were translated into Korean, and instruction not only emphasized combat skills, but also national pride, responsibility, and unity. For example, students were taught the Korean national anthem and studied subjects like Korean history.

The Korean Military Academy replaced the Officer's Training Academy soon after the South Korean government was established on August 15, 1948, and by March 1949, the Korean Constabulary, which now numbered more than 50,000, was converted into the Republic of Korea Army. U.S. officials allowed Koreans to join the constabulary regardless of ideological affiliation, but officers were encouraged to be politically neutral, and constitutional prohibitions were in place to discourage military interference in civil politics. Select officers were sent to American training schools in the U.S. One of the first officers to visit, Yi Hallim, who eventually became a lieutenant

---

59 Ibid., 112.
general in the Korean Army, recalled his determination to use the United States Military Academy at West Point as a model for South Korea's military academy, and believed the exposure to "the true nature of a democratic society" was more powerful than the military training. However, not every officer felt like Yi when he visited the U.S. Many were ambivalent, and resented American efforts to discourage traditional Japanese military practices. While these officers might have agreed with the U.S. objective of building a disciplined and capable indigenous military force, they did not advocate blindly following American advice.

Along with the groups from the English Language School, officers from the Manchurian Defense Force, which was created by the Japanese in Manchuria, and personnel from North Korea who had escaped before and during the Korean War, joined the South Korean military. Within these groupings, personnel might also coalesce around their home region, service, or graduating class from the Korean Military Academy; these disparate groups often competed for influence. For example, following a crisis instigated by the South Korean Labor Party, who entered the military between 1947 and 1949 to start a "war of national liberation," thousands of military personnel suspected of Communist or leftist sympathies were expelled from the then-80,000 man force, bolstering the influence of the fiercely anti-Communist officers from North Korea. A Communist cell operating among the 2500 Korean army soldiers based at the south coast port town of Yosu had revolted, killing hundreds of police in Yosu and Sunchon before being stopped by soldiers and police outside the provincial capital of Kwanju.

The Korean War would be a transformative experience for the South Korean military, which fought alongside American and coalition troops against the Korean and Chinese Communists for three years. All eligible Korean men from ages 17–40 were mobilized, and the Korean army expanded from a fledgling force of approximately

---

62 Ibid., 116-18.
63 Kim, The Politics of Military Revolution in Korea, 43.
64 Ibid., 55.
65 Brazinsky, Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy, 113.
66 Johnston, "Korea Orders Martial Law, Army Moves on Red Rebels."
100,000 men at the start of the war to 250,000 by 1952. By the end of the war, the standing army alone would number nearly 650,000.

The first weeks of the Korean War were devastating as the Korean military was forced to abandon equipment and personnel as it retreated from the areas surrounding Seoul toward the Pusan perimeter. As U.S. military personnel arrived on the peninsula, Korean and American forces were able to regroup; with the KMAG empowered to strengthen all branches of the ROK armed forces, training centers turned out hundreds of new recruits daily. New staff colleges gave American advisers an opportunity to expose senior officers to U.S. military doctrine, inculcate a sense of loyalty to South Korea, and discourage a role in politics. Branch schools not only taught valuable technical skills but also socialized military personnel by encouraging self-discipline, character, and patriotism.

The Korean Military Academy gave U.S. advisers an even greater opportunity to influence the character of the officer corps. Along with military history and tactics, the four-year program provided a liberal education, including English language classes as well as Korean language and Korean history, and emphasized the importance of developing moral, mental, and physical character. The goal was not only to create a disciplined class of professional soldiers, but also to encourage a sense of national responsibility. Two graduates of the first KMA class to attain a full four-year education were Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo; they went on to be loyal supporters of Park Chung Hee, co-conspirators in the 1979 coup, and presidents during the 1980s.

After the Korean War, military education was expanded, with new institutions like the National Defense College added to facilitate the military's professionalization. According to historian Gregg Brazinsky, the goal of these institutions was to "produce officers who were technically proficient, devoted to their nation's well-being, and receptive to American influence." When arguing against a reduction of U.S. military aid, Ambassador Lacy wrote in 1955 that American influence was largely exercised through the personal relationships established "between American civilian and military

---

67 Kim, *The Politics of Military Revolution in Korea*, 39-49. This number is even more remarkable considering by then 80,000 Korean soldiers and officers had lost their lives.
69 Ibid., 130-31.
officers and individual ROK military leaders." 70 Schools were modeled on similar schools back in the U.S., and became increasingly specialized, providing technical training that gave soldiers high-level skills they could take into the private sector after their service. Officers were given administrative and managerial opportunities beyond anything they could have found in the private sector at the time.

While U.S. officials were committed to the professionalization of the armed forces, they believed the size of the Korean army was unsustainable.71 President Rhee resisted all efforts by U.S. officials to downsize the forces, not only because he wanted to preserve the option of unifying the peninsula via force, but also because psychologically, the Korean people felt more secure with a large standing army, even if it was poorly equipped and underpaid, than with a smaller, more elite, modern, and mobile force. One consequence of maintaining an oversized military force in a developing country is that low-paid military personnel are more vulnerable to corruption. Some military personnel sold extra weapons or supplies on the side to augment their salaries, despite efforts by the Americans to enforce a strict accounting for defense materiel.72 Rhee shielded loyal military members from government auditors and the National Assembly as they marketed commercially valuable war materials (provided by U.S. military aid) such as petroleum, foodstuffs, automobiles and automobile parts. In exchange these personnel contributed to funds that supported Rhee and his party.73 The military thus eventually became a source of financial support for Rhee.

Another issue that undermined the military’s professionalism was the disparity in promotion rates as the 1950s progressed. The rapid expansion during the Korean war reduced promotion time for higher-ranking officers from 1948 onward; yet once these officers assumed the top posts, they slowed promotion rates for their subordinates, causing discontent among many of the middle-ranking officers who later supported the

---

70 “Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State.”
71 Memorandum from the Officer in Charge of Korean Affairs (William G. Jones) to the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Robert J.C. McClurkin): Anticipated Difficulties in Carrying out Annex B of Agreed Minute of Understanding with ROK Government, February 1, 1955, FRUS 23, no. 9., #374 “The ROK Army is now a highly effective military instrument’, developed by nine years of advisory activity by the U.S. and three years of heavy fighting side by side with U.S. and other Western forces.”,ibid.
72 Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy, 127.
73 Kim, The Politics of Military Revolution in Korea, 75; Han, “The May Sixteenth Military Coup,” 43.
coup in 1961. When President Rhee stepped down after the April 19 Student Revolution of 1960, some of these officers, put in the position of maintaining security in an increasingly volatile political arena and frustrated by the failure of the political leadership to implement anti-corruption reforms, began to imagine that their education and experience put them in a unique position to confront the multiple challenges facing the country. Thus despite the monumental strides made toward professionalization of the armed forces, a faction within the military would soon emerge to challenge the post-Rhee democratically elected civilian government.

The Park Era: The Military’s Role in Korea’s Transformation

"It must be realized that if the coup is permitted to be successful, Park, whose real loyalty remains to be determined, may emerge as the most powerful man in Korea."
– Brigadier General Carter B. Magruder, Seoul, May 17, 1961

After President Rhee’s resignation, some American officials hoped that a political transition would provide a fresh start, re-invigorate South Korean democracy, and usher in a more cooperative era of U.S. – South Korea relations. The Korean government adopted a parliamentary system, and amended the 1948 constitution on June 15, 1960. The new constitution redistributed power between the executive and legislative branches, weakening the presidency. Within a few weeks, a national election was held to elect a new National Assembly, which would then elect a president. The opposition Democratic Party became the ruling party, and in August 1960, after five months of an interim government, long time opposition leader Chang Myon became the Prime Minister.

During the interim period and after, “reformists” within the officer corps, including Major General Park Chung Hee, demanded the senior military leadership, including the army chief of staff, be held accountable for their the role in the vote rigging

---

74 "The May Sixteenth Military Coup," 42.
75 Telegram from the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command (Brigadier General Carter B. Magruder) to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (General Lyman L. Lemnitzer), May 17, 1961, FRUS 22, no. 218.
76 Woo, Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 67.
of 1956 and 1960. In August, they appealed to the military establishment and the newly inaugurated Chang to launch an anti-corruption campaign and allow the reformers to oversee the selection of a new army chief of staff and defense minister.\(^7\)

While Chang’s attempt to establish a more democratic system was supported by the United States, Chang was politically too weak to realize his objectives. In 1960 and 1961, as students and labor unions held thousands of demonstrations, many Koreans grew alarmed by radicalism and pro-Communism within these groups.\(^7\) Political uncertainty, economic crisis, and widespread public unrest frustrated those in the military who found Chang Myon’s government unable to address civilian corruption, incompetence, and economic stagnation. This group of officers, led by future president Park Chung Hee, came to the conclusion they would have to act outside of the military hierarchy.\(^7\) On May 16, 1961, this group acted against the senior military leadership and intervened directly to overthrow the civilian government.

U.S. military aid ideally would have decreased the role of the army in civil politics by mitigating the external security threat raised by a hostile North Korean government, providing political support for Rhee and Chang’s civilian leadership, and appropriating millions to expand, professionalize, and modernize the Korean armed forces. For example, reducing the threat of invasion by North Korea might have minimized the likelihood the military would use the Communist threat to justify a political role for itself. Yet Park and his co-conspirators were motivated by the weakness of the civilian political leadership. In addition, while U.S. military aid had been decisive in protecting South Korea in the 1950s, Korea’s leaders understood that U.S. military aid would likely decline over the next decade. Park and his associates believed that South Korea’s poor economic standing heightened the psychological and military threat posed by North Korea. To meet this threat, they believed the Republic of Korea needed a strong, authoritarian state to mobilize society toward economic development. Park and his associates believed they were uniquely qualified to shape the future of the South Korean state.

---

\(^7\) Han, "The May Sixteenth Military Coup," 43.
\(^7\) Woo, *Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization*, 69.
\(^7\) Han, "The May Sixteenth Military Coup," 45.
The first part of this section will examine the relationship between the military's role in Korean politics and the external threat to security, which U.S. military aid mitigated through the 1960s and 1970s. While Park's faction in 1961 did not use the external threat to justify their coup, Park did link the external threat posed by Communist North Korea with his political opposition to justify the centralization of his authority as his presidency progressed. In addition, Koreans anticipated a decline in U.S. military aid in the context of Sino-American détente, the Guam Doctrine, and the withdrawal of American military personnel from South Vietnam; this expectation influenced Park's decision to pull the military deeper into politics. The next part will examine if American political support for the civilian President Park after 1963 enhanced Park's ability to establish objective civilian control over the military. While Park's political strength may have minimized the options for anti-Park elements within the military to intervene, Park deliberately politicized hand-picked, loyal military personnel to monitor Korean society and preserve the option of using force against his opposition. Discontinuities in American political support during the 1970s, as increasing American public and Congressional criticism of Park's government undermined the credibility of Nixon and Ford's reassurances, led the Korean president to rely even more heavily on the military to secure his regime. The final part will discuss the professionalization of the Republic of Korea's armed forces. In 1961, Park's faction behaved much like Stepan's "new professionals" by intervening to overthrow Chang's government with the intent of reshaping Korean society. Over the next two decades, U.S. military aid, along with Park's determination to insulate most of his officers from politics, allowed the military as an institution to improve in all four aspects of professionalism. However, Park's support for the Hanahoe faction would undermine the coherency of the military, leading to another coup following Park's death in 1979.

---

Park’s Presidency and the American Commitment to Korea’s Defense

Throughout his presidency, Park would use the external threat posed by the Soviet-backed, Communist North Korea to justify the presence of the military in politics and neutralize his political opposition. Ideally, the Mutual Defense Treaty, the presence of U.S. troops, and Foreign Military Financing for the procurement of defense articles, services, and training, should have encouraged Park to initiate a gradual civilianization of the Korean government, as economic growth provided new avenues for social mobility and Koreans sought a greater voice in their government’s policies. However, by the end of the 1960s, Park was concerned about the U.S. commitment to Korea’s external defense, particularly in the context of the Guam Doctrine, détente, and the anticipated withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Vietnam. In response, Park drew the military deeper into politics to consolidate his power and implement the repressive Yushin Constitution, which remained in force until his assassination in 1979.

At the time of the military coup in May, 1961, the head of the UN command in Korea wrote, “Basically my mission is to protect Korea from external aggression. To this end the Korean Forces appear to be steadfast. I feel that it is also a part of my mission to protect Korea from internal subversion by Communists. The uprising does not appear to be Communist inspired.... Accordingly, I do not propose to direct FROKA (the first Republic of Korea army) to suppress the uprising on my own authority only.”

The Korean military officers who intervened to unseat the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Chang Myon established the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR) to govern until new elections could be held. The U.S. response was cautious. A sympathetic National Intelligence Estimate concluded that the U.S.-trained military group might “inject a new sense of drive and discipline into the ROK Government’s economic and administrative efforts, and may make some headway, especially in curbing corruption.” U.S. officials were to emphasize that U.S. assistance

---

81 “Telegram from the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command (Brigadier General Carter B. Magruder) to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (General Lyman L. Lemnitzer).”
82 Special National Intelligence Estimate: Short-Term Prospects in South Korea, May 31, 1961, FRUS 22, no. 224.
was conditioned upon Korean cooperation with the Kennedy administration’s new aid concepts, which included decisive action to implement economic reforms.83

The Kennedy Administration’s desire to shift its emphasis from U.S. military aid to economic development,84 with the long-term goal of helping South Korea develop the capacity to defend itself against Communist aggression, aligned with Park’s belief that economic growth and industrialization were necessary to meet the threat of Communist North Korea.85 To this end Park was also amenable to normalizing relations with Japan. While Park proactively sought American economic expertise, he followed American advice selectively, and frequently asked for reports from Korean business leaders, scholars, and journalists, as well as academics such as the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal.86 Park was contemptuous of Rhee’s laissez-faire attitude toward the economy, and called for a “great national awakening” in which all sectors of society were mobilized for economic development, which he linked to Korea’s national security.87 For example, Park encouraged Korean business leaders to view export-led growth as a national duty, and maintained control over Korea’s industrialization by providing incentives to companies that exported manufactured goods. Park also achieved economic gains through the Basic Japan-South Korea Treaty in 1965, when the Japanese government committed $300 million in unconditional grants and $200 million in low-interest loans to South Korea.88 Within two years, Japan became South Korea’s largest trading partner, as well as a significant source of both foreign investment and technology transfer.

Park used the external threat posed by Communism to purge potential political rivals, for example by launching a “purification campaign” to rid the government of

---

83 Memorandum from Robert H. Johnson of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow), May 23, 1961, FRUS 22, no. 221., ibid.
84 Memorandum from Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow): Action in Korea, March 15, 1961, FRUS 22, no. 203., ibid.
85 United States Agency for International Development Filed Proposed Program for 1963: Korea, FRUS.
88 Brazinksy, “From Pupil to Model: South Korea and American Development Policy during the Early Park Chung Hee Era,” 108.
Communist sympathizers.\(^8\) Park assigned loyal military personnel to head important posts, such as the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), which he established in June 1961, to monitor Korean society through a network of informers in business, media, universities, and labor unions.\(^9\) While justified as a means to prevent Communist subversion, the KCIA affirmed the loyalty of Park’s associates and monitored his political opposition while Park pursued his economic goals.

While the Kennedy Administration had sought reductions in military aid in favor of economic development projects, Johnson and his successor relied increasingly on military aid to encourage South Korea to provide and sustain a Korean troop presence in South Vietnam. U.S. military assistance to the Republic of Korea nearly doubled from 1965 to 1966.\(^9\) Park hoped that in addition to the military and economic benefits of assuming a greater share of the burden in Southeast Asia, Korea’s contribution to the war would discourage the U.S. from withdrawing troops from South Korea.\(^9\)

From 1967 – 1971, however, Park would come to doubt the American commitment to Korea’s external security. Beginning in the spring of 1967, North Korea increased its armed infiltrations, including an assassination attempt on Park by North Korean commandoes. Captured North Koreans revealed Pyongyang was preparing for a Vietcong-inspired “war of liberation.”\(^9\) Thus President Nixon’s speech in Guam on July 25, 1969, where he articulated his expectation that Asian nations take more responsibility for their own defense,\(^9\) seemed ill – timed from the perspective of South Koreans. The Guam Doctrine, later known as the Nixon Doctrine, was interpreted by President Park as a warning the Americans would be withdrawing their military forces from South Korea in the near future. These fears were confirmed when the U.S. announced it would withdraw 20,000 of its 64,000 troops, including a division guarding an 18 mile stretch of the

---

\(^8\) Woo, *Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization*, 70.


demilitarized zone understood to be "one of the historic invasion corridors into South Korea," just 35 miles north of Seoul.95 While the Pentagon hoped the $500 million saved annually by redeploying these troops would convince Congress to approve a modernization plan for the South Korean armed forces, South Korean leaders believed it sent a clear message of declining American resolve to protect its ally.

Responding to the External Threat: the Centralization of Park's Authority

Nixon delayed the next phase of American troop reductions from Korea because he needed Park to maintain a Korean troop presence in South Vietnam. Nevertheless, Park understood that when U.S. operations in Vietnam ended, he would lose his leverage over the U.S. administration and U.S. military aid would likely decline. This sense was reinforced by pressure from the U.S. for Korea to assume a larger share of the financial burden of maintaining its armed forces.96 When the 1971 Korean presidential elections revealed just how much Park's political opposition had grown, Park used the threat posed by North Korea, in the context of declining American support, to justify the centralization of his authority.97

Park mobilized the military and intelligence services to suppress opposition politicians and university students, and his party rushed a bill through the National Assembly that increased presidential powers during national emergencies.98 He used the Army Security Command (ASC), whose mission was counterintelligence and counter-subversion within the military, to investigate opposition politicians and root out their supporters within the military. The next year, Park declared martial law, dissolved the National Assembly, closed universities and colleges, censored the press, and suspended political activities in anticipation of a referendum to approve constitutional amendments.

96 Memorandum from the Under Secretary for Political Affairs (William J. Porter) to President Nixon: Reexamination of the Korea Force Modernization Plan, June 15, 1973, FRUS 12, no. 237.
97 Kohli, State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery, 95.
that gave him the power to take emergency measures in response to a broad range of internal and external security and economic issues.99

Park named the new constitution “Yushin,” which means “restoration” or “revitalization,” and emphasized the importance of discipline and self-reliance for Korea’s security.100 Korean Prime Minister Kim Chong-pil explained to President Nixon, “We had to solidify our position at home to maximize our strength” while pursuing negotiations with North Korea regarding possible reunification. In the context of détente and American reengagement with the People’s Republic of China (PRC), as well as ongoing negotiations with North Vietnam, Nixon agreed that a strong, stable South Korean regime was in the best interest of the U.S.101

Despite President Ford’s effort to “reaffirm the continuation of U.S. policy, reaffirm modernization program, and reiterate no intention to withdraw U.S. personnel,”102 Park worried Congress’s refusal to pass the aid package to South Vietnam as North Vietnamese forces were advancing on Saigon in 1975 was an invitation to North Korea to test the American commitment to South Korea’s defense, and that Congress and the American public could force troop withdrawals, deny funds, or refuse to send U.S. troops to defend Korea in the event of an attack. The U.S. Ambassador to Korea, Richard Sneider, noted that the Park government “has utilized the present crisis as further rational for adopting what comes naturally – tighter authoritarian regime intolerant of opposition.”103 South Korea’s insecurity was exacerbated by the fact that in the absence of U.S. military support, Korea lacked any viable alternatives to self-reliance.

The North Korean attack on American and Korean military personnel in Panmumjom on August 18, 1976, further heightened Korean insecurity. The incident, which took place in the Joint Security Area of the Demilitarized Zone, left two American

100 Woo, Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 72.
101 Memorandum of Conversation Between President Nixon and ROK Prime Minister Kim Chong-pil, ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Yong-sik, January 5, 1973, FRUS 12, no. 230.
102 Memorandum of Conversation between President Ford, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, President Park Chung Hee, and Lt General Brent Scowcroft in Seoul, November, 1974, FRUS 12, no. 259.
103 American Embassy in Seoul to the Secretary of State: ROK Views of U.S. Security Commitment, April 18, 1975, FRUS 12, no. 267.
officers dead and several American and Korean personnel injured. North Korean officials
tried to manipulate the incident to gain political support from the non-aligned nations to
call for a withdrawal of U.S. troops from the peninsula. The U.S. military responded to
the provocation with a show of force that included sending F-111 bombers capable of
dropping nuclear munitions to South Korea, warships off of North Korea’s coast, and B-
52 bombers on practice bombing runs just far enough to register on North Korean radars.

Despite the show of force, Korean insecurity persisted. Shortly after his election,
President Jimmy Carter made the controversial announcement that he planned to
withdraw all 32,000 American troops over a period of four to five years, including all
ground combat units and tactical nuclear weapons; while reasserting the firm U.S.
commitment to Korean defense, the Carter Administration judged the Korean people
were capable of defending themselves, and argued the Mutual Defense Treaty plus
military aid would be enough to guarantee Korea’s security. In September 1977, 1000
American troops were withdrawn from South Korea, but by the spring of 1978 it was
clear Congress would not pass the aid package necessary to compensate for the military
withdrawal, and Carter cut the number of troops to be withdrawn by two - thirds. Facing
conservative Congressional opposition as well as criticism among Korean and American
military and civilian personnel in Seoul, the Carter administration announced in the
summer of 1979 that no more American troops would be withdrawn from the peninsula
until at least 1981.

Political Support for Park Chung Hee

While Chang Myon may have wanted to follow the liberal model of civil-military
relations, his tenure was too brief and his political stature too weak to establish objective
civilian control over the military. Park, like Chang and Rhee, also had a vested interest in
maintaining the competency of the military, but did not seek objective civilian control
because he relied on his faction to secure his regime, and the loyalty of the military
establishment for political support. During much of the 1960s, Park enjoyed strong
political support from the United States; while elected three times, however, his victories
over the opposition were always narrow. After a “honeymoon period” with President
Johnson, Park grew anxious that American political support was declining in the context of the Sino-American détente and Nixon's Guam Doctrine. Discontinuities in American political support, along with increasing domestic political opposition to his rule, challenged Park's presidency, leading to a centralization of authority that drew the military deeper into civil politics as Park implemented the repressive Yushin constitution. As Park became increasingly unpopular at home and criticized by Congress and President Carter for human rights abuses, his grip on his inner security circle weakened, culminating in his assassination in 1979.

The Chang government's inability to address social disorder and economic stagnation frustrated U.S. officials as well as the plotters of the military coup. Chang Myon's fragmented Democratic Party could not reconcile the demands of the "April Revolution" Koreans, who demanded radical reforms, with more conservative forces that prioritized political stability and national security. Nevertheless, on the morning of the coup, the head of the UN command, General Carter Magruder, called on all military personnel under his command to support Chang Myon's government and restore order in the Korean armed forces. Magruder, along with the Chargé d'Affaires, Marshall Green, emphasized that the U.S. supported the constitutional government of the Republic of Korea as elected by the Korean people, believing that a coup attempt undermined the political stability of South Korea and damaged its reputation within the international community.

However, U.S. officials hesitated to act on Chang's behalf when they observed, "the strange unwillingness of the President, armed forces leaders and other key officials to take any action to suppress coup or to take sides at all...Irresolution of those officials who have it in their power to deal with uprising and apparent indifference general public to fate of Chang government provide poor foundation for exerting U.S. influence on behalf Chang Myon." Magruder worried if he acted without any direction from Chang, he might be restoring a government "with no one to run it and lacking popular

---

104 Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 68-69.
105 Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Korea, May 16, 1961, FRUS 22, no. 216.
support." The State Department concluded it would not intervene on behalf of Chang’s government unless it demonstrated the ability to reassert its authority.

The U.S. officials in Seoul were instructed to provide “moderating, balancing, and restraining influences” to the SCNR in an effort to establish a “broadly based, responsible non-partisan government of national unity and of predominately civilian composition.” U.S. officials were to encourage the military junta to pursue maximum possible civilianization of the regime. While cautious at first, the Kennedy administration ultimately embraced the interim regime while insisting Major General Park retire from active duty and run for president as a civilian. Park retired from the military just before his election on October 15, 1963, and the so-called transition to civilian rule dismantled the military junta.

Park’s political strength would rest on his control over the 600,000 man armed forces, the bureaucracy (including the intelligence services), the ruling Democratic Republican Party (DRP), which had branches down to the village level, as well as the external political support provided by the United States. Many of Park’s supporters followed him into retirement, and were active in the DRP, holding nearly twenty percent of the seats in the National Assembly. Retired military officers and senior officers were appointed to key government positions and served as ambassadors to foreign countries, and Park established the KCIA to monitor army officers, civilian politicians, students, intellectuals, and the media.

The Kennedy Administration’s goals aligned with Park’s determination to legitimate his rule by achieving rapid economic growth and industrialization, which included the necessary, but controversial, normalization of relations with Japan. As Korea’s primary military aid provider, U.S. officials were able to maintain access to Park, and communicate American advice with respect to political and economic

---

106 "Telegram from the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command (Brigadier General Carter B. Magruder) to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (General Lyman L. Lemnitzer)." 107 "Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Korea." 108 "Memorandum from Robert H. Johnson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow)." 109 Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 70-71. 110 Memorandum from Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow, March 15, 1961, FRUS.)
Even though Washington minimized its conditions on military assistance, U.S. officials successfully linked economic assistance to the establishment of numerous special committees that facilitated exchanges between American advisors and a broad range of Korean government officials. The stabilization agreement of April 1963, for example, enabled USAID to take on a substantial role in the allocation of South Korea's resources, as well as other economic matters such as revenue collection and monetary reforms.

Park relied heavily on military personnel to guarantee political order, monitor potential challengers to his authority, and reassure himself of his associates' loyalty. While insulating the bulk of the armed forces from a "praetorian guard" function, the most trusted personnel were put on what Joo-Hong Kim terms the "counter-subversive security path," where they would eventually command military intelligence units such as the Army Security Command (ASC), the Capital Garrison Command (CGC), the Korea Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) and the Presidential Security Service (PSS). Park, inspired by how the Japanese colonial administration had used intelligence networks to penetrate Korean society, preserved this mission for his security institutions. While the bulk of the armed forces provided military deterrence against North Korea, the security services and the bureaucracy dominated South Korean politics, over time diminishing the role of the political parties.

The Johnson Administration was motivated to provide political support to Park's government to garner backing for the U.S. military campaign in South Vietnam. Park believed Korea's troop contribution would encourage the U.S. to sustain the American troop presence on the Korean peninsula. When Park's opposition in the National Assembly protested the decision to send a combat division to Vietnam, Vice President Hubert Humphrey travelled to Seoul to emphasize American support and give Park

---

111 Brazinksy, "From Pupil to Model: South Korea and American Development Policy during the Early Park Chung Hee Era," 101.
112 Brazinsky, Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy, 142-44.
114 Kohli, State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery, 89.
additional leverage against his opponents. In addition to providing grants, loans, and suspending the funding requirements for the Military Assistance Program (MAP), the U.S. also helped secure foreign loans and provided South Korean businesses the opportunity to manufacture goods for American and South Vietnamese forces and reconstruction projects in Vietnam. The Park regime, which relied on its economic development agenda for its legitimacy, welcomed such incentives, which bolstered Korea’s transition to export-led industrialization.

Park was elected to a second term in 1967. During this term, while his party occupied the majority in the National Assembly, Park revised the constitution to permit a third presidential term. Opposition politicians, intellectuals, students, and even politicians within the ruling party opposed the measure, which undermined party politics. However, Park was laying the groundwork for the centralization of political authority that would enable him to maintain control through a new period of uncertainty in Korean foreign affairs: North Korean provocations, the Guam Doctrine, American reengagement with the People’s Republic of China (PRC), and increasing isolationist sentiment within the American public and Congress, accompanied by the weakening of U.S. presidential power.

Hardliners within the Park regime criticized the United State’s decision to negotiate directly with North Korea to release the crew of the USS PUEBLO, which North Korea had seized in January of 1968. In response to their call for the withdrawal of Korean troops from South Vietnam, special envoy Cyrus Vance travelled to Seoul to affirm an increase in military aid, transfers of military equipment, and the commitment of U.S. troops in South Korea to prevent North Korean military forces from reaching

---

117 Tom Wicker, "Report Card on Humphrey the Traveler," *The New York Times*, February 27, 1966. During his visit Humphrey gave impassioned speeches about the necessity to resist Chinese Communist expansion; his message was largely well-received by the Koreans.

118 Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy*, 105,18. When the MAP had been established after the Korean War, the United States procured equipment for both the United Nations and ROK forces in South Korea. Over time, however, Washington required South Korea assume more of the burden of procuring defense items from its own budget. This transfer of costs had been a source of friction between Washington and Seoul; thus eliminating this burden would provide a political boost to President Park.


Seoul.\textsuperscript{121} Yet the Guam Doctrine, followed by the announced withdrawal of nearly one-third of the American troops stationed in Korea, was politically destabilizing for Park in a country where the vast majority of Koreans believed the American troop presence was crucial for their survival.\textsuperscript{122} Park agreed to keep Korean forces in South Vietnam in an effort to delay further troop withdrawals,\textsuperscript{123} prompting Nixon to instruct the Defense Department to delay further redeployment of U.S. military personnel ahead of the 1971 South Korean elections.\textsuperscript{124} The U.S. also agreed on a military modernization program for the Korean armed forces to compensate for the reduction in U.S. military personnel. While such measures may have contributed to Park's narrow election victory against opposition leader Kim Dae Jung on April 27, 1971,\textsuperscript{125} the net effect of the perceived wavering American support on Korea's domestic political stability prompted Park to centralize his authority soon after the elections.\textsuperscript{126}

The 1971 elections revealed the extent of public opposition to Park.\textsuperscript{126} The perception of a democratic opening in anticipation of the elections led to increased activity among the opposition, particularly within the media, universities, and labor unions. Park enhanced his own political base by pulling more members of the military establishment into key government positions, nominating forty-one retired generals as DRP candidates ahead of the National Assembly elections in May 1971.\textsuperscript{127} Yet the opposition party made gains in the May elections, and Park's party no longer enjoyed enough seats in the National Assembly to conclusively shape future legislation.\textsuperscript{128}

Park understood his leverage over the U.S. troop levels in South Korea would decline as the U.S. withdrew from South Vietnam; with his party no longer dominant in the National Assembly, Park moved swiftly to consolidate and centralize his political authority in preparation for a major effort to reduce South Korea's dependency on the United States. Park mobilized the military to deal with socio-economic turmoil in

\textsuperscript{121} Kim, "The Armed Forces," 175.
\textsuperscript{123} Lee, "The Vietnam War: South Korea's Search for National Security," 424.
\textsuperscript{125} Lee, "The Vietnam War: South Korea's Search for National Security," 428.
\textsuperscript{126} Kohli, \textit{State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery}, 95.
\textsuperscript{127} Joo-Hong Kim, "The Armed Forces," 186.
Kwangju in August of 1971, and in response to student demonstrations Park sent soldiers to ten different university campuses, arresting more than four thousand students, many of whom were forced into the military.\textsuperscript{129} At the end of the year, his threat to impose martial law helped his party rush a bill through the National Assembly that increased his emergency powers.\textsuperscript{130}

In October, 1972, Park declared martial law throughout South Korea, sending tanks and military personnel to key government buildings and major intersections in downtown Seoul. He justified the suspension of the Constitution, the dissolution of the National Assembly, as well as other measures to restrict political activity by insisting they were necessary to pursue a North-South dialogue that could put the country on a path to reunification.\textsuperscript{131} The next month voters approved the “Yushin” Constitution, paving the way for Park to be “re-elected” by an electoral college, the National Conference for Unification, whose members were selected by Park and dominated by the military.\textsuperscript{132} The new Constitution limited parliamentary power and drew the military ever more deeply into civil politics. From 1972 to 1979, the Korean society was organized “into a kind of garrison state,” including the comprehensive military education of the male population to support the regular armed forces and the reserves.\textsuperscript{133}

While the policies of the Nixon administration had created uncertainty with respect to America’s ability to provide for Korea’s external defense, Nixon and his National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, recognized the importance of providing unwavering political support. When Korean Prime Minister Kim Chong-pil, possibly anticipating American criticism for Park’s actions, assured President Nixon, “We are restoring our National Assembly and will have elections in March,” Nixon responded, “I won’t lecture you like some do on your internal affairs. Some people here were disturbed but that’s your decision. I understand your problem.”\textsuperscript{134} Kissinger, recognizing that

\textsuperscript{129} Joo-Hong "The Armed Forces," 185,86.
\textsuperscript{131} "South Korea Chief Orders Martial Law."
\textsuperscript{132} Woo, \textit{Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization}, 72; Halloran, "South Korea Vote Backs President: Move to Widen his Powers Ratified in Referendum."
\textsuperscript{133} Se-Jin Kim, \textit{The Politics of Military Revolution in Korea}, 123.
\textsuperscript{134} "Memorandum of Conversation Between President Nixon and ROK Prime Minister Kim Chong-pil, ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Yong-sik."
rapprochement between the U.S. and the People’s Republic of China was unsettling for Park’s government, met with Park at the Blue House on Nov 16, 1973, to assure him, “you can count on the fact that we will not make any prior decisions without consulting you,” and if Pyongyang launched a surprise attack to secure a stronger post-conflict negotiating position, “As long as this Administration is in office we would give you strong support so as to return to the status quo ante.”

Kissinger also recommended to President Nixon a gradual transition from grant aid to foreign military sales rather than the rapid change favored by the State and Defense departments. He instructed Secretary of State William Rogers and Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger to reassure the South Koreans of American support and refrain from adjusting force levels. He insisted, “We will do nothing that will harm South Korean vital interests, and will consult with the ROK to the max extent.”

Despite Nixon and Kissinger’s assurances, the discontinuity between White House and Congressional and public attitudes contributed to Park’s growing unease. Park was caught in a vicious cycle: American public criticism and pressure for political liberalization undermined Park’s control over Korean society, prompting him to use the military to suppress dissent, which led to even more American criticism. The Central Intelligence Agency noted in February 1974, that Park’s ability to mobilize the coercive apparatus to suppress his opposition was eroding. As domestic opposition to the Yushin system mounted, including coordinated large-scale demonstrations at Seoul National University, Sungkyunkwan University, and Ewha Woman’s University, Park responded by issuing an Emergency Decree and ordering the arrest of student activists,

---

135 Park worried the U.S. would reach an accommodation with the Chinese at Korea’s expense. China had publically supported Pyongyang’s one Korea policy and called for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Korean peninsula.
136 Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and President Park Chung Hee: Secretary Kissinger’s Discussion with President Park, November 16, 1973, FRUS 12, no. 246.
137 Memorandum from the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon: Korean Force Modernization, July 25, 1973, FRUS 12, no. 242.
138 Memorandum from the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to Secretary of State Rogers and Secretary of Defense Schlesinger: U.S. Policy Toward the Korean Peninsula, July 18, 1973, FRUS 12, no. 241.
139 Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency: South Korea: Can Park Hold On?, February 1, 1974, FRUS 12, no. 250.
many of whom were tried by emergency court-martial.\textsuperscript{140} Members of Congress argued the U.S. should not give aid to regimes that imprison its people for political purposes.\textsuperscript{141} President Ford travelled to Seoul to personally assure President Park that he had the support of Ford's administration.\textsuperscript{142} However, the increasing encroachment of the U.S. Congress on Presidential foreign policy prerogatives continued to worry Park for its impact on the U.S. president's credibility. The American Ambassador to Korea, Richard Sneider, wrote that Park and his supporters believed the United States, which did not understand the need for internal discipline, was encouraging the opposition and trying to undermine position of President Park personally; Park worried the decline in American political support would prompt North Korea to test “the strength of ROK internal support for Park government.”\textsuperscript{143}

Park's government's anxiety grew when two senior KCIA officers defected, refusing orders to return to Seoul, where they likely faced imprisonment for their role in exposing an operation that included spying on Korean nationals and collecting information about U.S. Congressmen.\textsuperscript{144} Korean officials were frustrated that the U.S. government, despite President Ford's personal affirmation of political support for Park's government, was not making a stronger effort to contain the harsh criticism of the Park regime in the American press.\textsuperscript{145}

The Carter campaign's emphasis on human rights did not bode well for President Park, although opposition to his policies among American and Korean personnel in Korea and from conservative Congressmen ultimately led Carter to postpone plans to withdraw U.S. troops from Korea. Park, with his control over the press, downplayed

\begin{flushleft}


\textsuperscript{142} "Memorandum of Conversation between President Ford, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, President Park Chung Hee, and Lt General Brent Scowcroft in Seoul."

\textsuperscript{143} "American Embassy in Seoul to the Secretary of State: ROK Views of U.S. Security Commitment."

\textsuperscript{144} Richard Halloran, "Korean Critics Seek Another Defection; They Hope to Persuade Chief of Intelligence Unit in Capital to Cooperate with U.S. Inquiry," \textit{The New York Times}, December 5, 1976.

\textsuperscript{145} Telegram from Embassy in the Republic of Korea to the Department of State: Kim Case and its Aftermath in Korea, December 3, 1976, \textit{FRUS} 12, no. 290.
\end{flushleft}
Carter's human rights concerns, and celebrated Carter's visit to Seoul in July 1979 as a political victory.146

After the parliamentary elections in 1979, when the opposition party NDP won more votes than the ruling DRP, hardliners within the National Assembly censured opposition politician Kim Young Sam for criticizing the government in an interview with the New York Times. The move prompted massive demonstrations in Kim's home region of Pusan and Masan; in response Park's government imposed marital law in Pusan on October 18, and a garrison decree in Masan on October 20. The ambitious and aggressive Presidential Security Services' Chief Cha Ji-Chul, who had played an increasingly dominate role in military and political affairs and argued for a military response to the protests, clashed with the more moderate KCIA director, long-time Park associate Kim Chae Gyu, who advocated for a political solution. Kim assassinated both Park and Cha on October 26, 1979, marking the abrupt and unexpected end of the Park era.

The Professionalization of the Armed Forces Under Park

While U.S. military training had discouraged a political role for Korean officers from 1948 - 1960, a sense of national responsibility coupled with technical and administrative capabilities led a group of "reformers" to assume a central role in civil politics, beginning with the 1961 coup. From 1961 – 1979, the U.S. continued to exert a major influence on the Korean armed forces through a modernization program, schools both within South Korea and in the United States, during combat operations in South Vietnam, and while maintaining security along the border with North Korea. Economic growth, as well as U.S. military aid, particularly to support the Korean troop presence in South Vietnam, allowed for an improvement in standards of living that boosted morale and decreased corruption. Thus the competence of the Korean armed forces during this period was dramatically improved, as the quality of military personnel as well as their training and experience increased. Unfortunately, U.S. advisers' emphasis on discipline,

---

unity, and responsibility could not overcome the pervasiveness of factionalism, which Park relied upon to maintain control over the military.

Park depended upon a tight-knit group of loyal supporters from his faction for intelligence gathering as well as mobilization against his opposition, and ensured the institutional support of the military by preserving its corporate interests and providing structural incentives such as privileged positions in government and industry following military service. Factionalism undermined the cohesiveness of the military, and protection from civilian oversight eroded its respect for civilian political authority. However, Park also sought to improve the professionalism of the military as an institution. Thus, while a small group within the military enjoyed reserved domains granted in exchange for personal loyalty to President Park, the bulk of the more than 600,000 strong Korean armed forces became more competent, more cohesive, focused exclusively on external defense, and amenable to a return to democratic processes.

At the time of the coup, it is unlikely that any other institution could have mustered the political authority necessary to maintain social order and reform the Korean economy. With the help of U.S. military aid, by 1961, the South Korean military, which had exploded from less than 100,000 to nearly 700,000 by the end of the Korean War, was overdeveloped relative to other sectors of society. While hundreds of officers and defense personnel were exposed to a liberal-democratic model that emphasized military subordination to civilian authority, the impact of U.S. military training and education on the professionalism of the South Korean armed forces could not overcome the persistence of factions based on regional origin, kinship, or prior military experience. Park’s faction coalesced around the eighth class of the Korean Military Academy, and was heavily influenced by the Japanese Army’s political ideology from World War II.\textsuperscript{147}

Park’s faction acted not only against Korea’s civilian government, but also against senior commanders who had remained politically neutral a year earlier when President Rhee had sought their assistance in suppressing student demonstrations.\textsuperscript{148} Major General Park, who had been educated at the Japanese Military Academy in Manchuria, and had


\textsuperscript{148} Saxer, "Generals and Presidents: Establishing Civilian and Democratic Control in South Korea," 385.
attended the Tokyo Military Academy, was influenced by Japan’s state-centric capitalism, in which the government worked closely with private industry to launch and manage major infrastructure projects. He believed his group could reform not just the military but also the nation, ridding it of its crippling corruption, and moving it along a path of economic growth that would contribute to long-term security and a stronger position vis-à-vis North Korea.

While the Constitution mandated that the armed forces maintain political neutrality, Park undermined the military’s cohesiveness and mission exclusivity by relying on select military personnel embedded in the military and intelligence services to guarantee political order during crises. For example, KMA alumni from Park’s native eastern Youngnam region held key positions in the security establishment, and were granted accelerated promotions. These officers included Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo, members of a secret society named “Hanahoe,” formed by members of the eleventh KMA class in 1963 to support Park’s presidential campaign. The eleventh class was the first to receive a full four years of professional education from the Korean Military Academy, from 1952 – 1955. These officers were part of Park’s inner power circle, and would later act against the military establishment to organize the 1979 coup after Park’s assassination.

Despite the loss of nearly 5,000 Korean troops in South Vietnam, Park’s commitment of troops to the Vietnam War had a largely positive impact on the military. The U.S. provided financial support to the tens of thousands of Korean troops participating in the war, enabling the military to raise living standards, modernize, and transform into a more sophisticated fighting force. More than 300,000 soldiers gained combat experience in Vietnam, and their material capabilities increased significantly.

Park provided structural incentives to consolidate the political support of the military establishment. For example, graduating from the Korean Military Academy was seen not only as a means to a military career, but also an opportunity to gain important positions within government or industry upon retirement. Between 1964 and 1979, 118

---

150 Saxer, "Generals and Presidents: Establishing Civilian and Democratic Control in South Korea," 386.
152 Ibid. From 1965 – 1971, South Korea added 170 aircraft, 190 missiles, 25 naval ships, and 630 combat vehicles.
out of 314 government ministers had a military background. Park established the Special Junior Officer Recruitment System in 1977 to encourage junior officer loyalty. For this program, the Ministry of National Defense made available civil service positions to KMA graduates once they had served their five-year obligations. Park’s emphasis on discipline, austerity and self-reliance, his strong anti-Communist national security rhetoric, as well as the confidence that he would protect the corporate interests of the military, ensured that military personnel could be relied upon to be an important part of Park’s political base. This was particularly true when opposition leaders such as Kim Dae Jung proposed dismantling the KCIA as well as other pillars of military socialization, the militia-like Civil Defense Corps and a paramilitary training program for high school and university students. By the early 1980s, more than 8 million South Koreans had experienced some military training.

Park’s “Total National Security” approach reinforced the dominance of the military in Korean politics, and puts the American effort to diffuse democratic norms and socialize military members through education, training, and interpersonal relations into perspective. South Korea had its own powerful method of socialization that privileged national security, even linking economic development to national defense. However, as the Yushin system concentrated Park’s personal political power, his options for responding to pressure from Korean civil society became more limited. Within the military there was disagreement over how to respond to the increasingly widespread protests and demands for greater political freedoms in the second half of the 1970s. Hardliners wanted to continue using force to suppress members of the opposition, while others favored a more moderate approach. This ideological split contributed to, and would persist beyond, Park’s assassination on October 26, 1979.

---

153 Woo, Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 71-72. Woo elaborates, "Out of 588 retired generals in 1975, 53 held posts in the executive branch, 13 served as diplomats, 32 sat in the National Assembly, and 43 managed state-owned enterprises; 174 others were in private business firms as owners, managers, and advisors, 24 working at universities; 135 generals were unemployed, indicating the importance of earning Park’s trust while on active duty."


The Post-Park Era of Democratic Consolidation

By the end of President Carter’s term, Carter, under pressure from Koreans, U.S. officials in Korea, and conservative members of Congress, had backed away from attempts to withdraw U.S. troops from the peninsula. Just months after President Park’s assassination in October 1979, fellow Hanahoe members Chun and Roh thwarted attempts to return to democratic processes, and executed a coup not in response to a heightened external threat, but to protect their reserved domains gained under Park’s patronage. Nevertheless, President Reagan, mindful of the strategic implications of domestic instability and convinced “quiet engagement” would give U.S. officials more opportunities to influence Korean policy, offered political support for President Chun, and increased the number of American troops in South Korea. The Reagan administration contributed to the professionalization of the Korean armed forces by supporting a modernization program, joint exercises, and the sale of American training, equipment, and weaponry.

Several factors contributed to the democratic opening in 1987 that paved the way for South Korea’s democratic consolidation in the 1990s. Bolstered by over two decades of economic growth, a broader swathe of Korean society joined the opposition to the authoritarian, military-dominated government. President Reagan altered his approach to human rights, which minimized the political options for the military when the public demanded reforms in 1987. Finally, moderates within the military prevailed over hardliners, eventually allowing for a transition to objective civilian control of the military under future president Kim Young Sam.

This section is divided into three parts. The first examines the relationship between the balance of military capabilities on the Korean peninsula and the military’s role in civil politics from 1979 through 1997, when long-time opposition leader Kim Dae Jung was elected in the absence of any interference from the military establishment. The second part looks at how U.S. political support for Korea’s civilian leaders might have shaped the options for the military’s role in civil politics. The final part will discuss how the professionalization of the military ultimately facilitated Korea’s transition to democratic control over its armed forces.
Reinvigorating the Alliance: Reagan, U.S. Military Aid, and the Weakening of the External Threat

The 1980s marked a dramatic shift in the tone of U.S. policymakers toward their ally, as the Reagan administration determined unwavering support for South Korean security was necessary to demonstrate American resolve to the Soviet Union and Communist North Korea. In addition, the rapid expansion of the South Korean economy that included the development of an indigenous defense industrial base meant Presidents Chun Doo Hwan, Roh Tae Woo, Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung would enjoy a more favorable security environment than their predecessors. By the early 1990s, South Korea had established ties with the Soviet Union and Communist China, leaving North Korea isolated and dependent on the ambiguity surrounding its nuclear program for deterrence. American support was steadfast as U.S. troops remained on the peninsula to assuage Korean fears over Pyongyang’s continued hostility. The weakening of the external threat, coupled with increasing domestic and international pressure for political liberalization, limited the opportunities for South Korea’s leaders to link the external threat with political opposition or for military officers to use the external threat to justify an expansion of their role in civil politics.

President-elect Ronald Reagan’s transition team judged that political instability in South Korea was in danger of inviting aggression from North Korea, and believed this would be a top issue for Reagan when he assumed the presidency in January, 1981. His administration believed Carter’s emphasis on human rights had undermined the alliance and threatened American strategic interests. Presidential Reagan, determined to demonstrate strength and resolve in the context of the Cold War and relative to the outgoing president, invited President Chun to the White House to reassert the U.S. security commitment to the Republic of Korea, confirming that he had no plans to withdraw U.S. troops. In conjunction with the visit, American and South Korean units began a joint military exercise, which included 100,000 members of the ROK Army,

Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force. Reagan restored bilateral diplomatic and economic activities, and would eventually add 2,000 personnel to the 39,000 American troops already serving in South Korea.

As Seoul assumed greater financial responsibility for the acquisition of defense articles, services and training, the most important aspect of U.S. military support for Korea’s external security rested in the presence of American military personnel on the Korean peninsula.\textsuperscript{158} While Presidents Nixon and Carter had planned a more dramatic reduction in U.S. military personnel, both in response to demands from the American public and to cut expenditures, President Reagan was determined to demonstrate his resolve to protect American allies in the context of the Cold War. In response to escalating Cold War tension that included the downing of a Korean airliner in September, 1983, and the assassination of several Korean cabinet members in a bombing in Burma a month later, President Reagan travelled to South Korea, where he toured the demilitarized zone and emphasized the American commitment to Korean security. In a symbolic demonstration of that support, the U.S. and South Korea conducted joint exercises in December.

General Chun exploited the external threat to justify the neutralization of his opposition, including Kim Dae Jung, who was sentenced to be executed for his alleged role in provoking the Kwangju uprising.\textsuperscript{159} Immediately after he seized power in December, 1979, he had his major political opponents arrested, accusing them of Communist sympathies. However, rather than being motivated by the external threat, his intervention was primarily driven by his desire to preserve the reserved domains he gained as a member of the secret Hanahoe faction during Park’s presidency.

Once he became president, however, Chun would have a more difficult time than his predecessors in linking the opposition to external threats for two major reasons. First, the opposition to Chun’s political authority had a broader base in Korean society. Along

\textsuperscript{158} The United States assumed responsibility for funding its troop presence in South Korea throughout the Cold War, but as the Korean economy grew and the Cold War ended, American legislators called on South Korea to contribute to the cost of maintaining American forces. In 1991, South Korea agreed to burden sharing, and in 1995 agreed to increase its contribution by 10% annually to support the then 37,000 American troops stationed in the country (from $300 million in 1995 to $399 million by 1998. By 2014 South Korea was paying for nearly 40%, or $867 million, of the cost of maintaining 28,500 U.S. troops.)

with radical students and labor activists, conservative Koreans sought a political system that reflected Korea’s new prosperity, and workers who for years accepted low wages in support of Korea’s export-led growth demanded a share of the wealth and improved living standards. After being subject to the repressive Yushin system under Park for nearly a decade, Korean society was less likely to accept national security and economic growth as justifications for the lack of political liberalization.160

Second, South Korea was no longer in as vulnerable a position as it had been for most of Park’s rule. By the early 1980s, South Korea’s economy, population, and military spending had surpassed that of North Korea. In addition, the security commitment of the United States was stronger than ever under President Reagan. Thus while Chun continued to rely on loyal military personnel to lead Korea’s intelligence and security posts, he was unable and unwilling to mobilize the military when widespread demonstrations calling for free elections erupted in 1987.

Several developments in the late 1980s reflect the sense among Korean officials that the external threat had declined. Seoul had successfully increased its outreach to Eastern European, Warsaw Pact countries while hosting the 1988 Summer Olympic Games in Seoul. In a significant departure from its stance the previous four decades, Seoul accepted the American troop cuts proposed by the George H.W. Bush Administration in 1989, and Korean officials were amenable to President Bush’s pressure to increase burden-sharing in light of South Korea’s strong economic performance. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev met with Chun’s successor, President Roh Tae Woo, in San Francisco briefly in June 1990, giving Roh hope that diplomatic relations would be restored, paving the way for Korean reunification.161 In response to Roh’s offer to provide economic aid in support of the faltering Soviet economy, Gorbachev personally visited South Korea, where the two leaders agreed to negotiate a mutual cooperation treaty and called on Pyongyang to allow international inspectors to visit its nuclear facilities.162 While hostilities with North Korea persisted, the 38th parallel was no longer the front line in the Cold War, and South Korea was no longer the bulwark against

Communist expansionism. Even more important, however, was the fact that North Korea was isolated and its economy crumbling, while South Korea had expanded its diplomatic ties and its economy was thriving.

While President Roh did not implement any major military reforms during his presidency, he refrained from linking critics of his government to external security threats to justify the mobilization of the military against his political opposition, even though there remained legitimate concerns regarding Korean security. The dominant security issue throughout the 1990s was North Korea’s intransigence on the nuclear issue. In this context South Korean officials had reservations about President Bush’s efforts to denuclearize the peninsula, and in November, 1991, U.S. plans to withdraw troops was postponed indefinitely. Despite these concerns, the Korean military did not interfere when Kim Young Sam, the long-time pro-democracy advocate with no military background, was elected in 1992.

U.S. policymakers remained committed to South Korean security as efforts toward reunification were stalled by North Korea’s announced withdrawal from the nuclear nonproliferation treaty in the Spring of 1993. In response, the Clinton administration committed to sending Patriot Missiles to South Korea, and negotiated an agreement with North Korea which exchanged economic aid and financing for new nuclear reactors for an agreement by Pyongyang to freeze its nuclear program.163 Despite the nuclear concern, and the breakdown in peace talks between North and South Korea, the dominant issue during the 1997 Korean presidential elections was the economic crisis, and Koreans elected long-time dissident and pro-democracy activist Kim Dae Jung, whose “Sunshine Policy” promoted greater social and economic outreach to the North Korean regime.

Senior military personnel were well known for their opposition to Kim’s “Sunshine Policy,” and had hinted they would intervene if Kim Dae Jung was elected when he ran against Park Chung Hee in 1971, and Roh Tae Woo in 1987. However, during the presidential campaign in 1997, military representatives made no overt attempts to interfere, nor were there rumors of potential military interference. Some analysts

consider Kim's election as the marker of democratic consolidation in Korea, while others argue the fact that the military did not intervene during his five-year term is a stronger indicator that the South Korean government established objective civilian control over the military. While South Korean policymakers and successive American administrations would continue to be challenged by the North Korean nuclear problem, the military refrained from interfering in Korea's civil politics.

American Political Support and the Struggle for Political Power After Park

American political support for South Korean president Chun Doo Hwan was a contentious issue throughout President Reagan's term, as pro-democracy activists criticized his engagement of the regime that perpetrated the massacre at Kwangju and derailed a return to democratic processes in the wake of Park's assassination. However, Reagan judged his administration would have more influence over President Chun behind the scenes, where U.S. officials negotiated the release of Kim Dae Jung and encouraged Chun to accept democratic reforms in 1987. Support for Chun's successor, Roh Tae Woo, continued despite Roh's involvement in the coup against the military establishment in December 1979. While Roh did not attempt to establish objective civilian control over the military during his term, his restraint, particularly with respect to the imposition of martial law, made him an important transitional figure that paved the way for the election of Kim Young Sam. Kim benefited from a favorable post-Cold War security environment, strong political support from the U.S., and a public mandate for anti-corruption measures and civil-military reforms that enabled him to take dramatic steps toward subordinating the military to civilian political authority.

After Park's assassination, party leaders anticipated a return to electoral politics; however, the real struggle for political power was taking place within the military. General Chun Doo Hwan, along with other Hanahoe members from the eleventh and seventeenth graduating classes of the Korean Military Academy, was pitted against the traditional military establishment, which included higher-ranking officers and coalesced around the martial law commander. Chun had the advantage of leading the Defense

---

164 Joo-Hong Kim, "The Armed Forces," 197.
Security Command, which coordinated the security intelligence agencies of all three branches of the armed forces. On December 12, 1979, Chun, in collaboration with other members of the Hanahoe, ordered the arrest of the Army Chief of Staff and martial law commander, then sent Roh to lead loyal armed troops from the Ninth Infantry Division into Seoul. By the next day, Chun’s group occupied the Ministry of Defense and army headquarters, and Chun became the head of the armed forces.

Chun did not assume leadership of South Korea’s government immediately, however. The civilian acting president, Choi Kyu Hah, maintained his post and insisted the military was subordinate to civilian authority, even when a special national security committee dominated by military officers formed in May, 1980, and appeared to put the military leaders on equal footing with the civilian cabinet.165 Choi was forced to resign when Chun’s group assumed power under nation-wide martial law on May 17th. President Carter was highly critical of the military junta and its heavy-handed treatment of the media and protestors. U.S. officials urged Chun to become a civilian before arranging for himself to be elected by an electoral college, and President Carter sent a personal letter to Chun through Ambassador William H. Gleysteen Jr. that called for progress toward political liberalization. Chun’s political legitimacy was undermined by the loss of life in Kwangju, where Chun’s dispatch of troops to brutally suppress anti-government demonstrators led to the loss of nearly 200 lives.166 Carter administration officials stressed that American political support for the South Korean leadership would be very difficult if the regime carried through its plan to execute well-known dissident Kim Dae Jung.

Thus Chun was given a much-needed boost when newly-elected President Reagan invited him to the White House. Reagan refrained from public criticism but privately negotiated the release of Kim, warning his execution would have an irreparable impact on U.S.-Korean relations. Reagan’s preference for “quiet diplomacy” with respect to human rights issues would evolve, but during this sensitive period it was effective in both restoring a critical Cold War alliance and stabilizing South Korea’s domestic politics. Reagan’s visit to South Korea in 1983, in the context of escalating

166 Saxer, "Generals and Presidents: Establishing Civilian and Democratic Control in South Korea," 386.
tension with North Korea, was another boost for Chun’s regime. Joint military exercises demonstrated to the domestic and international audience that the United States was committed to supporting South Korea.

While Chun’s government maintained the institutional prerogatives, such as privileged access to government funding, necessary to discourage the military from direct intervention in his government, Chun sought to restore public confidence by pursuing modest political reforms. He made an effort to accommodate the opposition by holding semi-competitive elections in 1985, which gave opposition leaders Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung an opportunity to mobilize the new urban middle class.\footnote{Croissant, “Riding the Tiger: Civilian Control and the Military in Democratizing Korea,” 369.} Structural factors within Korean society had changed; the military was no longer the primary avenue for education and professional development within Korean society. After two decades of economic growth, civil society was more organized, and the private sector offered more opportunities for education, training, and a comfortable standard of living.\footnote{Ibid., 367.} However, when the 1985 National Assembly elections revealed strong support for the newly-formed opposition, the New Korea Democratic Party, Chun began to retreat from political liberalization ahead of the 1987 elections.

In June 1987, large-scale demonstrations were held to protest President Chun’s decision to postpone the constitutional reform process, prompting Chun’s likely successor, Roh Tae Woo, to declare his support for liberalization, including direct presidential elections, the release of political prisoners, and freedom of the press.\footnote{Okonogi Masao, “South Korea’s Experiment in Democracy,” in Korea Under Roh Tae-woo: Democratisation, Northern Policy and Inter-Korean Relations, ed. James Cotton (Canberra: Allen and Unwin, 1993), 7-9.} President Reagan wrote a personal letter to Chun on June 19\textsuperscript{th}, 1987, encouraging compromise between the ruling and opposition parties, supporting the right to freedom of assembly, and discouraging military intervention.\footnote{Ibid., 11.}

emphasized the meeting was not an endorsement for Roh’s candidacy, Reagan wasted no
time congratulating Roh when he won the election in December of 1987, after the
opposition vote was split by rivals Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung.

President Roh would play a key role in Korea’s transition to democracy. Despite
his association with authoritarian presidents Park and Chun, Roh had gained the support
of pro-democracy forces with his proposed “Declaration of Democratization and
Reforms,” on June 29, 1987, and reached an agreement with democracy activist Kim
Young Sam on a constitutional revision that was approved by the National Assembly in
October, 1987. Roh preserved the institutional prerogatives of the military, minimizing
the likelihood of direct intervention as Roh implemented modest political reforms.
During his five-year term, Roh ensured the military’s financial, organizational, and
personal interests were protected from civilian oversight. He maintained seats for retired
military in the cabinet and National Assembly, and the military retained control over
defense and national security policy, with minimal oversight by the National Assembly.
The military was granted amnesty with respect to human rights abuses, and the DSC
continued to interfere in domestic politics by monitoring politicians, labor leaders,
academics, religious leaders, reporters and others.

Yet public sentiment began to have a greater impact on the role of the military in
civil politics. For example, in 1992, the head of the Agency for National Security
Planning (ANSP) was fired when the public reacted strongly to the illegal campaigning
of several agents. The outcry compelled the ANSP to pledge political neutrality in future
elections. Still, by the end of Roh’s term in 1993, most of the military’s reserved
domains remained, and the military was able to exercise institutional and political
autonomy, even though it had been discouraged from openly political activities.

Kim Young Sam was the first president without a military background to be
inaugurated in 32 years. During his campaign, he promised to embark on a new era of
civilian government. Because he enjoyed greater democratic legitimacy than his
predecessor, as well as a ruling majority in the National Assembly, he was able to go

172 Woo, Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-
Democratization, 107-08.
173 Saxer, "Generals and Presidents: Establishing Civilian and Democratic Control in South Korea," 390.
174 Ibid.
farther in reducing the discretionary powers of the armed forces leadership and
establishing objective civilian control over the military.\textsuperscript{175} After gaining support for his
reforms from top officers, he fired the Chief of Staff and the head of the DSC, ordered
military-associated intelligence agencies (so long responsible for monitoring domestic
politics) to report to the civilian defense minister, dismantled the Hanahoe, and purged
corrupt officers.\textsuperscript{176}

Public outrage over a series of corruption scandals exposed from 1993 – 1995
allowed Kim to decisively overcome resistance to his reforms. For example, after two
defense ministers were found to have profited from corrupt military procurement
procedures, Kim introduced a mechanism to monitor financial activities and real estate
deals, which for decades had been used to anonymously funnel money from big business
owners (chaebol) to corrupt politicians.\textsuperscript{177} The “Real-Name Financial Transaction
System” revealed that former president Roh held approximately $650 million under 40
false-name accounts, a discovery that sparked massive demonstrations. With support
from civil society groups and the National Assembly, Kim’s anti-corruption drive
culminated in the arrest of former presidents Chun and Roh, as well as fourteen former
associates. Kim enjoyed broad public support for his “Campaign to Rectify the
Authoritarian Past,” which included naming the December 1979 seizure of military rule a
“coup d’etat,” and establishing the anniversary of the Kwangju uprising as a public
holiday. The punishment of the high-ranking officials, which included imprisonment and
death, was sobering to military officers and discouraged future attempts to influence
politics, paving the way for long-time opposition leader Kim Dae Jung’s candidacy ahead
of the 1997 presidential elections. The primary issue during the 1997 presidential
campaign was the financial crisis, and the public focused on which candidate could
restore growth. Upon his election, the military accepted Kim’s Sunshine Policy, which
proposed offering economic and humanitarian aid to North Korea and promoting greater
cultural, education, and economic exchanges. Many analysts consider South Korea’s

\textsuperscript{175} Croissant, "Riding the Tiger: Civilian Control and the Military in Democratizing Korea," 372.
\textsuperscript{176} Woo, \textit{Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-
Democratization}, 112.
\textsuperscript{177} Saxer, "Generals and Presidents: Establishing Civilian and Democratic Control in South Korea," 394;
Woo, \textit{Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-
Democratization}, 113.
democracy was consolidated when Kim’s term ended in February 2003.\textsuperscript{178} The percentage of retired military officers in core political institutions declined, along with the strategic position of the armed forces as an institution.

Military Professionalism During Korea’s Transition

The professionalization of the Korean armed forces proved to be a decisive factor in the government’s ability to implement civil-military reforms in the 1990s. By the time Kim Young Sam approached senior military leaders for their support in establishing objective civilian control over the military, the armed forces’ competence, coherency, mission exclusivity and respect for civilian political authority had been enhanced by several modernization programs, two wars, and professional education and training at both Korean and American military schools. U.S. American military doctrine, which included an emphasis on unity, responsibility, and respect for civilian control over the military, had permeated Korea’s armed forces for more than four decades, and a greater share of the armed forces’ officers were convinced that the presence of the military in the civil sphere undermined their effectiveness in countering threats to Korea’s national security.

Chun deployed his loyal Hanahoe faction to seize power from the senior military establishment and impose martial law for 456 days following Park’s assassination. Because the military suppression of demonstrators opposing martial law in Kwangju had damaged Chun’s legitimacy, Chun would refrain from mobilizing the military to crack down on dissent in an effort to “soften the brutal image of dictatorial rule.”\textsuperscript{179} For example, when students from a total of 27 universities and colleges in Seoul demonstrated on the fifth anniversary of the Kwangju uprising, nearly 5,000 students clashed with 1,000 riot police, yet military personnel were not tasked with restoring order.\textsuperscript{180}

\textsuperscript{178} Croissant, "Riding the Tiger: Civilian Control and the Military in Democratizing Korea," 378.
\textsuperscript{179} Woo, Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 105.
Chun's decision not to use the full force of his loyal faction against pro-democracy demonstrators in the summer of 1987, may be a reflection of the military leadership's split between "hardliners" who favored heavy-handed tactics, and "softliners" who were uncomfortable with such interventions and/or preferred to protect their reserved domains by returning to the barracks. A former intelligence chief claimed he and other generals prevented military intervention during the demonstrations of 1987, because they opposed the use of military force against political opponents of the regime, and sought to end the military's involvement in politics.181

The restraint shown by military officers may have also been influenced by the fact that the opposition had a more conservative character than in the past, and as such did not undermine Korea's national security.182 In addition, the military balance on the Korean peninsula was in favor of South Korea, which had surpassed North Korea in terms of military capabilities by the early 1980s.183 The alliance with the United States was strong, and South Korea possessed an indigenous defense industrial base that rendered it less dependent on foreign sources of military hardware.

During the peaceful transfer of power from President Chun to President-elect Roh, the likelihood of military intervention was low. Roh had been a close associate of Chun and Park's, and while he had proposed democratic reforms he could also be expected to preserve the military's reserved domains. Yet Roh would also refrain from imposing martial law, stating in 1989 that he was opposed to using emergency powers under the Korean Constitution even when confronted with violent protests by radical students, during which six riot police officers were killed.184 Thus while retaining many of the military's institutional prerogatives, Roh refrained from directly politicizing the military by tasking it with using force against Roh's political opposition. The more years that passed in the absence of martial law, the more extreme the measure may have seemed from the perspective of the government, military, and society.

Long-time opposition leader Kim Young Sam joined Roh's ruling Democratic Liberal Party two years before the presidential elections in December, 1992, which may

181 Saxer, "Generals and Presidents: Establishing Civilian and Democratic Control in South Korea," 388.
182 Ibid.
183 Woo, Security Challenges and Military Politics in East Asia: From State Building to Post-Democratization, 197.
have convinced the military elite he would not threaten their corporate interests. Professional senior military officers welcomed the civil-military reforms proposed by Kim shortly after he assumed the presidency in 1993. Corruption, factionalism, and politicization undermine the military readiness of the armed forces and reflect poorly on their reputation as a professional fighting force. Given that Kim Young Sam’s foreign policy did not imperil the external security of South Korea, the senior leadership could take advantage of the broad public support for Kim’s reforms to dismantle the insular Hanahoe faction. Under Kim’s leadership, objective civilian control over the military was finally achieved.

Conclusions

From the beginning of bilateral security cooperation between the U.S. and South Korea throughout the remainder of the Cold War, U.S. military aid, as well as the presence of U.S. troops, mitigated the external threat to South Korea. The American security guarantee and political alignment continues to the present day. The U.S. has fought alongside, trained and educated countless members of the Korean military, contributing to the professionalization of the Korean armed forces. U.S. military doctrine remains dominant among Korean military planners and within Korean military institutions. Why, then, did the role of the military in civil politics expand from 1961 through the 1980s, including two instances of direct military intervention via coup d'état?

This case reveals several interesting insights regarding the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of the recipient’s military in civil politics. In particular, it challenges several assumptions one might make about this role based on the civil-military relations literature, particularly with respect to the influence that the presence of an external threat, the political strength of the civilian political authority, and the professionalism of the armed forces have on the inclination of the military to intervene. This section will offer some conclusions based on observations of the three periods covered in this case study. The goal is that these conclusions may inform expectations in future cases when U.S. military aid is deemed necessary in support of American strategic interests.
The External Threat

In the two instances of direct intervention by military officers, in 1961 and 1979, the military faction did not explicitly justify its intervention based on the presence of an external threat, but rather believed it was uniquely capable of restoring domestic order and meeting the nation's economic, political, and social challenges. Nevertheless, the regimes that evolved from these interventions linked the external security threat posed by the Soviet-backed North Korea with its political opposition, pulling the military deeper into politics both as a means of monitoring and suppressing dissent and consolidating political power. While President Park used officers from the "counter-subversion track" to secure his regime for nearly two decades, however, President Chun, who enjoyed strong political support from President Reagan, barely held onto power for seven years before conceding to democratic reforms and the peaceful transfer of power to a democratically-elected successor (albeit one from his own military faction.) While much credit is given to the vocal middle class willing to join students, intellectuals, and labor unions in demanding political liberalization, the perceived level of external threat, as well as the expectation of American support to meet this threat, remains important.

Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, despite the presence of U.S. troops and large outlays of U.S. military aid, North Korea's military capability was considered to be greater than South Korea's, and the Soviet-backed regime frequently sent guerillas south to inject fear and uncertainty in Korean society. In addition, during the Nixon Administration, Park expected American material support as well as the U.S. troop presence would decline. This expectation leant urgency to the development of a viable economic base from which to build an indigenous defense capability, and mobilizing the public toward this effort would require strong state leadership. President Park recognized the geopolitical circumstances under which the alliance had been forged were changing, and South Korea would need to be capable of meeting future challenges on its own. This would require Park to draw the military deeper into civil politics both to serve as his political base and to guarantee social order during crises.

The centralization of Park's political authority allowed for a state-directed economic development program that would enable South Korea to support its own
defense industrial base and provide for greater independence in national security policymaking in the future. Park was able to mobilize Korean society during the 1960s by linking national security with economic vitality, enabling him to justify close government cooperation with industry and sustain uncomfortable economic practices such as low wages for workers. Thus the presence of an external threat served as a powerful tool for the executive in maintaining a sense of national unity and purpose. The support of both the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations during this period bolstered support for Park’s efforts.

However, Park worried about his capacity to deter North Korean aggression in the context of the Sino-American détente, the Guam Doctrine, the massive American troop withdrawal from the peninsula, and the decline of U.S. military aid. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the balance of military capabilities still favored North Korea; in the minds of most Koreans, only the U.S. troop presence prevented the North from a surprise assault on Seoul. Even as President Nixon tried to assure Park of his political support, the expectation of a decline in U.S. military aid meant Park was more likely to risk American disapproval over his authoritarian behavior. This explains why Park consolidated his authority with the unprecedented expansion of presidential powers in the constitutional amendments of late 1972, despite the fact that 1972 was the peak of U.S. military assistance, with more than three billion in constant 2012 $US allocated. The Yushin constitution was an effort to maintain control over society during what Park anticipated would be a decade of extraordinary economic, social, cultural and political change.

President Chun enjoyed a far more favorable security environment from 1980 - 1987. By the early 1980’s, South Korea’s military capabilities had surpassed North Korea’s, and President Reagan offered his government strong political support that included a commitment not to withdraw American military troops from the peninsula. Modest steps were being taken toward reconciliation with North Korea. In absolute terms, the U.S. granted Chun far less in annual military aid than it had the Park regime, and Reagan only added approximately 2,000 American troops to the 38,000 troops stationed in South Korea when he assumed the presidency. Unlike the Carter administration,

---

185 "U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations, 1 July 1945 - 30 September 2012.", ibid.
however, the Reagan administration refrained from publically undermining Chun’s presidency and criticizing its human rights abuses, instead emphasizing repeatedly the importance of the alliance. While tensions with North Korea persisted, the overall decrease in the external threat rendered it more difficult for Chun to justify the continued presence of the military in civil politics and reject the demand for democratic reforms that reached its apex in 1987. In particular, Chun could no longer credibly link the external threat with his political opposition to the extent that both President Rhee and President Park had during their terms. The election of fellow Hanahoe member, retired General Roh Tae Woo, ensured the more hard-line, conservative military officers would have less incentive to intervene, whether for reasons of national security or to protect their reserved domains.

By the presidential elections of 1992, the Cold War had ended, South Korea’s economy had far outstripped North Korea’s, South Korea had established diplomatic relations with both Communist China and the former Soviet Union, and North Korea was isolated from the international community. Even in the context of Pyongyang’s recalcitrance vis-à-vis nuclear inspections, when long-time opposition member and democracy activist Kim Young Sam was elected, he was in a far more favorable position to implement civil-military reforms and establish objective civilian control over the military. South Korea continued to enjoy strong political support from the U.S., but overall military aid had declined sharply as U.S. policymakers demanded greater burden sharing on the part of South Korea. In fact, by 1993, the U.S. provided only .4 million in constant 2012 SUS, in the form of grants for IMET, although the U.S. still funded its own troop presence.186 South Korean officials could expect that over time the demand for burden-sharing would increase, with U.S. troops eventually withdrawing from the peninsula. Nevertheless, the structural conditions allowed for dramatic reforms, including the dismantling of the Hanahoe faction, which limited the options for military interference in civil politics.

186 Ibid.
Political Support for the Civilian Leadership

U.S. officials accompanied military aid with political support for South Korea’s civilian leadership. Nevertheless, the military dominated civilian politics for more than three decades. In examining the relationship between U.S. political support and the interference of the military in politics, several factors that contributed to this unexpected outcome emerge. A critical observation is that most of South Korea’s civilian leaders did not attempt to establish objective civilian control over the military. President Rhee, President Park, and President Chun sought to deliberately politicize the military in the service of their own political objectives. The civilian leaders who would benefit from objective civilian control, Prime Minister Chang Myon, President Choi Kyu Hah, and President Roh Tae Woo, chose “acquiescence,” or tacit approval of the military’s reserved domains, to stave off military interference. Only Kim Young Sam had both the incentive and the domestic and international structural conditions necessary to implement civil-military reforms and achieve objective civilian control over the military. It is worth noting that American political support was not always consistent, and that discontinuities that influenced regime behavior existed across and within successive American administrations.

Like Rhee before him, as domestic and international criticism of Park mounted, the president pulled the military deeper into civil politics. While both mobilized loyal factions against the political opposition, Park established a sophisticated network comprised of select members of the military establishment, reserving prestigious positions in government and industry in return for loyalty. Thus Park deliberately politicized members of the military throughout his seventeen years as president, establishing reserved domains for the military that future administrations would be forced to confront. Yet Park was also committed to the professionalization of the armed forces, and established a dual-track system that insulated the bulk of the military from political activity. Thus the non-politicized military officers were reluctant to intervene on behalf of President Chun in the face of widespread pro-democracy demonstrations in 1987.

Transitional regimes that would benefit from objective civilian control over the military are not always in a position to implement civil-military reforms. Prime Minister
Chang Myon enjoyed strong political support from the United States, but his tenuous position precluded the de-politicization of senior military officers who had benefited from President Rhee’s patronage. His government’s reluctance to implement anti-corruption reforms or hold accountable military officers who participated in vote-rigging under Rhee angered the faction within the military that ultimately intervened in May, 1961. Thus while Chang chose “acquiescence,” protecting certain military officers’ reserved domains to maintain political stability, the factionalized military was unable to provide coherent support to his government. The government was so weak, in fact, that the United States, the Korean public, and the military establishment ultimately decided not to intervene on Chang’s behalf.

President Choi Kyu Hah, who assumed his post after the assassination of President Park, put forward a timetable for political liberalization that included a revision of the Yushin constitution and presidential and parliamentary elections. U.S. officials were highly supportive of Choi’s efforts to implement democratic reforms. Yet in May, 1980, Choi acquiesced to the formation of a “Special Committee for National Security Measures” that was dominated by the military, led by Chun, and which granted the military body political authority equal to that of the civilian cabinet. Not three months later, Choi assumed responsibility for the Kwanju uprising, and, facing pressure from the army, abruptly resigned, clearing the way for Chun to be elected by the National Council for Unification, the electoral college established by Park in 1972.

President Roh Tae Woo also enjoyed consistent U.S. political support, but chose not to implement civil-military reforms. Ultimately this may have preserved South Korea’s democratic consolidation; there were rumors that if dissident Kim Dae Jung were elected in 1987, the military may have intervened. While Roh preserved most of the military’s reserved domains and institutional prerogatives, minimizing the risk of a direct intervention that would have been highly contentious and destabilizing domestically and internationally, he refrained from using his emergency powers to impose martial law, which would also have drawn the military deeper into civil politics. By the time of Kim Young Sam’s election, the risk of direct intervention was much lower, and Kim enjoyed greater domestic political support for civil-military reforms.
Another important factor to consider is that political support from the United States has not always been consistent. The extent to which U.S political support influenced regime behavior is evident when comparing the absolute amount of U.S. military aid with the discontinuities in American political support. During the Carter administration, for example, the U.S. contributed more in annual U.S. military aid than did the Reagan administration. However, President Carter’s criticism of the Park government’s human rights record and his call for the withdrawal of American troops undermined President Park’s control over Korean society as well as his inner security circle. In contrast, President Reagan quickly embraced both President Chun and President Roh, and emphasized repeatedly the American commitment to South Korea’s security. In addition, Reagan refrained from publically admonishing their governments, and his high-profile meetings with the South Korean leaders leant legitimacy to both former generals.

Discontinuity also existed within administrations. While President Nixon and President Ford tried to assure Park’s government of their unwavering support, the American media and members of Congress criticized Park’s authoritarian practices, questioned the justification for the American political commitment, and were particularly vitriolic in response to the lobbying scandal in 1976. President Eisenhower faced a similar problem during Rhee’s government. Understanding the political and psychological impact of U.S. military aid, Eisenhower wanted to implement a modernization program that would give Koreans greater confidence in their security, allow for South Korea to gradually reduce the size of its military, and ease the burden of a large Korean force on both the Korean and American budgets. Congress, however, did not feel that an increase in military aid to Korea was justified, and the allocations for the military assistance program dropped precipitously from nearly three billion in constant 2012$US in 1957, to just 491 million in 1958. These types of fluctuations created uncertainty within these regimes, which often led to an increased reliance on the military for domestic political support.
Professionalization

U.S. military aid was instrumental in professionalizing the Korean armed forces, which is a precondition for achieving objective civilian control over the military. American military advisors established schools that raised the competency of the armed forces, contributed to the military's cohesiveness, emphasized the importance of mission exclusivity and respect for civilian political authority. However, more than four decades would pass before South Korea established objective civilian control over the armed forces, in large part due to the dominance of the military as an institution relative to other sectors of Korean society. The massive effort to increase the competency of the Korean armed forces after the invasion from North Korea in 1950 may have created internal tension that ultimately challenged the military's cohesiveness, mission exclusivity, and respect for civilian political authority.

U.S.-established military schools as well as the military experience gained during the Korean and Vietnam wars helped advance the capabilities of the Korean military. Military education was one of the only means of upward mobility in Korean society through the 1950s and 1960s. The training had net positive effects for Korea's economic development, as Koreans rotating out of military service brought technical and administrative education and skills to the civilian workforce. However, during the 1950s, as Korea was still recovering from Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War, the civilian sectors of the economy had difficulty absorbing these personnel; meanwhile, while the military was the primary beneficiary of U.S. aid, living standards for military personnel were low, exacerbated by the costs of maintaining a force of more than 700,000 troops. Promotions for mid-ranking officers were slowed by higher-ranking officers, particularly those who benefitted from President Rhee's patronage. Many were also resentful of Rhee's attempts to use the military to intervene against the opposition on his behalf.

In this context, the military establishment chose to condone the coup of 1961, which was instigated not by the military as an institution, but by a faction led by Park, who was heavily influenced by his time with the Japanese Imperial Army. Despite the American preference for the liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations, Park
pursued an alternative model in which the state penetrated society through extensive intelligence networks, and played a major role in guiding the country through industrialization. Park purged military officers who disagreed with his policies and rewarded loyal military personnel, enabling him to overcome opposition from within the military ranks. Thus he at once subordinated the military to his civilian authority while also deliberately politicizing select members to consolidate his political base.

Yet Park valued the professionalization of the armed forces, and established a dual-promotion track that insulated field officers from politics. The field officers would remain focused on meeting the external threat of North Korea, contributing to a sense of mission exclusivity. Thus while Park relied heavily on his inner circle for regime security, the military as an institution continued to advance in its professionalization. For example, the military’s competency and coherency were strengthened by its participation in the Vietnam War, both because of the experience gained and the increase in U.S. military aid during this period.

Hanahoe members Chun and Roh also satisfied the corporate interests of the military, which served as a fundamental part of their political base. Yet the military as an institution continued to evolve. “Softliners” in the late 1970s and through the 1980s preferred to remain outside the political arena; this sentiment was reinforced by a growing number of moderates in the government, particularly after the 1985 National Assembly elections. Even though the military tried to protect its institutional prerogatives under Chun and Roh, the military did not intervene directly when Kim Young Sam asserted civilian institutional control of the military, and did not protest after the election of long time opposition leader Kim Dae Jung, even though his sunshine policy was anathema to the military’s strong anti-Communist ideology. The mandate for political reform enjoyed by both Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung, bolstered by a robust Korean middle class and the post-Cold War geopolitical environment, allowed the civilian presidents to roll back the institutionalized role of the military in South Korea’s civil politics. Of particular importance was Kim Young Sam’s ability to finally dismantle the Hanahoe, which for so long had undermined the cohesiveness of the armed forces. Under Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung, politicized officers were in a much weaker position to fight for their reserved domains.
In retrospect, the strongest relationship between the external threat, U.S. military aid, and the military’s inclination to intervene rests in the decision to expand and professionalize the military. While a professionalized military is a precondition for objective civilian control, a *professionalizing* military, one that gains socio-political importance relative to the rest of society and benefits from the diversion of state resources as well as external aid, may conceive of itself as uniquely capable of assuming a nation-building role if civil society is weak and civilian elites are considered incompetent, unpopular, and incapable of bringing economic growth. U.S. military aid that contributes to the competence of the military may undermine coherency in the short term, as tensions grow between junior officers with new ideas and senior officers who prefer the status quo. This dynamic can be exacerbated when promotion rates are slow, living standards are poor, and there exist few alternatives for upward mobility outside of the military hierarchy.

In addition, a competent and cohesive military that is well-funded (both by domestic and foreign government resources) is an attractive strategic partner for civilian elites who seek the active political support of the military and wish to preserve the option of using force against political opponents. This relationship is important to consider when training and equipping partners’ and allies’ militaries in the context of regimes that have not yet achieved democratic consolidation.
CHAPTER III

TURKEY: CAN THE GUARDIANS OF THE REPUBLIC FOLLOW THE LIBERAL-DEMOCRATIC MODEL?

Introduction

The United States and Turkey found they had shared strategic interests based on common threat perceptions of the Soviet Union in the wake of World War II. From Ankara’s perspective, Moscow’s termination of the Turkish-Soviet Treaty of Neutrality and Friendship in the Spring of 1945, Stalin’s effort to modify the Montreux Convention that governed the use of the Bosporus and Dardanelles Straits, and the Soviet Union’s demand that Turkey hand back the border districts of Kars and Ardahan, raised concerns of Soviet regional domination.¹ American policymakers were concerned Turkish neutrality might give Soviet naval vessels privileged access to the Mediterranean from the Black Sea, as well as facilitate expansion to the Balkans and the Middle East.

To meet Turkey’s immediate security needs, President Truman authorized $45 million in security and economic aid through the Lend-Lease act of 1941. Upon learning that the British government could no longer extend financial aid to Turkey, President Truman declared in March of 1947, that Turkey was “essential to the preservation of order in the Middle East,” and through the Truman Doctrine increased aid to $75 million for fiscal year 1948.² Turkey was a vital strategic ally for the United States not only because of its geographical location on the Eastern Mediterranean, but also because of its proximity to the Middle East. Most importantly, though, the Turkish government and military demonstrated early on that they were willing to fight by contributing the 1st Turkish Brigade, with more than 5,000 personnel, to the U.S.-led UN coalition defending the Republic of Korea in the Korean War, where the Turks were lauded for their tenacity and skill on the battlefield.

² Aid to Greece and Turkey: The Truman Doctrine, March 12, 1947.
Recognizing the need to institutionalize strategic cooperation with Turkey, U.S. policymakers encouraged Turkey's membership in the North Atlantic Alliance. Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty, the U.S. commitment of material aid, and the presence of U.S. military personnel in Turkey played a decisive role in mitigating the principle external threat to Turkey's national security posed by an increasingly domineering Soviet Union. U.S. military aid was also an expression of political backing for Turkey's civilian leadership, one that was often reinforced by public statements of support, official visits by government leaders, and institutionalized cooperation, particularly through NATO. In addition, close cooperation between the U.S. defense establishment and the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF), access to advanced modern weaponry and equipment, as well as grants for International Military Education and Training (IMET) contributed to the professionalization of Turkey's military personnel. Previous studies of civil-military relations suggest mitigating the external threat, increasing the political strength of a civilian regime, and enhancing the professional character of the armed forces will decrease the likelihood of military intervention in civil politics. Yet since U.S. military aid began in 1948, there have been three direct coups, one "postmodern" coup, and an attempted "e-coup." In addition, from 1960 through the 1990s, the Turkish military expanded its reserved domains, strengthening its political power in relation to the rest of the Turkish government, and allowing for a dominant role in national security policymaking and foreign relations.

How can we explain the apparent negative relationship between U.S. military aid and the institutionalization of civilian control over the military? American policymakers in the early days of bilateral relations with Turkey sought political, economic, and social development along with the modernization of Turkey's armed forces. The transition from single-party to multi-party rule, which led to Turkey's first free elections in 1950, was considered a positive indicator of Turkey's democratic consolidation. This chapter will examine some of the paradoxical effects of U.S. military aid on Turkey's political development.

In the first decade of U.S. military aid, civilian leaders prioritized extensive force modernization over political, economic, and social reforms, preferring to maintain an underpaid but oversized military establishment with the latest military technology, even if
the Turkish troops lacked the training to operate the new equipment. This suggests despite NATO and American security guarantees that mitigated Turkey’s external threats, Turkey’s leaders were anxious to take advantage of the opportunity to expand Turkey’s military capabilities, as well as use foreign aid to launch ambitious development projects. However, when the government attempted to use the military to suppress public opposition to its increasingly authoritarian policies, the military, as the most powerful state institution and the guarantor of domestic stability, was compelled to intervene and reestablish order. Military capabilities continued to be crucial for protecting Turkish Cypriots, confronting left and right-wing extremist violence, contributing to NATO and U.S.-led military operations, and protecting Turkish citizens from attacks by Kurdish separatists. In this context the prestige and influence of the military establishment grew, granting greater legitimacy to its presence in Turkey’s civil politics. Had Turkey refused U.S. military aid and maintained a neutral position in the Cold War, the armed forces may not have wielded so much influence in Turkish politics.

During the 1950s, the military refrained from interfering in civil politics; however, rather than establish objective civilian control over the military, the prime minister attempted to use the military to harass the opposition and quell public dissent. The military, highly resentful of this attempt at politicization, intervened in 1960 with the stated intention of restoring democratic processes. While the military junta did allow for a return to competitive elections, it also assumed an active guardianship role that would last for more than four decades. The reserved domains necessary to carry out this role persisted into the 21st century, and pressured successive prime ministers to assume a policy of “acquiescence” rather than establish objective civilian control over the military. In addition, discontinuities between Congressional and White House political support for Ankara has traditionally been perceived as an expression of America’s wavering commitment to its ally, leading Turkish authorities to question the credibility of the U.S. security guarantee.

Finally, U.S. military aid that contributed to the competence of the Turkish Armed Forces may have undermined its coherency in the short-term, as some Turkish officers became motivated to assume a greater role in Turkey’s nation-building. Kemalism, an ideology named for the Turkish Republic’s founder, Mustafa Kemal
Attaturk, pre-dates U.S. military aid and bolsters the sense that Turkish officers are uniquely qualified to guarantee Turkey's secular orientation. The TAF's legal role as the "guardian of the constitution" and the "guardian of the republic" has been used to legitimize its political intervention for decades. The TAF's strong Kemalist ideology, combined with the prevalence of internal security challenges, has undermined the military's mission exclusivity as well as its respect for civilian political authority.

Because of the emphasis on westernization, modernization, secularism and national unity in the Kemalist ideology, the military often clashed with both Communist and Islamist political parties. For this reason, the transition to multi-party politics actually increased the likelihood of military intervention in civil politics, as senior military leaders perceived far-left and far-right parties to threaten the republic. U.S. military assistance increased the military's ability to intervene by improving the technical and administrative skill of military personnel, enhancing the TAF's cohesiveness and organizational capacity, and bolstering the legitimacy and prestige of senior military personnel.

This study will examine the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of the military in Turkey's civil politics during four periods: from the early days of the Truman Doctrine until the first coup d'état in 1960, from the post-coup period of military rule until the military intervention in 1980, after the 1980 coup until 2000, and from 2001 to the present. The first period, during which the U.S. established its strategic relationship with Turkey, highlights the primacy of military and economic development in Turkish decision-making. While the TAF experienced an impressive period of force modernization and became integrated in the North Atlantic Alliance, the Turkish economy stagnated and Turkey's multiparty politics became increasingly contentious, motivating the military to intervene in 1960 to restore order. The second period is characterized by tension in U.S. - Turkey bilateral relations, particularly in response to the Cyprus issue, which caused serious fluctuations in American military aid and culminated in the imposition of an arms embargo by U.S. lawmakers. This period also ends in a direct intervention by the TAF in civil politics, in reaction to widespread

---

political violence and the ascension of influential Islamist leaders who threatened to reorient Turkish politics. During the third period, civilian leaders, backed by senior military personnel, are finally able to implement liberal economic reforms; subsequent growth enables Turkey to develop its own defense industrial base and reduce its dependence on U.S. military aid. With the end of the Cold War, the bulk of U.S. military assistance is cut, although International Military Education and Training (IMET) and bilateral security cooperation in response to regional security concerns, including counterterrorism and nuclear non-proliferation, continues. Broad public support for European Union accession, along with negative memories from the 1980-1983 period of military rule, leads to a decrease in the public’s tolerance of the armed forces’ role in civil politics, although the rise of political Islam leads to a “post-modern coup” in 1997. The final period witnesses the resumption of U.S. military aid in response to complex and volatile regional security issues; while the military unsuccessfully attempts an “e-coup” in 2007, under the premiership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey’s political leaders accomplish an unprecedented subordination of the military to civilian authority.

U.S. Military Aid and the Challenges of Multi-Party Politics, 1948-1960

U.S. military aid, including shipments of advanced weaponry and equipment, education and training, and the presence of American military personnel, mitigated the risk of external aggression from the Soviet Union, provided political support for civilian leadership during the first decade of multi-party politics, and made great strides in modernizing and professionalizing the Turkish Armed Forces. Nevertheless, the Turkish military intervened directly in civil politics to remove the leadership of the ruling Democrat Party in 1960. This section will examine the relationship between U.S. military aid and the evolution of civil-military relations in Turkey up until the first coup d’état.

This section is divided into three parts. The first will examine the relationship between U.S. military aid, Turkey’s external threats, and the role of the military in Turkish politics. While bilateral aid, along with NATO and the Baghdad Pact (later renamed the Central Treaty Organization, or CENTO), dramatically improved Turkey’s security environment, the military intervened in reaction to what it perceived was the
increasing authoritarianism, corruption, and incompetence of the civilian government of Premier Adnan Menderes. The second part will review if the political support provided by the United States for Turkey’s civilian leaders minimized the options for the military to interfere in Menderes’ government during the 1950s. While political support from Washington and Turkish society bolstered the civilian regime and minimized the political options for the military to interfere through most of the decade, in the late 1950s, as the Turkish public was decrying the undemocratic practices of Menderes’ Democrat Party, Menderes tried to mobilize the military against his political opposition. This attempt to politicize the military ran afoul of Turkish officers, motivating them to remove the elected leader despite the political support of the Eisenhower administration. The third part will look at how U.S. military aid contributed to the professionalism of the Turkish armed forces. While American technical assistance, education, and training contributed to the competency of the armed forces, its coherency was undermined by divergent views among military officers of the armed forces’ role in nation-building. In addition, the deeply ingrained belief that the military is the guardian of Turkey’s democracy pulled the military away from an exclusive focus on external defense and, in the minds of many officers, entitled it to scrutinize and ultimately unseat the civilian political authority.

U.S. Military Aid and Turkey’s Postwar Security

The Truman Doctrine, NATO membership, and the Baghdad Pact oriented Turkey’s national security firmly with the West in the postwar period. U.S. military aid decisively mitigated the external security threat posed by the Soviet Union to the extent that by the early 1950s, Turkey’s civilian leadership placed greater emphasis on the need for economic aid over military aid when conferring with American policymakers. Washington was hopeful that Turkey’s more democratic orientation, particularly under the Menderes government, would render Ankara amenable to economic reforms. A stable economic base would be vital to ensuring allies could eventually reduce their dependence on U.S. aid, given that U.S. resources were finite and the Cold War security architecture was growing. As the decade progressed, President Eisenhower questioned the need to continue the pace of military aid, concerned that the Turkish Armed Forces were unable
to absorb the sophisticated equipment and weaponry being provided. Meanwhile, despite
enjoying a more favorable external security environment, Turkey's civilian leadership
responded to domestic pressure by pulling the military into politics, using the armed
forces to intimidate and harass opposition politicians. This attempt to use the military for
political purposes incurred deep resentment within the TAF, ultimately leading to the
military coup that removed Premier Adnan Menderes and President Celal Bayar from
power.

Turkey maintained its neutrality up until the end of World War II, receiving
modest military aid from the United Kingdom and the U.S. to maintain a large but ill-
equipped defense force. In February 1945, Turkey declared war on Germany and Japan,
and became a founding member of the United Nations. In early 1947, the UK formally
declared it could no longer give aid to Greece and Turkey; the U.S., fearing a return to
Turkish neutrality, believed military aid could bring Turkey more resolutely in the
American sphere, providing strategic depth to the American policy of containing Soviet
influence.4

While U.S. officials did not necessarily believe Turkey was in imminent danger of
a Soviet attack, military planners recognized the strategic significance of Turkey's
location in the event war unexpectedly erupted between the Allies and the Soviet Union.5
Bilateral relations deepened in 1950, when Turkish forces joined the United Nations
effort in the Korean War. The contribution to the collective security effort in Korea was
instrumental in demonstrating Turkey's willingness to fight, and proved to American
policymakers Turkey could be an effective and indispensable Cold War partner by
controlling access to the Turkish straits and deterring Soviet advances toward the Middle
East. Turkey's transition to multi-party rule helped American policymakers convince
their allies to support Turkey's full membership in the North Atlantic Alliance.

From Washington's perspective, U.S. military aid would not only bolster the
security of Western Europe, but also potentially facilitate a NATO-friendly, anti-
Communist security architecture in the Middle East. American policymakers hoped by

---

4"Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of War (Patterson) and the Secretary of the
Navy (Forrestal): United States Economic and Military Aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine,
5 Leffler, "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and NATO, 1945 - 1952,”
113, 16.
joining Turkey in an alliance with Pakistan, the westernmost member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a "Northern Tier" could be established, forming a line of countries capable of repelling Soviet advances toward the Middle East. Turkish co-bellicosity would slow down any potential Soviet moves toward the Suez and North Africa, and allow NATO forces a platform from which to launch air attacks against strategic Soviet targets.

U.S. military aid was geared toward establishing viable Allied bases and logistics networks within Turkey, and contributed to modernizing air landing strips, facilities, and roads to facilitate troop mobilization. In the early days of the alliance, more than thirty defense-related installations were established. In exchange for U.S. security guarantees, including protection under the American "nuclear umbrella," Turkey would allow the U.S. and its NATO allies to station troops and equipment in Turkey, with some 25,000 U.S. troops stationed in the country by the mid-1960s. These troops would bolster Turkey's defense and contribute to its intelligence-gathering capabilities. U.S. bilateral aid was also instrumental in increasing Turkey's indigenous capabilities, which had atrophied during WWII. American military advisors sought to reorganize the approximately 400,000 Turkish troops, build up their combat effectiveness, and provide them with "much greater mobility and firepower." 7

American support for Turkey's external defense from the announced Truman Doctrine in 1947 on contributed to the country's improved security environment to the extent that by July, 1949, nearly twenty percent of the personnel in the Turkish Armed Forces were demobilized, and Turkish leaders began emphasizing the need for economic assistance rather than military. Nevertheless, during a visit to Washington in 1954, Premier Menderes pressed for more military aid to meet the Soviet threat; Washington

---

responded by nearly doubling its promised military aid to Turkey and accelerating the shipment of weapons and equipment.  

Turkish and American policymakers struggled to balance American commitments to improving Turkey's military capabilities with concerns over the burdens those capabilities placed on both the American and Turkish budgets. Supporting Turkey's military consumed a large percentage of the Turkish government's budget, at the expense of economic development, and the Menderes government hoped Washington could help compensate for this burden. Turkey's other Western allies, aware that Turkey's economic development had long-term implications for its ability to provide for its own defense, contributed to the maintenance of NATO's second largest army by extending more than $500 million in short-term credit.  

Nevertheless, as the decade progressed, it became increasingly apparent Washington and Ankara possessed different ideas about the number of armed forces necessary to meet the external threat. President Eisenhower believed Turkey's deteriorating economic conditions were "aggravated by the amount of military force being maintained in that country." 11 The American president believed a collective security program could not function if member states were unable to carry their share of the economic burden. The Turkish government insisted U.S. military aid was necessary for Turkey to carry out its NATO force goals, but Eisenhower could not understand why Turkey would continue to press for more aid when its external threat had been mitigated by its bilateral relationship with the U.S. as well as NATO membership. Eisenhower wrote, while "Turkey has reaped significant benefits in terms of the overall security provided by NATO, modernization under our military assistance efforts and protection afforded by the growing U.S. nuclear retaliatory capability," "her force goals have increased. This to me represents an illogical end result which requires careful reappraisal." 12

---

10 Ibid.
11 Letter from the President to the Supreme Commander Allied Powers Europe (Norstad), July 15, 1956, FRUS 24, no. 360.
12 Ibid.
U.S. military aid, Turkey's military readiness, and economic development were inextricably linked. Turkey had hoped to use American military aid to not only bolster the capabilities of the Turkish armed forces, but also to initiate a modernization program that the Menderes Government would expand upon through ambitious development projects. By 1956, however, these projects, along with the size of the army, created an outsized burden on Turkey's finances, to the extent that prices on every-day staples were exorbitant. At the same time, while Washington emphasized its commitment to the Baghdad Pact by joining its Military Committee, the American military aid program was decreasing.\textsuperscript{13}

While U.S. military aid had bolstered Turkey's military capabilities and thus improved its regional security environment, by the end of the decade, Turkey's internal security situation was deteriorating. Economic stagnation and political violence in reaction to the government's increasingly authoritarian policies were causing massive social disruptions.\textsuperscript{14} The Menderes government responded to domestic pressures by attempting to pull the military into politics, calling on the armed forces to impose martial law and harass and intimidate opposition leader Ismet Inonu.

This effort to use the military for political purposes provoked a strong reaction from the armed forces. For example, despite a ban on demonstrations that the military was supposed to enforce, a thousand army cadets marched alongside protesting students in Ankara.\textsuperscript{15} The military's intervention to expel Premier Menderes and President Bayar was thus not in reaction to an increase in the external threat, but a response to widespread public discontent combined with the government's attempt to politicize the armed forces.

U.S. Political Support and Turkey's Multi-Party Politics

U.S. military assistance coincided with the determination by members of Turkey's political elite to continue moving the country toward democracy, which included establishing objective civilian control over the country's military. On May 30, 1949, the


\textsuperscript{14} "Arc of Crisis," ibid., May 1, 1960.

country's political leaders, including the highly respected Turkish politician and former chief of the Turkish General Staff, Ismet Inonu, initiated a new Turkish law that subordinated the chief of the Turkish General Staff (TGS) to the Minister of Defense.\textsuperscript{16} This law, intended to harmonize Turkey's civil-military relations with those of its new liberal democratic partners, represented the intent of Turkey's leaders to achieve objective civilian control over Turkey's military, rather than adopt a policy of "acquiescence" or "deliberate politicization." President Inonu's dedication to this policy was also evident when several senior members of the military, upset by the victory of the opposition Democrat Party (DP) in 1950, pressed Inonu to annul the results. Inonu's refusal contributed to the ability of Turkey's civilian leaders to maintain authority over the Turkish Armed Forces throughout the 1950s, until attempts to politicize the military prompted a direct intervention in May, 1960.\textsuperscript{17}

In addition to support from such influential former military leaders and politicians such as Inonu, Premier Menderes and President Celal Bayar of the Democrat Party also enjoyed political support from the United States. Washington promoted Turkey's membership in the North Atlantic Alliance, praised Turkey's contribution to collective security in the Korean War, and bolstered Turkey's standing in the Middle East through its support of the Baghdad Pact. The Eisenhower administration's decision to double military aid to Turkey and expedite delivery of weapons and equipment to Turkey's 400,000-man army was perceived as a political victory for Menderes.\textsuperscript{18} In addition, Menderes and Bayar enjoyed steady support from Turkey's NATO allies, particularly Britain, France, Italy and Western Germany.

When Menderes' Democrat Party won the 1954 elections, the DP increased its parliamentary majority, and the Menderes government used the opportunity to implement more ambitious social, political, and economic reforms, such as relaxing some of the strict secular policies of the Ataturk era, reforming the civil service and state-run enterprises, and passing laws that would encourage greater foreign investment. However, the Menderes' government's perceived deviation from the secular nature of the republic

\textsuperscript{17} Zeki Sarigil, "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?," ibid. (2010): 8.
\textsuperscript{18} "Turkish Premier Here to Push Aid: Menderes to See President, Dulles and Weeks Today - Confers with Stassen," \textit{The New York Times}, June 1, 1954.
exacerbated tension between the DP and its secular opposition. In addition, rapid economic expansion from 1949 – 1954, bolstered by U.S. aid, good crops, and high international prices for agricultural exports, encouraged the government to launch over-ambitious infrastructure projects. A drought in 1954, combined with the inflationary pressures of aid and the government’s quantitative easing, precipitated a sharp decline in growth that caused the economy to stall for several years while inflation soared. U.S. policymakers grew concerned about Turkey’s ability to absorb the vast amounts of money and equipment flowing into the country.\(^{19}\) In 1956, when Prime Minister Menderes asked for $800 million in military assistance over a period of four years, officials responded they could only commit to one-fourth of a four-year program.\(^{20}\)

As Turkey’s economic problems worsened and criticism among the secular elite mounted, the ruling party began to restrict opposition views in the press and impose restrictions on public assembly ahead of the October 1957 elections.\(^{21}\) The DP passed a media law that prohibited publishing anything that might damage the prestige of the government. Journalists, editors and media owners could be fined and even imprisoned under the new law.\(^{22}\) Menderes responded to criticism from abroad by saying these were internal matters to be “settled among us Turks.”\(^{23}\)

Increasing hostility between the two major political parties, the ruling DP and the opposition Republican People’s Party (RPP), resulted in parliamentary deadlock, and Prime Minister Menderes attempted to mobilize the army to restrict the opposition. For example, he used the army to bar a political tour by RPP leader and former President Inonu in the spring; four senior officers who objected to the army being used for political purposes resigned in protest. The Menderes government also used police to remove Inonu from the floor of the National Assembly. In April 1960, Menderes banned all opposition political activity, and established a parliamentary commission to investigate the RPP.

---

\(^{19}\) Memorandum of Discussion at the 238th Meeting of the National Security Council, February 24, 1955, \textit{FRUS} 24, no. 319.


The increasingly authoritarian nature of the DP leadership led civil and military bureaucrats, university students, and academics to organize a series of large-scale demonstrations, which on April 28, 1960, led to violent confrontations with police forces. Many of the protestors hailed the student uprisings that had recently ousted South Korean President Syngman Rhee. Menderes responded by closing the universities and imposing martial law on the first of May. Military cadets demonstrated solidarity with their civilian counterparts by staging a sympathy march in Ankara.

Even though U.S. political support for Turkey's civilian leaders might not have been as strong in 1960 as it had been ten years earlier, it was the loss of Turkish public support along with the military's refusal to use force on behalf of the Democrat Party that led to the collapse of the Menderes government. Even if Washington had committed to providing all of the military aid requested by the Turkish prime minister, the outcome would have likely been the same. Menderes' decision to shift from a policy of objective civilian control over the military to a policy of deliberate politicization violated the military's conviction that the armed forces should exist above party politics.

U.S. Military Aid and the Professionalism of the TAF

The Turkish military is the only institution to have been carried forward from the Ottoman Empire into the modern Turkish Republic established by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in 1923. Its first military academy was established in Istanbul in 1834, as part of an effort to modernize the Ottoman army officers. Thus while U.S. military aid contributed to the competency of a force that had not engaged in battle since World War I, the Turkish Armed Forces possess a sense of professionalism that pre-dates U.S. military assistance and contributes to its ideological coherency. Turkey's civil-military relations are also informed by the role the Turkish military assumes as the guardian of the republic, and the guarantor of Turkish democracy. This renders military officers highly sensitive to civilian leaders' attempts to politicize the military to serve their own interests, but also pulls them away from an exclusive focus on external defense. Thus Premier Menderes' mobilization of the military to suppress the opposition, combined with his increasing

24 "Turkish Military Academy History," www.kho.edu.tr/eng_about_tma/history.html.
authoritarianism, which seemed to threaten the democratic nature of the republic, provoked the military to intervene in civil politics in May of 1960.

While historically the Turkish military has been a driver of modernization, through World War II Turkey had little money to provide modern equipment or training for its military, the standards of living were low, and the competency of the armed forces had declined. American military aid provided weapons, equipment, and improved transportation and communications infrastructure; in addition, American military advisers taught technical and administrative skills to Turkish military personnel. Turkish officers and senior enlisted were sent to schools in the U.S., Germany and Canada. The quality of the Turkish military force was also enhanced by the education of otherwise illiterate military recruits, who often learned to read and write during their service. By facilitating the education of these recruits, U.S. military aid also contributed to Turkey’s private sector. In fact, military schools provided one of the only merit-based opportunities for professional development, particularly for poorer Turks from rural parts of the country. Yet some experts argue the military’s exposure to the armies of its western allies also made Turkish officers more aware of Turkey’s lack of economic, financial, and technological development.

The Turkish military’s western orientation was reinforced by the close cooperation with American military advisors that began in the late forties and deepened while fighting alongside American military personnel during the Korean War. The heart of the U.S.-Turkish security relationship was the Turkish commitment and willingness to fight. In 1952, the chief of the Turkish General Staff (TGS) Nuri Yamut assured U.S. Ambassador George McGhee that Turkey would intercept a Russian attack on the Middle East. Turkey’s soldiers earned a reputation for bravery while fighting on South Korea’s behalf during the Korean War, during which Turkey sent a full brigade, more than 5,000 men, the largest contingent after the United States, Britain, and Canada.

28 Memorandum of Conversation by the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) Aboard the Turkish President's Train, May 6-8, 1952, FRUS 8, no. 464.
While U.S. military aid had a decisive impact on the competency of the Turkish military, the tradition of subordination to civilian authority pre-dated U.S. aid. In May 1923, the Turkish parliament passed a law that required military officers to resign from active duty prior to running for public office. The military chief of staff's seat in the cabinet was abolished, and the chief became accountable to the Turkish president. While Ataturk considered the army the guardian of the state, he discouraged the military's interference in civil politics, in part to consolidate his own political authority and neutralize potential political rivals in the upper ranks of the TAF. Huntington writes, "The party (Ataturk's Republican People's Party, the RPP) came out of the womb of the army, political generals created a political party, and the political party put an end to political generals." The army was subordinate to, and worked in harmony with, the RPP from 1923 – 1950. While initially reluctant to back the victorious Democrat Party in 1950, the military was convinced by the highly respected statesman Ismet Inonu to submit to its authority.

By the mid-1950s, American authorities in Turkey grew concerned the Turks were trying to modernize and improve their capabilities too quickly. Admiral Radford observed a "serious lack in the Turkish armed forces of career soldiers, sailors and airmen with sufficient technical skill to make profitable use of many of the modern weapons for which the Turkish Government was making requests," and President Eisenhower suggested it might be better for the Turks to invest in human capital, using U.S. military aid for training and troop pay, rather than sophisticated military equipment. Rapid force expansion had led to the deterioration in salaries and working conditions for the officer corps.

While the Turkish armed forces' strong Kemalist identity contributes to its ideological coherency, the expansion of junior officers' experiences, during the Korean War and while attending both American and NATO military training programs, may have undermined the cohesiveness of the military as junior officers grew frustrated by senior

---

29 Sarigil, "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?" 7; Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 72.
31 "Memorandum of Discussion at the 238th Meeting of the National Security Council."
officers’ resistance their ideas. While the coup is often associated with junta leader Lieutenant General Cemal Gursel, it was driven by a group of mid-level military officers, many of whom advocated for extended military rule after the coup. Gursel, bolstered by support from other senior military leaders, insisted the purpose of the coup was to restore the constitutional liberties that had been violated by the Democrat Party, and brought in civilian academics and law experts to work alongside the Turkish Committee of National Unity (CNU) to form a provisional government and draft a new constitution. The junta reaffirmed its commitment to its western allies, emphasizing the anti-Communist character of the Turkish armed forces. In Istanbul and Ankara, Turks, many of whom believed the Turkish armed forces to be the ultimate guarantor of both Turkey’s territorial integrity and internal security, cheered the army as the troops marched through the streets.

Assertive Guardianship and an Unstable Alliance, 1960-1980

The next two decades of Turkish – U.S. relations were characterized by discontinuity and crisis. The Cyprus issue in particular, which pitted one NATO ally against another, was destabilizing not only for U.S.-Turkey bilateral relations, but for Turkey’s civil-military relations, as the armed forces were torn between the pressure to protect the minority Turkish Cypriot community and their dependence on U.S. military aid. The Cuban Missile Crisis, détente, and Congressional objections to the foreign aid program in general also generated uncertainty among Turkey’s political elite, including those military officers who would assume a more active guardianship role in Turkish civil politics.

This section is divided into three parts. The first will discuss how expectations with respect to the U.S. commitment to Turkey’s security declined through the 1960s and 1970s. While Turkey’s relations with the Soviet Union improved, the Turkish Cypriot community was threatened by the majority Greek Cypriots, and political violence, fueled by Communist subversion, escalated. The political leadership’s inability to manage these

---

threats prompted the military to intervene in 1970 and again in 1980. The second part will discuss how Turkey’s turbulent domestic and international political environment, including discontinuities in American political support, combined with the institutional prerogatives expanded by the military during its 17 months in power to inhibit the ability of civilian leaders to achieve objective civilian control over the Turkish armed forces. Turkey’s civilian prime ministers had little choice but to assume a policy of acquiescence, as the military assumed a more assertive guardianship role through President Cemal Gursel and the newly-established National Security Council. Finally, this section will conclude with a discussion of the TAF’s transition to assertive guardianship, which facilitated the expansion of the military’s reserved domains, violated the principle of mission exclusivity, and undermined its respect for civilian political authority. In addition, the Turkish military’s coherency was threatened as some junior officers pressed for military rule and continued to plan military coups.

Expectations, Bilateral Relations, and Military Intervention

American military aid was uninterrupted by the May, 1960, coup and the subsequent 17-month rule of the military junta. Vice President Johnson personally assured Turkey’s leaders of American support in modernizing their armed forces, but emphasized the importance of self-reliance, as foreign aid allocations were increasingly difficult to pass through Congress. While Turkey’s relations with the Soviet Union gradually improved, leftist political groups increasingly clashed with the extreme right, leading to escalating political violence from the late 1960s through the 1970s, and spurring agitation at the presence of American military personnel in Turkey. Turks were also deeply disturbed by the vulnerability of Turkish Cypriots, the restraints imposed by Washington, including the “Johnson letter,” and the arms embargo imposed in 1975. Thus throughout this twenty-year period, Turkish confidence in the American commitment to Turkey’s external defense was shaken, undermining the ability of the United States to discourage military intervention in Turkey’s civil politics.

In August, 1962, Vice President Johnson travelled to Turkey, met with Turkish President Cemal Gursel and Premier Ismet Inonu, and committed to supplying the Turkish armed forces with F-104 jet fighters and other modern equipment.\textsuperscript{35} Amicable U.S.-Turkish relations survived the coup d’etat, and Turkish leaders were impressed by President Kennedy’s handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis.\textsuperscript{36} They were disturbed, however, by the appearance of a bilateral Soviet - American arrangement at Turkey’s expense; the U.S. had discreetly agreed to withdraw Jupiter missiles from Turkey without consulting Ankara, where leaders insisted the missiles were defensive in nature and thus should not be the object of bargaining.\textsuperscript{37} Recognizing the deterrent and psychological impact of the missiles to the government of Turkey, U.S. officials agreed to provide submarine-based Polaris missiles to compensate, offering to visit Turkish ports to reassure the Turkish public “they are constantly guarded by this undersea force.”\textsuperscript{38} Secretary of State Dean Rusk also authorized the U.S. embassy in Ankara to promise advanced fighter aircraft if the Turks agreed to the Jupiter proposal.

The most contentious issue during this period, however, would involve Cyprus. Fighting had broken out on the island in response to Cyprus President Archbishop Makarios’ proposals to amend the Constitution, overturning the Turkish Cypriots’ right to veto legislation. The Greek and Turkish troops stationed on the island were drawn into the fighting on behalf of their respective Cypriot communities, and jets from Turkey’s southern bases flew low over Cyprus as a warning while Turkish naval vessels steamed toward the island.\textsuperscript{39} While President Gursel urged Turkey’s allies to use their influence to stop the fighting, the Turkish military demonstrated its willingness to augment the 600-man contingent permanently stationed on Cyprus to protect the Turkish minority. On June 5, 1964, President Johnson sought to deter Ankara from further military intervention by sending a letter to Prime Minister Inonu. Johnson warned, “NATO allies have not had a chance to consider whether they have an obligation to protect Turkey against the Soviet

\textsuperscript{36} “Turkey Relieved at U.S. Firmness,” ibid., October 29, 1962.
\textsuperscript{37} Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State, November 13, 1962, \textit{FRUS.} ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey, January 8, 1963, \textit{FRUS} 16, no. 387.,ibid.
Union” if Turkey were to intervene in Cyprus.\textsuperscript{40} In other words, a Turkish invasion that led to conflict with Greece might provoke Soviet involvement, in which case NATO may not act on Turkey’s behalf, despite the North Atlantic Treaty’s Article V guarantee.

The letter, which became public two years later, exposed the limitations of the American commitment to Turkey’s external defense, which from the Turkish perspective was astounding given Turkey provided the greatest number of troops to NATO after the United States. Even though the U.S. provided over one billion dollars in military assistance in 1967\textsuperscript{41}, the American ambassador to Turkey, Robert Komer, whose car was later burned by Turkish students at Ankara’s Middle East Technical University,\textsuperscript{42} warned President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State William Rogers that U.S. policy was not only weakening Turkey’s military posture, but signaling a “loss of U.S. interest in Turkey.”\textsuperscript{43} He worried more Turks were questioning the value of Turkey’s alignment with the West, and creating an opportunity for militant left-wing entities to attack not only the American presence, but also Turkey’s democratic institutions. For example, in June 1970, militant left-wing workers staged riots in opposition to proposed labor reforms, and revolutionary student groups joined the Confederation of Workers’ Syndicate in attacking security forces, factories, and government buildings.\textsuperscript{44} This kind of violence pulled the military into politics, as martial law was imposed to protect property and restore order.

The general staff grew concerned the ruling party, led by Prime Minister and Justice Party leader Suleyman Demirel, was incapable of dealing with increasing violence between radical-left and radical-right elements. The chief of the air force, General Mushin Batur, proposed a program of socioeconomic reforms to Gursel’s successor, former chief of staff Cevdet Sunay, in a November 1970 memo, in which he called for an expansion of the NSC’s powers to restore public order.\textsuperscript{45} Between 1968 and 1971, civil

\textsuperscript{40} Quoted in "Johnson, in Stern '64 Letter, Warned Turkey on Cyprus," ibid., January 16, 1966.
\textsuperscript{41} In constant 2012 SUS. "U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations, 1 July 1945 - 30 September 2012." ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State: For President and Secretary from Komer May 7, 1969, \textit{FRUS} 29, no. 422.
\textsuperscript{45} Political Situation in Turkey, December 23, 1971, \textit{FRUS} 29, no. 439.
demonstrations had become more disorderly, with extremist violence from both sides of
the political spectrum paralyzing Turkish politics. Violence escalated through 1970, and
early in 1971 there were murders and bombings of government buildings. On March 4th,
four U.S. servicemen were kidnapped. The inability of the National Assembly to
effectively deal with the disorder prompted chief of staff Memduh Tagmac to send a
memorandum to Prime Minister Demirel on March 12, 1971, threatening to intervene
directly if Demirel’s government did not resign. The TGS called for a strong and credible
government consistent with Ataturk’s principles; Demirel conceded, and the TGS asked
Nihat Erim, a member of the Republican People’s Party, to form a caretaker government.

The new Prime Minister, Erim, met with President Nixon on March 21, 1972, and
implored Nixon not to let the military assistance program lag; he insisted the best way to
guarantee Turkey’s security was to strengthen the military. Erim insisted extremists were
being “fed from abroad,” and that modernizing Turkey’s military forces was the best way
to boost the morale of the TAF and prevent extremists from infiltrating the military.
While sympathetic, President Nixon explained that the U.S. Congress was in an
isolationist mood, and suggested economic assistance, technical advice, and support from
international lending parties could play a greater role in helping Turkey than military
assistance.

U.S. lawmakers were incensed in the summer of 1974 when Turkish Premier
Bulent Ecevit deployed the Turkish military, equipped with American-made weapons, to
invade and occupy two-fifths of the island of Cyprus in response to a coup that brought
a hard-line Greek-Cypriot faction to power, threatening the rights of the Turkish-Cypriot
minority. The invasion, which was highly popular with the Turkish public, displaced
nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes. Congress threatened to cut off all
military aid to Turkey unless “substantial progress” toward relieving the humanitarian
crisis and reaching an agreement on the Cyprus issue was made by February 5, 1975.
While sympathetic, President Nixon explained that the U.S. Congress was in an
isolationist mood, and suggested economic assistance, technical advice, and support from
international lending parties could play a greater role in helping Turkey than military
assistance.

U.S. lawmakers were incensed in the summer of 1974 when Turkish Premier
Bulent Ecevit deployed the Turkish military, equipped with American-made weapons, to
invade and occupy two-fifths of the island of Cyprus in response to a coup that brought
a hard-line Greek-Cypriot faction to power, threatening the rights of the Turkish-Cypriot
minority. The invasion, which was highly popular with the Turkish public, displaced
nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes. Congress threatened to cut off all
military aid to Turkey unless “substantial progress” toward relieving the humanitarian
crisis and reaching an agreement on the Cyprus issue was made by February 5, 1975.

President Ford reminded members of Congress of the strategic importance of the
U.S. – Turkey relationship: “Our longstanding relationship with Turkey is not simply a

46 Lombardi, "Turkey - the Return of the Reluctant Generals?,” 205-06.
47 Meeting between President Nixon and Prime Minister Nihat Erim of Turkey, March 21, 1972, FRUS 29,
no. 454.,ibid.
48 Bernard Gwertzman, "Kissinger Fails to Achieve Delay in Turkey Aid Cutoff," The New York Times,
February 2, 1975.
favor to Turkey; it is a clear and essential mutual interest. Turkey lies on the rim of the Soviet Union and at the gates of the Middle East. It is vital to the security of the eastern Mediterranean, the southern flank of Western Europe, and the collective security of the Western alliance. Our U.S. military bases in Turkey are as critical to our own security as they are to the defense of NATO.49 The cessation of military equipment and spare parts deliveries dealt a substantial blow to the Turkish military’s operational readiness.

The Turkish government was unprepared for the embargo because policymakers believed it clearly ran against U.S. interests as well as Turkey’s: a decline in Turkey’s military readiness would undermine NATO’s second largest army’s ability to secure NATO’s southern flank and capacity to control Soviet access to the Mediterranean. When a resumption of aid was not forthcoming, the Turkish government responded by closing U.S. defense and intelligence installations on Turkish territory. Yet Turkey had limited options for maintaining its capabilities. Economic problems (inflation, a trade deficit, and a drop in foreign exchange reserves) would impede Turkey’s ability to increase domestic arms production or purchase weapons from alternative sources such as West Germany, France and Italy, or wealthy Middle Eastern states such as Iran and Libya.

By July 1975, nearly 25 American installations were closed. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger worked with Turkish Foreign Minister Ihsan S. Caglayangil to reach an agreement in March of 1976, which would allow American installations to reopen in exchange for nearly $1 billion in U.S. grants and loans. The U.S. pledged $250 million annually for four years, with most of the funds directed toward force modernization.50 Kissinger hoped that the agreement would motivate the government of Turkey to persuade the Turkish Cypriots to make some concessions to the Greek Cypriots.

Congressional support for Kissinger’s initiative was lukewarm, however, as legislators demanded greater progress in handling the refugee crisis on Cyprus. The Ford administration was at least able to secure Congressional approval for $125 million in military credits for Turkey in 1976, and Carter was able to get $175 million in military credits in May. Nevertheless, by November of 1977, the Turkish Government was growing impatient with the lack of progress in obtaining Congressional approval for the

49 Address by President Gerald R. Ford Before a Joint Session of the Congress Reporting on United States Foreign Policy, April 10, 1975.
four-year agreement, and warned they might begin expelling the approximately 7,000 American military personnel still stationed in Turkey.\footnote{Richard Burt, "Turkey Threatens to Expel U.S. Troops: Ankara Aides, in Private Warnings to State Department, Call for Progress on Arms Accord," ibid., November 30, 1977.} Ankara’s frustration was to a point where U.S. officials worried Turkey might withdraw from NATO and opt for neutrality, particularly in light of recent improvements in relations with its Arab neighbors and the Soviet Union.

While delays in restoring U.S. military aid aggravated Turkey’s ability to provide for its external defense, Turkey’s internal security was deteriorating. In December of 1978, Premier Ecevit was forced to impose martial law in 13 provinces in response to sectarian violence and riots that had left 93 people dead in the city of Kahramanmaras.\footnote{"Martial Law is Set in 13 Turkish Cities: Cabinet Acts after 93 are Killed in Political-Religious Clashes," ibid., December 26, 1978.} Over a thousand residents had been hurt as political extremists exploited rivalries between the majority Sunnis and the Kurdish-speaking Shiite minority. On January 3, 1979, the Interior Minister, Irfan Ozaydinli, resigned amidst criticism that the government was unable to stop the wave of violence, which took 700 – 1000 lives in 1978.\footnote{"Turkey’s Interior Minister Quits Following Riots and Martial Law," \textit{The New York Times}, January 3, 1979.} By the end of 1979, the political violence had spread throughout Turkey, with 2300 people killed during the 22 months of Mr. Ecevit’s rule.\footnote{Marvine Howe, "A Day in the Political Life of Turkey: Shootings and Reprisals by Left and Right," ibid., October 30, 1979.} The military finally intervened in 1980, not only to restore order, but also to purge Islamic extremists who challenged the secular nature of the state and sought to reorient Turkey’s alliances away from the West and Israel, and toward other Muslim states.\footnote{"Stem Army Rule in Turkey Stillis the Voices of Islam," ibid., November 14, 1980.}

**Discontinuities and Political Instability**

American political support for Turkey from 1960 until 1980 was characterized by discontinuity. While Washington was largely supportive of the military junta that intervened to remove the increasingly authoritarian Menderes government, the position taken by the Johnson administration with respect to Cyprus, as well as lawmakers’
imposition of an arms embargo over White House objections in 1975, deeply offended Turks, who determined the United States was a capricious ally. Extremists exploited frustration with American policy to mobilize members of Turkish society against the country’s major political parties, the center-left Republican People’s Party and the conservative Justice Party, the successor to Adnan Menderes’ prohibited Democrat Party. By the late 1960s, anti-Americanism had become more prevalent, forcing a decrease in the number of American military personnel stationed in Turkey. Meanwhile the military assumed a more active guardianship role, promulgating a new constitution in 1961, establishing a National Security Council, and through the presidency, which retired senior military officers held throughout this period. In response to increasing political violence, economic instability, and the rise of political Islam, the military intervened twice, once by memorandum to dissolve the government of Justice Party leader Suleyman Demirel in 1971, and again in 1980.

American policymakers’ reactions to the coup in May 1960 were restrained. In a statement, U.S. State Department officials declared, “We believe merely carrying on our usual relations with Turkish Government officials constitutes recognition. No other formal act of recognition is considered necessary. We expect that our close and friendly relations will Turkey will continue as in the past.” The junta had reaffirmed Turkey’s commitments to NATO and bilateral relations with the U.S., avowed it was anti-Communist, and announced the Turkish Constitution would be amended to provide for two legislative chambers instead of one. U.S. officials also seemed satisfied by Gursel’s insistence that the leader of the RPP, Inonu, had nothing to do with the coup; in other words, the coup did not appear to be the result of one political party using the army to gain an advantage over another. The U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, Raymond Hare, described the military intervention “rational and bloodless,” although U.S. officials were unsuccessful in discouraging the new regime from imposing death sentences on the deposed leaders, including former Prime Minister Menderes and former Foreign Minister Fatin Zorlu. Despite President Kennedy’s objections, on September 16, 1961, former

---

57 Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State, August 7, 1961, FRUS 16, no. 368.
Foreign Minister Zorlu and former Finance Minister Hasan Polatkan were executed; the following day former Prime Minister Menderes was executed.

The constitution of 1961, which was passed by a referendum on July 9, 1961, both expanded the reserved domains of the military and granted Turkish citizens greater individual freedoms. The constitution was also inclusive, allowing for broader political representation in the Turkish government, inviting greater participation from Islamist, nationalist, and socialist parties. A Constitutional Court was established to provide a check on parliamentary power, and a Senate was added to the National Assembly to form the Grand National Assembly. While most members of the Grand National Assembly would be elected, fifteen of the Senate seats would be permanent, and reserved for former Turkish presidents and members of the military junta, the Committee of National Union. The military would have a greater role in national security policymaking through the newly established National Security Council (1955), which would consist of leading members of the civilian government and the high command of the TGS, and serve as an advisory body to the Council of Ministers. The chief of the TGS would now be accountable directly to the prime minister rather than the defense minister, reversing the change Inonu had insisted upon a decade earlier to harmonize Turkey’s civil-military relations with its Western allies. The Grand National Assembly chose Gursel as president on October 26, 1961.

The strategy of the civilian political leaders during this period was that of acquiescence. No prime minister attempted to implement civil-military reforms; rather, each made an effort to consider and respect the role the military played in monitoring Turkey’s domestic politics. This is in part due to the weakness of the civilian political leadership through the 1960s and 1970s. The broadening of political participation (eleven political parties registered to compete in the country’s first post-coup elections) rendered it more difficult to form durable coalition governments. The premiership changed hands multiple times, leaving little time for a civilian leader to accumulate personal political power. In addition, international political support was inconsistent; while relations with

the Soviet Union and Arab neighbors gradually improved, NATO allies were critical of Turkey’s military interventions on behalf of the minority Turkish Cypriot community.

For their part, senior military personnel were tolerant of the Justice Party’s electoral successes despite its being inhabited by many of the same personnel as the banned Democrat Party. This tolerance has been attributed to the success Justice Party leader Demirel had in cultivating a working relationship with the military. In addition, while the Justice Party did not subscribe to the same strictly secular vision of Turkish politics, and its base was in Turkey’s rural population rather than the established urban elite, the moderate party was firmly pro-Western and pro-business, with interests largely compatible with those of the military establishment.

The Cyprus issue complicated Turkey’s domestic politics along with its external relations. The Justice Party criticized the government of then – Prime Minister Inonu for failing to invade Cyprus on behalf of the Turkish Cypriots in 1964. In response to these challenges, Inonu’s Republican’s People’s Party requested the White House release the Johnson Letter, so Turks would understand that Inonu was pressured by Washington to refrain from sending troops to Cyprus. The White House agreed, making public Johnson’s letter, as well as Inonu’s reply, on January 15, 1966. The Turkish newspaper Hurriyet subsequently printed Johnson’s letter for mass distribution, revealing Inonu had responded on June 13th that Turkey would honor the U.S. request and delay sending troops, even though his government feared the Turkish Cypriot minority was in danger of armed attack from the ethnic Greek majority.

While the “Johnson Letter” may have discouraged Turkey from military action in 1964, the implication that the U.S. was trying to coerce Turkey by placing conditions on the NATO security guarantee infuriated Turkish officials, and inflamed anti-American sentiment within Turkish society. Public antipathy toward Johnson’s administration was evident when special envoy Cyrus Vance, sent to Turkey to help reach a Turkish-Greek accord over Cyprus, was greeted by protests and criticized in the Turkish media, although his efforts to reach a settlement between Athens and Ankara did ease some of the

60 “Johnson, in Stern ‘64 Letter, Warned Turkey on Cyprus.”
tension. The anti-American current running through Turkish society was exacerbated by the presence of approximately 20,000 Americans, including troops and their families, who seemed to enjoy a better standard of living than most Turks. Nixon’s effort to restore Turkey’s confidence in its bilateral relationship with the U.S. was constrained by Congress’s increasing antipathy for foreign aid. The perceived lack of U.S. political support for the Turkish position on Cyprus motivated the Turkish government to overtly demonstrate improved relations with the Soviet Union. For example, Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin and Premier Suleyman Demirel exchanged visits, and the Soviets began arranging cultural exchanges and sending economic aid, including $200 million in credits for purchases of Soviet textile and machinery.

The military’s call for the resignation of Prime Minister Demirel’s government on March 12, 1971, was a reaction to frustration with the civilian politicians in the National Assembly, who were unable to overcome their differences to pass much-needed reform legislation. The military once again insisted it did not wish to rule directly, but rather guide the democratic process by establishing a new coalition cabinet, which could implement a sweeping set of socioeconomic reforms like those urged by General Batur in his November 1970 memo. Legislation was introduced to restrict forces on the left and right wings of the political spectrum, particularly those that violated the spirit of Kemalism. After the intervention, the military was able to expand its reserved domains again through constitutional amendments in 1973, which gave greater weight to the military judiciary relative to the civilian judiciary. In addition, military spending became less transparent, and the primary function of the NSC was expanded to include making recommendations to the government. Fahri Koruturk, a retired naval officer, was selected by parliament to serve as president.

Despite the military’s efforts to restore political order, Turkish politics continued to be characterized by fragmentation and a lack of decisive authority throughout the 1970s. When the military allowed parliamentary elections in 1973, the two major center

---

parties, rather than joining together to form a coalition, looked to the smaller fringe parties to form unstable coalitions that polarized Turkish politics. The Premiership would change hands eleven times in the decade after the 1971 intervention, with Suleyman Demirel serving from March 1975 – June 1977, July 1977 – January 1978, and November 1979 until September 1980. When the U.S. Congress set a deadline of February 5, 1975, to reach an agreement on the Cyprus issue, Turkey’s political disorder impeded the government’s ability to work toward any type of settlement. On September 18, 1974, Prime Minister Ecevit resigned, and a caretaker administration led by Sadi Irmak was tasked with running the country until a coalition government could be formed. While the military pressed for early elections in order to restore stability within parliament, the Ford Administration worried the caretaker government was “drifting aimlessly toward the February 5 Congressional deadline on military assistance.”

Despite objections by the executive branch, Congress imposed an embargo on all military supplies to Turkey on February 5, 1975. While deeply shocked and offended, Turkish officials initially took a measured response in the hopes that military aid would be restored in short order. In April, President Ford addressed a joint session of Congress, where he implored Congress to lift the arms embargo against Turkey. “United States military assistance to an old and faithful ally, Turkey, has been cut off by action of the Congress. This has imposed an embargo on military purchases by Turkey, extending even to items already paid for--an unprecedented act against a friend.”

The discontinuity in American political support for Turkey heightened popular demand for greater Turkish control over bases and for the renegotiation of Turkish-American agreements, particularly as political parties exploited public sensitivities to the American military presence for short-term political gain. When Congress rejected a partial lifting of the embargo, the Turkish Government placed U.S. facilities under

66 Intelligence Note Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research: The Turkish Political Situation, January 16, 1975, FRUS 30, no. 215.
68 “Address by President Gerald R. Ford Before a Joint Session of the Congress Reporting on United States Foreign Policy.”
Turkish control, restricted some privileges of U.S. military personnel, and suspended non-NATO related operations.

The Turkish government hoped to pressure U.S. policymakers into reinstating the military aid program by meeting with Soviet Premier Kosygin in December, 1975, and announcing that Turkey and the Soviet Union had “agreed on the preparation of a political document on the subject of friendly relations and cooperation.” Prime Minister Demirel suggested that future American attentiveness to Turkey’s national interests would determine the nature of Turkey’s relations with the USSR. While U.S. analysts believed Turkey preferred ties to the West, they could not rule out the possibility that Turkey would reconsider its NATO alignment and adopt a policy of neutrality in the event the U.S. continued to withhold military aid.

In an effort to mitigate the fallout from the embargo and the risk of Turkey’s pulling its 500,000 troops out of NATO, Carter sent Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher to Turkey. Yet Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, like many Turks, resented linking U.S. military aid to the resolution of the Cyprus issue. Ecevit refused to attend a summit meeting of alliance leaders planned for later in May in Washington, and announced his intention to visit Moscow in June. President Carter was finally able to convince Congress to lift the arms embargo in August 1978; in response Turkey allowed U.S. installations to reopen, and negotiations for a new DECA began in the winter of 1979.

Throughout the arms embargo, Turkey was plagued by economic crises and political instability. The sharp increase in oil prices after 1973, high inflation and high unemployment, and a trade deficit that ballooned between 1974 and 1977, had motivated many foreign creditors to slow lending, and Turkey was nearly out of foreign exchange. By the end of 1977, the Demirel government was defeated on a vote of no confidence, and President Koruturk turned to Ecevit, the leader of the Republican People’s Party, to lead a new government in January of 1978. Yet Ecevit proved unable to reign in political violence, which claimed 1400 lives in 1978, and unwilling to implement economic

---

70 Report Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research: Kosygin’s Visit to Turkey and Future Ankara-Moscow Relations, January 14, 1976, FRUS 30, no. 239.
reforms to deal with soaring inflation and unemployment.\textsuperscript{72} By May of 1979, martial law was in effect in 19 of Turkey's 67 provinces.

Ecevit resigned again in November 1979, and his successor, Demirel, installed a technocratic government and proposed a stabilization program that included economic reforms intended to transform the state-controlled economy to a liberal free market system. The set of reforms were approved by parliament and implemented by the Under Secretary of Planning, economist Turgut Ozal. Ozal travelled through the U.S. and Europe, meeting with officials from the IMF, World Bank, and U.S. government to win support for his plans and secure at least $380 million in credit to execute his economic program.

Despite efforts to resolve the country’s economic crisis, unrest continued, including violence in Ankara and Istanbul resulting from clashes between students and riot police. In an effort to restore law and order, teachers were arrested for organizing leftist activities, schools were closed, and nearly 4,000 were arrested in late 1979.\textsuperscript{73} Between January and August of 1980, measures crucial to addressing the wave of political violence were delayed by disputes between the Justice Party and the Republican People’s Party. The two parties continued to avoid forming a coalition with each other, preferring instead to form alliances with splinter parties like Necmettin Erbakan’s Islamic fundamentalist National Salvation Party, or the neofascist National Action Party led by former Colonel Alparslan Turkes.\textsuperscript{74}

The outspoken, charismatic Erbakan withdrew his support for Demirel amidst public backlash against the prime minister’s economic reforms, which in the short term increased unemployment, raised food prices, and sparked shortages and inflation as government subsidies and price controls ended. The reforms, which also sought to rationalize the work force to control labor costs, ran afoul of the confederation of Turkish Trade Unions. When the government tried to mitigate these disruptions by restricting union activity and public assembly, the social and political unrest intensified. For example, leftist militants broke into grocery stores and seized food trucks, redistributing

\textsuperscript{72} Nicholas Gage, "Turkey's Hopes for Ecevit Yield to Disappointment," ibid., May 25, 1979.
\textsuperscript{73} Marvine Howe, "6 Die, 4,000 Seized, in Turkish Rioting," ibid., December 25, 1979.
\textsuperscript{74} Lombardi, "Turkey - the Return of the Reluctant Generals?," 207.
food to the poor. Erbakan became an outspoken critic of Demirel’s austerity measures, and demanded Turkey withdraw from the OECD and the IMF, cut ties with the European Economic Community, and create a common market of Muslim countries.

Erbakan’s party then presented a bill that would call for a break in diplomatic relations with Israel. Turkey’s relations with Israel cooled in 1964, when Turkey sought support from other Muslim nations for its position in the dispute over Cyprus. After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Turkey loosened ties further, sending only a chargé d'affaires to Israel, although military-to-military cooperation continued. As U.S. aid became less reliable, Turkey improved ties with Arab countries upon which Turkey was heavily dependent for oil, hoping to secure more financial aid while implementing economic reforms. However, an assertive pro-Islamist government completely opposed to ties with Israel, Europe, and the U.S. would endanger the political alignment that underpinned the article V guarantee of the North Atlantic Alliance as well as U.S. military aid. While Turkey looked to Arab neighbors for investment, aid, and political support on the Cyprus issue, Turkey still relied heavily on the West for its security.

As the attacks against Demirel’s government increased, collaboration between RPP leader Ecevit and Erbakan heightened the Turkish General Staff’s fear of an anti-Western, Islamic fundamentalist government forming. Ecevit and Erbakan revealed their determination to get rid of Demirel’s government on September 5th, when they forced the resignation of the foreign minister, Hayrettin Erkmen, who was accused of being too pro-Western. The National Salvation Party criticized Erkmen for not ending diplomatic ties with Israel, and accused him of undermining relations with Turkey’s regional neighbors in favor of a policy that tried to turn Turkey into “another province of the European Economic Community.” The military high command repeatedly warned party leaders they should put aside their differences to address the country’s political and economic problems. The chief of the TGS, General Kenan Evren, warned that the “weakening authority of the state was helping the spread of terrorism.”

---

76 "Turkish Parties Force Foreign Minister to Resign," ibid., September 6, 1980.
78 "Turkish Parties Force Foreign Minister to Resign."
79 Lombardi, "Turkey - the Return of the Reluctant Generals?,” 208-09.
By September 1980, martial law was in effect in 20 provinces, and nearly 25% of the 500,000-man Turkish military was involved in maintaining civil order. More than 2,000 people had been killed by extremists in the last year. Police officials, judges, politicians, and members of the armed forces were increasingly targets for extremist violence. On September 7, General Evren and the four service commanders agreed they would overthrow the civilian government on September 11.\textsuperscript{80} Evren appeared on state television on September 12, 1980, to extend martial law to all 67 provinces and announce the military leaders were dissolving the government. Evren explained the intervention was necessary to deal with domestic political anarchy, and that a new program would be based on civil order, national unity, and a secular state based on social justice and human rights. Evren declared the coup was in accordance with article 34, and the military appointed a civilian cabinet while taking administrative control of the state through a five-member NSC. The public, exhausted by years of violence and disorder, by and large welcomed the military's intervention.\textsuperscript{81}

Professionalism of the Turkish Armed Forces

Some observers of the Turkish armed forces have suggested that the exposure to Western military education and training, while attending schools in the U.S. and other allied countries, as well as the Turkish military rotations in South Korea, imbued younger officers with ideas about the modernization and organization of the services as well as Turkish society in general.\textsuperscript{82} While the education and experience improved the professional competence of the Turkish Armed Forces, ideological differences began to undermine its coherency, leading to several unsuccessful coup attempts throughout this period. Some of these officers held a deep disdain for Turkey's civilian leaders; others, including General Cemal Gursel, sought to preserve Turkey's democracy while assuming a more active guardianship role through the National Security Council, the upper house of the Grand National Assembly, and the presidency. While the military junta expanded

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{81} "Stern Army Rule in Turkey Still the Voices of Islam."; Marvine Howe, "Quiet Euphoria in Turkey as Military Restores Peace," ibid., October 7, 1980.
\textsuperscript{82} Hanson W. Baldwin, "Role of Junior Officers in Coup is Held a Result of Education and Environment," ibid., June 5, 1960.
its institutional prerogatives during its 17\textsuperscript{th} month rule, and forced Justice Party leader Suleyman Demirel to resign in 1971 and 1980, its tolerance of the Justice Party throughout this period reveals that while Turkey’s senior officers felt entitled to a privileged role in Turkish politics, it retained a deep respect for the electoral processes that brought the Justice party to power. Only when an extremist party began to seriously challenge the secular nature of the state and Turkey’s fundamental foreign policy orientation did the military completely assume responsibility for Turkey’s governance in September, 1980.

President Gursel’s commitment to transitioning to civilian government reflects a respect for civilian political authority. However, different visions of the extent to which the military should play a role in Turkey’s politics undermined the coherency of the TAF, threatening to also disrupt its competence, or military readiness. For example, in August, 1960, the Committee of National Unity purged more than 7,000 field officers, and 235 generals.\textsuperscript{83} While the official explanation for the forced retirements was that the armed forces were unnecessarily top-heavy, the expulsion of nearly half of the officer corps was unprecedented, as many of these officers had valuable experience working with NATO and within other international institutions. In October, 14 members of the CNU were dismissed and offered civilian posts abroad. While the CNU later admitted the massive August purge was a mistake that nearly destroyed the Turkish military,\textsuperscript{84} few questioned Gursel’s assertion that the 14 officers who advocated for extended military rule were conspiring to remove him as head of state.\textsuperscript{85}

The August purge seriously undermined the cohesiveness of the military, particularly as even those who remained on active duty felt their peers had been treaty unfairly. In 1962 and 1963, nearly 100 retired officers organized around the Land Forces War Academy commander to mobilize academy cadets to attempt a coup in 1962 and 1963. On February 23, 1962, a group of young army officers, frustrated by the slow pace of reform, seized buildings in Ankara. The coup-plotters included commanders of the War Academy, the Gendarmerie Officers’ school, a tank battalion school and some signal

\textsuperscript{83} "30 Turkish Officers Reported Retired," ibid., June 28, 1965.
units, and were motivated by the belief that the government would not be able to pass necessary reform legislation in a fragmented Parliament, since no single party had a clear majority. While the military was frustrated by Parliament’s inability to pass necessary tax, education, land and agricultural measures, the military as an institution, commanded by the chief of the TGS, General Cevdet Sunay, as well as the air force, navy and most of the army, stood behind the civilian government of Ismet Inonu, and crushed the rebellion. Subsequently, Inonu addressed the nation and declared the military’s “prime duty is to protect and defend the Constitution and the entity of the motherland, and they will fulfill their duty.”

Even those who favored a return to civilian government condoned the exercise of military influence over Turkish politics. In the immediate post-coup period, officers from the CNU circumvented civilian cabinet members when presenting requests for military budget support. In addition, the CNU ignored the advice of the Turkish Finance Minister and executed a pay raise and other military benefits, even though the measures could potentially undermine the government’s financial stability. The military’s guardianship role would be enhanced through the presidency, as the president’s seven year terms provided continuity compared to the relatively short tenures of the prime ministers during this period, and allowed for them to serve as a restraining influence on party leaders. When Gursel fell ill in 1966, he was replaced by TGS chief Sunay, who served until 1973. While it appeared the military hoped to reserve the presidency for the armed forces’ chief of staff, the military did respect the role of the parliament in electing the president in 1973. When JP leader Demirel disapproved of the military’s favored candidate, Chief of the General Staff General Faruk Gurler, a compromise candidate was found in independent former navy admiral, Fahri Koruturk. The military also acquiesced when Demirel, the Prime Minister they dismissed in 1971 via the “coup by memorandum,” was reelected in October, 1973.

87 Letter from the Charge in Turkey (Cowles) to the Deputy Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council (Thurston), January 10, 1961, FRUS 16, no. 358.
88 Bureau of Intelligence and Research: Turkey’s Presidential Election, July 19, 1973, FRUS 30, no. 196, ibid.
Yet the military did not hesitate to demonstrate its power to take over the government to protect a core interest, which included the constitution passed in 1961. For example, army, corps and division commanders were put on alert to indicate the military’s willingness to intervene if parliament amended the constitution to restore the political rights of former president Celal Bayar.\(^8\)\(^9\) The bill, which had broad political support within the National Assembly, was subsequently dropped.

The American embargo on arms shipments to Turkey had a negative impact on military readiness. Over 90% of Turkey’s military equipment, valued at over $3 billion, had been supplied by the United States since 1950, and at the time of the embargo, an additional $1 billion in military aid had been approved. Nearly a third of the undelivered aid was designated for spare parts and maintenance of existing equipment, which included American-made tanks, aircraft, artillery, personnel carriers, and naval vessels.\(^9\)\(^0\)

The military’s mission exclusivity was also seriously undermined as Turkey’s internal security deteriorated. For example, military units stationed at Turkey’s borders with Bulgaria and Greece were ordered to Istanbul as police forces were overwhelmed by rioting militant left-wing workers from the Confederation of Workers’ Syndicates, who rejected proposed changes to labor legislation. Tanks were moved into the city to protect infrastructure, including important factories and government buildings, as thousands of protestors marched through the city.\(^9\)\(^1\) Political violence from both extremes of the political spectrum reached a fever pitch in 1979 – 1980, pulling the military deeper into the civil sphere.\(^9\)\(^2\) Yet while junior officers may have pressed for intervention to address political dysfunction and violence during the 1970s, the military’s leadership refrained until it appeared that the Republican People’s Party might enter a coalition with Necmettin Erbakan’s far right party, imperiling Turkey’s fundamental foreign policy orientation as well as granting expanded power to a group motivated by religious fundamentalism. The intervention carried out by the military institution in 1980 was thus

\(^8\)\(^9\) Intelligence Information Cable: Turkish Military Plans to Assume Control of Government, May 19, 1969, \textit{FRUS} 29, no. 423.
\(^9\)\(^0\) \textit{F.R.U.S.}, Interagency Intelligence Memorandum: Turkey After the Arms Cutoff, February 21, 1975, \textit{FRUS} 30, no. 217.
\(^9\)\(^1\) "Istanbul Has Martial Law After Leftist Labor Riot."
not merely motivated solely by security concerns, but also by a threat to the secular nature of the state.

Order, Economic Growth, and an Alliance in Transition, 1980 – 2000

The presence of a military junta mitigated the risk that an anti-Western government, hostile to U.S. interests, European Community integration, and cooperation with Israel, would come to power just as political alignment with Turkey in the context of the Cold War was arguably most critical. The military's intervention to topple the Turkish government came just as Turkey's geostrategic significance was starkly revealed by the events of 1979. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan raised the spectre of a Soviet advance toward the Middle East, and the fall of the U.S. - friendly regime in Iran was the death knell for CENTO. In response, U.S. policymakers, rather than admonishing the generals, increased Turkey's military assistance to historically high levels, making Turkey the third largest recipient of U.S. military aid after Israel and Egypt.

This section is divided into three parts. The first will discuss the relationship between U.S. military aid and the threats to Turkey's external security through the 1980s and 1990s, which included the emergence of Kurdish separatism and the return of religious extremism, which was largely suppressed throughout the 1980s. While the damage done to U.S. - Turkish relations was largely repaired under the Reagan Administration, the George H.W. Bush administration's decision to establish a safe zone for Iraqi Kurds following the Persian Gulf War had implications for Turkey's security, as Kurdish rebels staged attacks on Turkish soil from safe havens in Iraq. The second part will examine the international and domestic political dynamics that facilitated the liberalization of the Turkish economy under Premier Turgut Ozal. Ozal's economic reforms, which drew a broader swathe of society into Turkish politics, impacted the balance of power between the secular political elite and Islamist parties, eventually prompting a military intervention in 1997 after what had seemed like progress toward achieving objective civilian control over the military under Ozal. The final part will review the professionalization of the armed forces, including its adherence to Kemalist ideals, which provided strong motivation to remove the Islamist government of Premier
Necmettin Erbakan. While the military’s competency remained a crucial resource for NATO, the military’s focus on internal security in response to threats by Kurdish separatists and Islamist militants undermined its mission exclusivity and respect for civilian political authority.

U.S. Military Aid and Turkey’s Security Challenges

The election of President Ronald Reagan promptly changed the tone of Turkish-American relations despite the military intervention in September, 1980, and the nearly three years of military rule that followed. On November 18, 1980, the U.S. and Turkey signed a new Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement, and U.S. military aid continued to enhance the capabilities of the Turkish armed forces. Unfortunately, the Persian Gulf War exacerbated Turkey’s problems with terrorism from Kurdish separatist groups, who staged attacks from U.S.-guaranteed safe zones in Northern Iraq. This struggle pulled the military deeper into politics despite Premier Turgut Ozal’s progress in achieving objective civilian control over the military.

While serving as prime minister, Turgut Ozal sought to strengthen security ties with the West while also increasing self-reliance through economic reforms and deepening ties with Turkey’s regional neighbors. Even though the U.S. increased its military assistance to Turkey during the Reagan Administration, Ozal had good reason to expect that in the future U.S. military aid to Turkey would decline. For example, Congress had again threatened to cut aid when the Turkish Cypriots decided to set up their third of Cyprus as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983.93

Ozal was thus motivated to mitigate Turkey’s dependence on the U.S. by establishing an indigenous national defense industry, dedicating a high percentage of his budget to defense development, and encouraging Turkish businessmen to invest in the security industry. The U.S. welcomed Turkey’s moves toward self-reliance and supported Ozal’s efforts; in June of 1987, Turkey, along with an American consortium, entered the aircraft industry as a producer by launching an F-16 project. By the late 1980s, Turkey had a sophisticated national defense industry, and was actually a supplier of anti-aircraft

125

weapons, small arms, communication equipment, military vehicles and other equipment to NATO members as well as Egypt and Pakistan.

Recognizing the importance of the strategic relationship with Turkey, President Reagan continued to press Congress to approve more military aid to modernize Turkey's armed forces, and in 1986 the U.S. reached an agreement on extending its rights to use Turkish military bases. The bases provided intelligence gathering sites, airfields, and coverage of the straights between the Mediterranean Sea and Soviet ports on the Black Sea. While Turkey, Israel, Egypt, Greece, and Pakistan enjoyed greater protection from U.S. foreign aid cuts, by the late 1980s, Congress was cutting overall military aid by $1.6 billion to about $5 billion overall.94 Between 1987 and 1992, U.S. military assistance averaged approximately $425 million in grants and $110 million in loans annually. Military aid facilitated the armed forces' modernization, including a general upgrade of Turkey's weapons systems.

The end of the Cold War, which neutralized the principal external threat to Turkey's security, along with the emergence of a robust Turkish middle class and the election of Turkey's first president without a military background since Celal Bayar, led some to speculate that the era of military intervention in Turkey was over.95 Yet the military had not relinquished its guardianship role, and remained in the political arena to confront what they identified as Turkey's most pressing security threats: the escalating insurgency launched by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the rise of political Islam. In the mid-1980s the PKK began using force to fight for Kurdish autonomy, and by the 1990s, most of southeast Turkey was administered by the military in response to PKK violence. After the Persian Gulf War, Kurdish rebels began using safe havens in northern Iraq to organize terrorist attacks against Turkey, escalating the confrontation between the military and the PKK.

Even though the Persian Gulf War underscored Turkey's geostrategic importance to the U.S. and NATO, Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants were phased into loan-only assistance in 1993, and loans were phased out after 1997. While the Clinton Administration argued aid cuts could "weaken and radicalize" Turkey, some members of

Congress argued the U.S. should not provide aid that enabled the TAF to strafe villages, killing thousands of civilians. The U.S. and Turkey continued to collaborate on pressing post-Cold War issues, such as energy security and the outbreak of violence in the former Yugoslavia, during which NATO engaged in its first "out of area" operations.

Political Stability and Economic Change

So as not to undermine American and international political support for Turkey, U.S. officials insisted the generals had intervened reluctantly in September, 1980, and intended to retreat from civil politics once domestic political, social, and economic stability was restored. While the Reagan Administration maintained its political support for the military junta, Turkey's European allies were highly critical of the junta's prolonged transition to civilian political government. Under the leadership of Premier Turgut Ozal, however, along with former junta leader President Kenan Evren, Turkey not only restored ties with its traditional allies, but deepened relations with its regional neighbors. Ozal's successful economic reforms during the 1980s also transformed Turkish politics, as a broader swathe of Turkish society, including workers, villagers, and traditional religious groups, entered the economy and challenged the political and economic hegemony of the secular elite to the extent that by the mid-1990s, the balance of power had shifted, threatening the secular nature of the republic and provoking a military intervention in 1997.

The coup was initially well-received by a Turkish public exhausted by political violence and instability. Eventually, however, Turks grew weary of the military's methods of maintaining political and social stability. The military imposed curfews and forbade public activities, banned much of the print media, and suspended the activities of nearly all professional associations and trade unions. While the military had detained Demirel, Ecevit, and at least 100 other members of parliament after the coup, they retained the architect of the economic reforms initiated in January, 1980 – Turgut Ozal – as Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs. They continued the unpopular economic

policies initiated by former Prime Minister Demirel, as they believed reforming Turkey’s protectionist and subsidized state economy and opening it to world market forces and investment was the path to restoring economic stability. By 1981, the military junta’s economic policies were showing signs of success; inflation dropped, exports increased, tourism revenues and Turkish construction activities abroad increased, and the current account deficit was sharply diminished.

By late 1982, the military was torn between pressure to return to democratic processes and their desire to minimize political uncertainty. The constitution passed by referendum in 1982 forbade political organizations based on religion, a religious sect, regional considerations, or Marxism. The generals wanted to avoid the parliamentary deadlock of the 1970s by banning old political leaders such as Demirel and Ecevit from re-entering politics, abolishing several other parties, and encouraging more moderate center-right and center-left parties that could successfully form a coalition government and continue reforms. The junta carefully controlled the campaign for the first post-coup general election by implementing press controls and limiting the campaign to three weeks. Only former General Sunlap’s moderate, right-wing Nationalist Democracy Party (NDP), Turgut Ozal’s Motherland Party (MP), and a liberal group called the Populists Party (PP) (led by a senior civil servant and expected to play the role of loyal opposition) were authorized to participate. All three parties pledged to develop the economy, firmly uphold the “spirit of September 12” action against political terrorism, and continue a pro-Western, pro-Islamic foreign policy that would reconcile Islam with Turkey’s Western orientation.

While President Evren favored the NDP, the military did not intervene when Ozal’s party won 45% of the votes and 212 of the 400 seats in parliament during the elections on November 6, 1983. Evren, who served as president until November 9, 1989, announced at the opening session of Parliament that the armed forces were going back to their barracks “confident that democracy will be safeguarded.”

Even though the military believed Kemalism was the key to restoring national unity, during their rule they pursued a conciliatory strategy that created space for religion

---

in the political life of the nation in an effort to moderate the extreme right and left wings of Turkey’s political spectrum. As prime minister, Turgut Ozal continued this policy, and endorsed a religious presence in Turkish society as well as an awareness of Turkey’s Ottoman legacy. The departure from the strict adherence to Kemalism also had international political benefits: deeper ties with Turkey’s Muslim neighbors could both garner political support for issues like Turkey’s protection of Turkish Cypriots and promote economic development. For example, Turkey’s economic success in the 1980s was bolstered by Saudi financiers, who gave preferential treatment to Islamic organizations.\(^{100}\) The Turkish construction sector dramatically increased its projects in the Middle East along with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

The Turkish General Staff facilitated the successful implementation of Ozal’s policies by guaranteeing a stable political environment. Between 1980 and the early 1990s, the Turkish economy grew at an annual rate of over five percent, the highest among the OECD countries. The volume of Turkish exports rose, and tourism flourished. Ozal’s popularity, along with the public’s increasing distaste for the military’s presence in civil politics, enabled him to make modest moves to subordinate the military to his political authority. In July 1987, for example, Ozal shocked the military by vetoing the appointment of General Necdet Oztorun as chief of the Turkish General Staff. More importantly, he decided to support the United States in the Persian Gulf War over the objections of top military leaders.

Ozal sought to consolidate his power base prior to the general elections of November, 1988; anticipating the decline of the Motherland Party, Ozal had himself elected President so he could retain office after his party’s 1991 election defeat by Suleyman Demirel’s True Path Party. This would be the first time a non-prior military civilian would serve as president since Celal Bayar, who was removed from office by the coup in 1960. Ozal definitively demonstrated the extent to which he had subordinated the military to civilian authority during the Persian Gulf War. Despite opposition from then-chief of staff General Necip Torumtay, President Ozal led Turkey to join the coalition effort against Iraq in 1990. According to Torumtay’s memoirs, he and other senior officers disagreed with Ozal’s decision because they believed Turkey “lacked the

---

\(^{100}\) Lombardi, "Turkey - the Return of the Reluctant Generals?," 197-98.
indigenous military capability to sustain an independent foreign policy that risked a prolonged confrontation with its neighbors.\textsuperscript{101}

Ozal, however, viewed the conflict as an opportunity to demonstrate Turkey's political alignment with its Western allies. Relations with the U.S. had been strained by criticism of the Turkish position in the Cyprus dispute, the military campaign against Kurds, and the numerous references to "Armenian genocide" by American politicians and the media. Pro-Armenian Congressmen in 1984 had campaigned to declare 24 April as an official day of mourning for the Armenians, who they claimed had been killed by the Ottoman Turks in 1915. Turks felt these public statements emboldened Armenian terrorists to continue attacks on Turkish interests. The Turkish public was so sensitive to the Armenian resolutions that after another attempt by pro-Armenian congressmen in 1987, President Evren cancelled a trip to Washington, and the government restricted the use of the Incirlik air base in Adana.\textsuperscript{102} While a new Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement was eventually signed in 1988, bilateral relations continued to be tested by anti-Turkey lobbies in Congress.

While some Turkish politicians argued Turkey should not act as an agent of American policy and risk being drawn into a war, Ozal circumvented the government and consulted directly with the White House. As a result, Turkey cut the oil pipelines that carried 1.52 million barrels of oil a day between Turkey and Iraq, allowed the U.S. to use its bases for air strikes on Iraqi territory, and amassed Turkish troops on the border with Iraq, which drew Iraqi troops away from the southern front. Ozal convinced the Grand National Assembly to approve the government's request to send troops to the Gulf; while the Foreign Minister, Defense Minister, and General Torumtay resigned in protest, Turkey's participation was a testament to Ozal's political authority.

Ozal's unexpected death on April 17, 1993, prompted the return of exiled political leader Necmettin Erbakan. As Turkey's economy cooled, millions of rural workers that had migrated into Turkey's cities during the economic boom of the 1980s were becoming frustrated by inflation, rising unemployment, and corruption; the charismatic Erbakan convinced many that Islam offered the solutions to Turkey's social, economic, and

\textsuperscript{101} Quoted in Michael Robert Hickok, "Hegemon Rising: The Gap Between Turkish Strategy and Military Modernization," Parameters 30, no. 2.
In 1994, Erbakan’s Welfare Party (WP) won the largest share of the vote in local elections, gaining control of several prominent cities in Turkey, including Istanbul and Ankara. The WP also won in twenty-nine other major cities and 400 smaller towns; thus nearly two-thirds of the country’s population lived under municipal governments run by Islamic fundamentalists, some of whom were determined to prevent further Westernization. For example, in November 1994, at a rally in Eastern Turkey, Erbakan addressed thousands of Kurds and pled with them “to save the world from European infidels.” After the general elections of December 25, 1995, the WP became the largest party in parliament.

The WP formed a coalition government with the True Path Party (TPP) in June 1996, and Erbakan became Turkey’s first Islamist prime minister. The dominance of an Islamist party was anathema to the TGS, and through late 1996, leading commanders delivered public speeches warning secularism was under threat. Erbakan’s visits to Libya and Iran also alarmed the generals. In January, 1997, the commanders of the armed forces held a meeting at the naval base in Golcuk on the Maramara Sea, where they finalized a strategy for forcing the WP from power. Rather than seizing power directly through the use of force, they galvanized civil society organizations and members of the media to build opposition to the WP and urge public protests. Military elites used briefings, conferences, and regularly organized public declarations to emphasize the dangers of political Islam to the state. After one mayor, WP member Bekir Yildiz, gave a speech in support of Sharia law, the TAF sent a column of tanks through his town. On February 28, 1997, the military issued a series of “recommendations,” a list of 18 anti-Islamist measures, which the government had no choice but to accept. The “February 28 Process” was prepared by the NSC Undersecretariat in cooperation with working groups in the Turkish general staff, and included curbs on the Islamist media, closure of private religious schools and courses, and restrictions on state-run preacher training schools which the military believed were being used to encourage anti-secularist values. Erbakan agreed to forward the list to the Council of Ministers, and on March 14, 1997, the

---

measures were approved by the parliament. The WP found it impossible to implement the measures without alienating its core supporters.\textsuperscript{105}

In April and May, the TGS increased pressure on the WP, holding a series of briefings for the media, judiciary, and business community on the growing threat to secularism posed by the WP. On May 22, 1997, the public prosecutor applied to the Constitutional Court for the closure of the WP on the grounds that it was attempting to undermine the principle of secularism enshrined in the Turkish constitution. The military discreetly lobbied members of the TPP in an attempt to persuade them to withdraw from its coalition with the WP, and the subsequent resignations eroded the WP-TPP majority. On June 18, 1997, the government finally resigned, and was replaced by a tripartite coalition.

On January 16, 1998, the Turkish Constitutional Court formally closed down the Welfare Party for violating the separation of religion and state as mandated by the constitution, and banned Erbakan from all political activity for 5 years. The WP’s successor, the Virtue Party, was also banned, and the military imposed restrictions on free speech, for example by jailing Recep Tayyip Erdogan, then mayor of Istanbul, after he gave an Islamist-nationalist speech in 1997. Erdogan, along with other junior members of the WP such Abdullah Gul, later formed the Justice and Development Party (AKP), which they described as a center-right reformist party without an Islamist agenda, in August of 2001.

The Institutionalization of Turkish Military Guardianship

The Turkish armed forces’ level of professionalism during this period was complicated by the institutionalization of its guardian role in Turkish politics. Its professional competency was enhanced by U.S. military aid, which included a modernization program. However, the military junta expanded the Turkish armed forces’ prerogatives during military rule from 1980 -1983, not only through coup-leader General Kenan Evren’s presidency, which guaranteed political stability for the implementation of Premier Ozal’s economic policies, but also through the National Security Council,

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., 346.
including its expansive Undersecretariat staffed with military personnel. These institutional gains pulled the military deeper into civil life, reflected a lack of confidence in civilian political authorities, and compromised the military’s mission exclusivity. Thus while the military worked largely in harmony with the civilian Turgut Ozal, its institutional subordination to civil authority was never established, a fact that became obvious when senior military officers, motivated by their strong Kemalist ideology, successfully removed Islamist Necmettin Erbakan and his party from office in 1997.

President Evren announced at the opening session of Parliament that the armed forces were going back to their barracks “confident that democracy will be safeguarded.” However, the military maintained an active guardianship role through numerous formal and informal mechanisms. While the five-member junta formally dissolved itself, Evren stayed on to serve as president until November 9, 1989, and the four other military leaders transitioned into a newly established organization, the Presidential Council. Article 118 of the new constitution stipulated that the recommendations of the National Security Council, which met monthly, should be given priority consideration by the Council of Ministers. The NSC was comprised of five members of the military (the chief of staff and the commanders of the land forces, navy, air force, and gendarmerie), four representatives of the government, and chaired by the Turkish president.

While theoretically the composition of the NSC would allow for a balance between military and civilian views, in practice the military had substantial power over the agenda, not only because the president was former general and junta leader Kenan Evren, but because serving and retired military personnel dominated the NSC’s Undersecretariat, whose 400 members drew up briefing documents and background papers for distribution to the NSC. For examples, the recommendations given to Premier Erbakan to guard against the growing influence of Islamism on the state were prepared by the NSC Undersecretariat in cooperation with working groups in the Turkish General Staff, and included curbs on the Islamist media, closure of private religious

106 Howe, "Turks Will Form First Civilian Cabinet Since 1980."
108 Ibid., 344.
schools and courses, and restrictions on state-run preacher training schools which the military believed were being used to encourage anti-secularist values.

Law No. 2945 gave the NSC secretary general, a serving admiral or general, access to any civilian agency, as well as the authority to monitor the implementation of the NSC’s recommendations. By participating in other government bodies such as the Higher Education Council, the NSC monitored civilians and played a role in diverse social policy realms such as school curriculum development and regulating television broadcasting hours. The military even supplied one of the three judges on the panels responsible for hearing cases at the National Security Courts. The chief of the Turkish General Staff was able to directly communicate the military’s concerns during weekly meetings with the prime minister and president.

By strengthening the authority of the president and the NSC, the military bolstered the ability of the executive and the military to overcome ideological divisions among elected officials in parliament, and deal swiftly with internal threats such as Islamic fundamentalism and Kurdish separatism. The arrangement would also ensure the Turkish defense budget would be insulated from parliamentary debate.

The military also retained an influence over Turkish politics through public declarations, as well as briefings for government and private groups such as the judiciary and the business community. For example, prior to the first presidential elections after the coup of 1980, President Evren departed from his position of public neutrality in a television address, in which he called on the public to elect an administration that would continue the military regime’s policies. Even though the military did not intervene when Ozal’s Motherland Party won 45% of the votes, and 212 of the 400 seats in parliament, during the elections on November 6, 1983, the pattern of publically commenting on Turkish politics would continue, with perhaps a decisive impact in discrediting Erbakan and his Welfare Party in the mid-1990s. When Erbakan became Turkey’s first Islamist prime minister, leading commanders delivered public speeches warning secularism was under threat. Rather than intervene directly to dissolve his party, they galvanized civil society organizations and members of the media to build opposition to the WP and urge public protests, emphasizing the dangers of political Islam to the state.

Howe, "Turks Electing First Parliament Since Coup."
The military thus demonstrated that while it appeared to serve in a supporting role loyal to the civilian leadership, it still yielded a substantial influence over Turkish political life, one that undermined its professionalism by compromising its mission exclusivity and revealing a lack of respect for civilian political authority. While its professional competency was held in high regard, and Kemalism continued to serve as a unifying ideology, its presence in Turkey’s civil sphere detracted from its military readiness and rendered it nearly impossible to establish objective civilian control.

Civil Military Relations Transformed?

Erdogan and the Subordination of the General Staff

“Let them subordinate the army to the ministry of sports if they want….the army will still do what it needs to do.” 110

- Retired General Armagan Kuloglu

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, brought new focus on the importance of strong political and military ties with Turkey for several reasons. Turkey plays an important stabilizing role in the region, and is also often considered a model of good relations between the West and a predominately Muslim nation. Turkey’s geographical location continues to make it a crucial base from which to project power and establish supply lines to support operations in Iraq. The U.S. and Turkey have worked closely together on range of issues, from counterterrorism to nuclear non-proliferation. Turkish military personnel have contributed to the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and the intervention in Libya, and Turkey has worked to contain the violence and deal with the humanitarian crisis in Syria as well as address the recent threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria . The United States resumed grant military aid to Turkey, and continues to sell advanced weaponry and equipment through the foreign military sales program. The U.S. mitigated external threats to Turkey’s security by bolstering its military capabilities, extended political support to the civilian leadership of the democratically elected Justice and Development Party (JDP), and

contributed to the professionalization of the Turkish Armed Forces through International Military Education and Training as well as close NATO and bilateral security cooperation. Over this same period, the JDP has achieved unprecedented success in subordinating the Turkish Armed Forces to civilian authority. Arguably the single most important factor that has contributed to the institutionalization of civilian control over the military in Turkey has not been U.S. military assistance, however, but the political authority granted by the European Union accession process to Turkey's civilian leaders.

This section is divided into three parts. The first reviews Turkey’s security environment, and looks at the relationship between external threats and the military’s role in Turkey’s civil politics. The second discusses how both international and domestic political support for the reforms of the civilian Justice and Development party leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, limited the political options for the military and thus decreased the likelihood that the military would interfere in politics. The final part looks at the relationship between U.S. military aid and the professionalism of the TAF. While aid continued to enhance the professional competency of Turkey’s armed forces, it was the EU accession process, rather than aid, that allowed the civilian political leadership to reverse the institutional gains made by the military junta in the early 1980s. While this may not reflect the military’s respect for civilian political authority, the institutional mechanisms available to the military to interfere in civil politics have been dramatically reduced. However, Erdogan’s reforms fall short of objective civilian control in that they have been overly coercive, relying on mass arrests and incarceration to subjugate the military and neutralize it as a political force. This unhealthy approach to civil-military relations may result in a renewed pattern of intervention should Erdogan’s political capital wane in the future.

Turkey’s Post-September 11 Security Challenges

Turkey has been challenged by numerous threats to its external security since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, as the “zero problems with neighbors” foreign policy approach of Turkish academic Ahmet Davutoglu has given way to multiple regional security crises, from Iran’s nuclear ambitions to Syria’s civil war and
ISIS’s caliphate ambitions. The perception among many Turks is that U.S. foreign policy has exacerbated, rather than ameliorated, these threats despite the fact that Washington resumed Foreign Military Financing to Turkey in 2002. Yet despite the increased complexity and threats generated by the U.S. – led war in Iraq and the Arab Spring, the military has not expanded its role in civil politics.

Erdogan and his closest advisors, particularly Davutoglu, have very particular ideas regarding the conduct of their foreign policy. The foreign policy approach advocated by Davutoglu when he was Erdogan’s chief advisor imagined Turkey as “the centre of its own sphere of influence” and sought to establish “strategic depth” through a soft-power strategy based on strengthening geopolitical, cultural, historical and economic ties within the region. Yet Turkey’s external security situation has become more challenging. For example, the “zero problems with neighbors” policy promoted the deepening of diplomatic and security cooperation with Russia, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, with particular attention to the role the latter three countries could play in mitigating the threat from Kurdish separatists. Yet pressure from Turkey’s Western allies to sanction Russia for its bullying of Ukraine, and Iran for its nuclear program, have complicated those relations. In addition, since 2011, Turkey’s attitude toward Syrian President Bashar al-Assad shifted completely, with Ankara admonishing Damascus for its brutal repression of peaceful Arab Spring demonstrators and the subsequent civil war that has sent hundreds of thousands of refugees flooding into Turkey. Putin’s support of Assad has put Russian and Turkish aims with respect to Syria squarely against each other. Iraq’s conflict with ISIS has altered Turkey’s relations with the Iraqi Kurds, who are among the most skilled at battling the militant Islamic group. While Turkey must cooperate with Iraqi and Syrian Kurds to battle ISIS, Ankara still worries about a post-conflict drive to create a separate Kurdish state that will compromise Turkey’s territorial integrity.

Despite U.S. military aid, Turks largely blame American foreign policy for many of these security challenges. The extent to which Turkish politicians believe U.S. policies pose a threat to their security was revealed in 2003, when the Bush administration promised approximately $24 billion in U.S. aid and loan guarantees in anticipation of

---

Turkey's permission to stage American ground forces at Turkey's border with Iraq, which would facilitate a second front during the 2003 Iraq War. Prime Minister Erdogan and the TAF supported the plan, but the Turkish Parliament could not muster the absolute majority necessary because nearly 100 members of the Justice and Development Party either joined the Republican People's Party members in voting against the U.S. request, or abstained from voting altogether. Some of the MP's argued the rationale for war against Iraq in 2003 was less convincing than it had been in 1991. Also, the first Gulf War cost Turkey billions in trade with Iraq, sent refugees into Turkey, and emboldened Kurdish separatists who were able to stage terror attacks from safe havens in northern Iraq.

While President Ozal believed in 1991 that participation would strengthen Turkey's security ties with the U.S. and NATO, prior to the Gulf War in 2003, NATO responded weakly to Turkey's request for Article V commitments to defend Turkey in case of an Iraqi attack. This was particularly disappointing since Turkey had allowed the U.S. to use its air bases for limited military action in Iraq since 1991, and Turkish troops participated in missions in Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. While Turkey did ultimately allow the U.S. to use Turkish airspace as well as Turkish bases and border crossings for non-lethal cargo transport, the U.S.-led Iraq War of 2003 led to sectarian violence and political instability, resulting in a weak state incapable of preventing attacks such as the cross-border ambushes in October 2007, in which 25 Turks in southeastern Turkey were killed by PKK terrorists. When Turkey sent approximately 100,000 troops to its border with Iraq to demonstrate its commitment to repelling such attacks, the Bush administration, fearing a Turkish invasion would jeopardize vital U.S. supply lines from Turkey to Iraq, committed to close counterterrorism cooperation with the Turks, including sharing intelligence on the movement of PKK operatives.

While the EU accession process reversed many of the TAF's institutional prerogatives, the military did use informal means such as public statements to express its views on foreign policy and security issues. In other words, these security issues provided

---

an opportunity for the military to publically express its foreign policy preferences, which violates the spirit of objective civilian control over the military. For example, on January 25, 2005, General Ilker Basbug warned that Turkey would not stand idly by if the Iraqi Kurds attempted to take control of the oil-rich province of Kurkuk or if they persecuted the Turkish speaking Turkmen minority. During a visit to northern Cyprus, army commander General Buyukanit declared none of the approximately 35,000 troops deployed on the island would be withdrawn before a “firm and final” solution to the Cyprus problem had been reached.\textsuperscript{114}

The Arab Spring, sparked in December of 2010 and January of 2011 by widespread, largely peaceful public uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, once again highlighted the importance of Turkey’s regional role. President Obama consulted frequently with Prime Minister Erdogan with respect to political change in Egypt, and Turkey was involved politically and militarily during the NATO intervention in Libya. While Prime Minister Erdogan initially opposed UN Security Council Resolution 1973 to protect Libyan civilians, after the initial U.S.-led intervention, Turkey decided to help implement the resolution as a part of a NATO-led coalition. On March 24, the Turkish Parliament voted to permit Turkish ground, air and naval forces in Libya for up to a year, supporting UNSCR 1973 and 1970.

Despite the collapse of the “zero problems” policy, the military has not assumed a more prominent role in Turkey’s foreign and national security policy-making; in fact its public presence has declined. This points to the ability of civilian political leadership to subordinate the military to its authority even in the presence of multiple external threats. The next section offers an explanation of how international and domestic political support for civil-military reforms allowed Turkey’s civilian leadership to take dramatic steps toward establishing objective civilian control over the Turkish armed forces, despite the general staff’s uncertainty regarding the Justice and Development Party’s commitment to secularism.

Turkey's Political Leadership and the Turkish Armed Forces

Prime Minister Erdogan's ability to depart from a policy of "acquiescence" and work toward achieving objective civilian control over the military has required both external and domestic political support. Despite American political support for Turkey's civilian leadership, however, the most decisive support came from the European Union - accession process, particularly as entry into the EU enjoyed broad domestic support as Erdogan began implementing reforms that diminished the armed forces' institutional prerogatives. The EU's support compensated for any negative effects of discontinuities in American political support, such as Washington's criticism of Ankara after the Turkish parliament failed to pass a resolution allowing U.S. troops to stage in Turkey prior to the 2003 Iraq War.

The JDP, led by Prime Minister Erdogan, has been able to implement significant legal reforms that have reduced both the formal and informal role of the Turkish military in civil politics despite the military's prestige. The Helsinki Summit of December, 1999, during which Turkey was officially named as a candidate for European Union membership, gave the government political authority to reduce the institutional power of the Turkish Armed Forces. While the "Copenhagen Criteria" had required Turkey to satisfy certain political preconditions to be considered for EU membership, the European Commission's report in 2000 insisted Turkey's National Security Council "exercised excessive influence over the government, and had little accountability to the parliament with regard to security and defense matters." The tripartite government that ruled prior to the JDP initiated some reforms, such as removing military judges from security courts, and in October 2001, parliament amended article 118 of the Turkish constitution to increase the civilian membership of the National Security Council. In addition, the requirement of the Council of Ministers to give "priority consideration" to the recommendations of the NSC was removed, and replaced by an obligation that the Council be merely "notified" of them.

The JDP, voted into office during the general elections of November 2002, was able to go much further in subordinating the military to civilian authority, particularly because over 70% of the Turkish population supported EU membership in the early 2000s.\textsuperscript{116} When the tripartite coalition government collapsed in the summer of 2002, the JDP successfully campaigned on a platform of economic and political reform. In the midst of a severe economic recession, public confidence in the other parties was low, and in the November 2002 elections, Erdogan’s Justice and Development Party (JDP) won the general elections with a wide majority, becoming the first single-party government in more than a decade. While the TAF was unconvinced of the JDP’s commitment to secularism, its political options were limited, particularly because it did not want to jeopardize the EU accession process, and an alternative government could not be formed with the existing members of parliament.

Despite the tension between the Justice and Development Party and the Turkish General Staff, the desire to receive a date for the opening of accession negotiations at the European Union summit in Brussels, scheduled for 16-17 December, 2004, led both sides to avoid an open confrontation, and the 7\textsuperscript{th} Reform Package initiated major changes to the structure of the primary institutional means through which the military influenced civil politics: the National Security Council.\textsuperscript{117} Also known as the “harmonization package,” the reforms abolished the requirement that the NSC secretary general be a serving member of the military. The NSC would meet less frequently, would no longer have unlimited access to civilian agencies, and could no longer send representatives to the Higher Education Authority or the Supervision Board of Cinema, Video and Music. Appointments to the NSC’s undersecretariat would be more transparent, and the number of personnel serving would decrease, with the proportion of civilian employees to military personnel increasing. The nature of the NSC, which since 1980 had been an executive decision-making board, was also restored to the advisory role of the 1960s and 1970s.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 350-51.
\textsuperscript{118} Sarigil, "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?," 2; Heper, "Civil-Military Relations in Turkey: Toward a Liberal Model?," 241-52; Jenkins, "Continuity and Change: Prospects for Civil-Military Relations in Turkey," 346-47.
The limitations of the military's influence on Turkey's foreign policy was revealed when the Turkish government failed to approve a resolution allowing the U.S. to transit Turkey during its 2003 invasion of Iraq, despite the Bush administration's promise of nearly $24 billion in U.S. aid and loan guarantees. Members of the Turkish General Staff, along with Prime Minister Erdogan, worried not only that the U.S. might cut military aid, but also that Turkey would have little input on post-invasion policy regarding the Kurds in northern Iraq. The JDP further consolidated its political authority over the Turkish Armed Forces when the EU tackled a glaring violation of the liberal-democratic model of civil military relations: the fact that the Chief of the Turkish General Staff was responsible to the prime minister rather than a civilian defense minister.119

The extent of public antipathy for military interference in civil affairs was revealed in April of 2007, during an attempted "e-coup" prior to the presidential elections in 2007. Because the JDP's parliamentary majority was re-elected during the general elections in 2007, foreign minister and JDP member Abdullah Gul was likely to be elected president, meaning the JDP, which the military saw as an Islamist party and thus a threat to the secular nature of the state, would have control over the legislature and the executive. The army chief, Yasar Buyukanit, posted on the Turkish General Staff's website that the Turkish Armed Forces were watching the Presidential elections with concern, and as the guardians of secularism would not hesitate to publically demonstrate its position if necessary."120

The Turkish public was upset by the implicit coup threat in the "April 27 memo;" many believed it hurt Turkey's prospects for EU membership, while others worried continued military intervention impeded Turkey's democratic consolidation. Nearly a million people took to the streets, some protesting the government, some protesting EU membership, and some protesting the military's interference in the presidential election. In the end, the failed "e-coup" attempt damaged the military's prestige. Emboldened by the presidential win and the damage done to the TAF's reputation, the JDP ordered police raids in June that would lead to accusations against ten army generals and hundreds of

other officers, as well as various journalists and professors, for conspiring to undermine the government.

Turkey's civilian leaders were able to exercise greater foreign policy independence not only because the influence of the military was waning, but also because Turkey's indigenous defense capability had grown, rendering Turkey less dependent on donors whose foreign policy preferences might not align with the JDP's. For example, in 2005, the state-owned Turkish Aircraft Industries bought out the remaining shares of TUSAS Aerospace Industries, which were partially owned by U.S.-based companies Lockheed Martin and General Electric International. Turkey became a major regional supplier of military arms and equipment, assembling F-16s for Egypt and upgrading aircraft for Jordan.

Thus Erdogan's government was able to withstand discontinuities in American political support. For example, President Obama, who had emphasized the importance of U.S. - Turkish relations when he addressed the Turkish Grand National Assembly in April 2009, later warned Erdogan that Turkey's "no" vote for sanctions against Iran, as well as Erdogan's reaction to the Gaza flotilla incident, which publically strained ties between Turkey and Israel, would render it more difficult to gain Congressional approval for foreign military sales, including the drone aircraft the Turkish military used against the PKK. Despite pressure from the U.S. and the preferences of the Turkish General Staff, which worried a nuclear Iran would complicate security relations with the U.S., Israel, and Europe, in June, 2010, Turkey voted no to UN Security Council Resolution 1929, which would have provided for further sanctions against Iran. By 2010, FMF grant assistance was being fazed out, and IMET, International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE), and Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR) funds were the primary sources of annual U.S. military and security assistance to Turkey.

While the JDP has made substantial progress in reversing the institutional gains made by the Turkish armed forces, its progress in achieving objective control over the military has been undermined by the coercive nature of its effort to neutralize the military.

---

as a political actor. In September 2012, a Turkish Court convicted 300 military officers, sentencing them to up to 20 years for allegedly engaging in a plot to overthrow the government in 2002. The heads of the navy, army and air force were each sentenced to twenty years. The “Ergenkon” network was allegedly comprised of military members and civilians who were working together to overthrow the JDP government. Prosecutors argued the coup plot, known as “Sledgehammer,” intended to blow up mosques and instigate a military conflict with Greece that would lead to the dissolution of Erdogan’s government. Turkey’s Constitutional Court later ruled the lower courts had violated the officers’ rights to a fair trial, and all 237 officers were released. Lawyers for the defendants maintained due process was violated, and that the digital evidence against the officers was fabricated.

Erdogan’s distinction of being the first president in Turkish history to be elected by popular vote comes in spite of increasing accusations of corruption and authoritarianism. Recent laws addressing antiterrorism and criminal defamation give the government broad powers to punish those critical of the regime, particularly journalists, many of whom were fired over their coverage of the Gezi Park demonstrations in May, 2013, when a small group of environmental activists protested the government’s plan to replace a park with commercial developments. Citizens were alarmed by the state’s overreaction, during which police sent tear gas canisters and water cannons into crowds. In December 2013, Erdogan and four of his cabinet ministers came under investigation for corruption and bribery; in response, Erdogan reassigned hundreds of judicial personnel and clamped down on the media. The National Assembly passed a bill restricting Internet freedoms, allowing authorities to collect browser histories and block web pages without a court order.

While the military has been able to establish working relationships with civilian politicians such as Suleyman Demirel in the 1970s, and Turgut Ozal in the 1980s, the JDP’s coercive tactics, including arrests and incarceration, undermine the spirit of objective civilian control and the liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations.

---

124 Tulin Daloglu, Al-Monitor.
While most of the military’s institutionalized prerogatives have been reversed, the public’s increasing ambivalence toward the EU accession process renders the external political support provided by the European Union less influential in discouraging military interference in civil politics. In the context of increased authoritarianism on the part of President Erdogan, if public support for the Justice and Development Party declines and the civilian opposition continues to be fragmented and thus ineffective, military intervention cannot be ruled out.

The Professionalism of the Turkish Armed Forces

The competency of the TAF, enhanced by U.S. military aid, continues to be lauded, particularly as the military demonstrated its skill while participating in NATO’s International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, even assuming command in 2002 and 2005. The EU accession process, rather than U.S. military aid, provided a strong motivation for the Turkish Armed Forces to respect the political authority of Turkey’s civilian leaders even though the Turkish General Staff was unconvinced of the Justice and Development Party’s commitment to secularism. The mission exclusivity of the military was improved by the civil-military reforms implemented during this period, which dramatically reduced the military’s presence in the civil sphere. However, the military’s ideological cohesion may have been compromised by the coercive tactics of the Erdogan government in neutralizing the military, particularly through mass arrests and incarceration, obfuscating the extent to which respect for civilian political authority has truly been internalized.

The Turkish military has played an important role in NATO’s command of ISAF, a UN-mandated force established in December 2001, to provide security for the Afghan Transitional Authority in Kabul. ISAF’s mandate was extended to the rest of Afghanistan by UN Security Council Resolution 1510 in October, 2003. Turkey has assumed command of ISAF twice, from June 2002 through February 2003, and February 2005 until August 2005, at which point thirty-six countries were contributing to ISAF. The only other NATO nations to assume command have been the United States, the United
Kingdom, Canada, Germany, France, and Italy. Lieutenant General Ethem Erdagi, who led ISAF in 2005, emphasized Turkey’s contribution was enhanced by its experience in counterterrorism operations against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), as well as its history of security cooperation with the Afghan military dating back to the days of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

The competence of the Turkish military, which continues to provide the second largest land force to NATO after the United States, cannot be understated. Its skill and willingness to fight and lead, bolstered by mandatory 15-month service for Turkish males and an “every Turk is born a soldier” mentality, render it an indispensable ally in the region. Yet for much of the 2000s, it resisted JDP attempts to wrest control of Turkey’s foreign and security policy and retreat from the civil sphere. While the military was reluctant to endanger the EU accession process, which enjoyed strong public support in the early 2000s, the leadership retained informal mechanisms for exerting pressure on the JDP and mobilizing opposition within Turkish society. For example, in what is commonly referred to as the “headscarf incident,” the chief of the TGS, General Hilmi Ozkok, along with the force commanders, staged a silent protest in the office of the new speaker of the parliament, Bulent Arnic. Arnic’s wife had worn a headscarf while bidding farewell to President Ahment Necdet Sezera, who was flying from the Ankara airport to Prague for a NATO summit. The incident, which was covered by the Turkish media, was intended to convey Ozkok’s willingness to confront attempts by the JDP to challenge the secular nature of the government.

The TAF also used public statements to articulate Turkey’s foreign policy preferences and express the TAF’s commitment to protecting the principle of secularism. These comments undermined Prime Minister Erdogan’s foreign policy initiatives on issues such as addressing Kurds’ demands for cultural and political rights as well as reaching a negotiated political solution in Cyprus. The EU commission noted, “The

127 Begum Burak, "The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics: To Guard Whom and From What?," European Journal of Economic and Political Studies 4, no. 1: 164.
Armed Forces in Turkey continue to exercise influence through a series of informal channels” in its 2004 commission report.128

While the chief of staff, General Ozzok, later urged the TAF to respect the political authority of the civilian leadership, his successor, General Yasar Buyukanit, was more assertive in voicing his opposition to the Justice and Development Party, and in 2006, Buyukanit along with the commanders of the army, navy and air force, each delivered public statements that warned Islamic fundamentalism was a threat to Turkey.129 Buyukanit later admitted he personally wrote the April 27 memo that warned the military would react if the secular nature of the republic were threatened by the results of the Presidential election process.

Buyukanit’s successor, Ilker Basburg, who served as chief of staff from August 2008, to August 2010, ordered his officers not to make public declarations, explaining, “According to Samuel P. Huntington, the most effective control over the military is ‘objective control,’ which means rendering the military a professional institution and thus putting a distance between the military and politics.”130 Ironically, Basburg was one of 300 officers charged with leading an illegal network accused of conspiring to overthrow the government.131 Senior military leaders acquiesced when Prime Minister Erdogan challenged the military’s tradition of appointing its own highest-ranking officials, including the Land Forces Commander and the Commander and Chief of the Turkish General Staff, in August of 2010, and in September, Turkey passed amendments to the 1982 constitution that increased military and judicial accountability to civilian and democratic institutions.132

While the institutional means for military interference in civil affairs have been reduced, it is uncertain that a sincere respect for civilian political authority has been internalized. Some officers may welcome following the democratic model of civil-military relations, while others may harbor deep resentments based on the perception of

130 "Civil-Military Relations in Turkey: Toward a Liberal Model?" 244-45.
131 Sebnem Arsu, "Ex-Chief of Turkish Army is Arrested in Widening Case of Alleging Coup Plot," The New York Times, January 5, 2012.
132 "Balance of Power," The Economist.
mistreatment at the hands of the Justice and Development Party in the last decade. The sense that the Turkish military remains the only institution capable of preserving the secular nature of Ataturk's republic is deeply ingrained; if Turkey drifts toward authoritarianism, antagonizes its traditional allies, and embraces political Islam, the military, or elements within it, may reassert its guardianship over Turkish politics.

Conclusions

This chapter examined if U.S. military aid, by mitigating the external threats to Turkey's security, providing political support for Turkey's civilian leaders, and contributing to the professionalization of the Turkish armed forces, rendered it less likely the military would intervene in civil politics. Since the Truman Doctrine in 1947, the Turkish military directly intervened to remove the government four times, in 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997, and assumed an assertive guardianship role from 1960 through the 1990s. While in 1960 and 1980, senior military leaders completely assumed the responsibilities of government through a military junta, in 1971 and 1997 the TAF used its political influence to pressure the government to resign. How can one account for the apparently negative relationship between U.S. military aid and the military's presence in civil politics?

_U.S. Military Aid, Turkey's External Threats, and Military Intervention_

One might argue that while the U.S. mitigated the external threat posed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War, Turkey continued to face internal security threats that justified the military's presence in civil politics. For example, while Turkey enjoyed a favorable security environment in 1960, civil unrest in response to the authoritarian practices of Prime Minister Adnan Menderes pulled the military into politics, leading to the coup in May of 1960. Similarly, political violence between militant groups of the extreme right and left preceded the interventions in 1971 and 1980. Yet political violence wracked Turkey throughout the 1970s, and PKK terrorism that began in the mid-1980s escalated into a full-blown insurgency in the 1990s. While the violence pulled the
military into the civil sphere as martial law was imposed to restore order, the military did not attempt to dissolve the government in reaction to violence. Moreover, the military did not take over in late 1974 or early 1975, despite the threat of an arms embargo imposed by the U.S. Congress, which would significantly undermine the military readiness of the armed forces and thus imperil Turkey's national security.

Rather, the prospect of Islamist political hegemony has been the single most powerful driver of military interference in civil affairs. While the military has shown a tolerance for political parties with roots in Islamism, such as Adnan Menderes' Democrat Party, Suleyman Demirel's Justice Party, and Turgut Ozal's Motherland Party, the prospect of political domination by an Islamist party is highly problematic for the armed forces. Menderes' attempts to coerce and marginalize Ismet Inonu and his opposition party raised the spectre of unchecked Democrat Party supremacy, for example. The prospect of a ruling coalition dominated by Necmettin Erbakan's extreme right party in 1980 and 1997 provoked military intervention, while the existence of violence within or beyond Turkey's borders did not. In 2007, despite the civil-military reforms generated by the EU accession process, the military attempted an "e-coup" to discourage the election of JDP member Abdullah Gul, out of concern that an Islamist party would control both the legislative and executive branches of government. Some speculated that the image of the Turkish head of state's wife wearing a headscarf was enough to cause a panic among military leaders.

Undermining the thesis that escalating external threats render subordination of the military to civilian authority less likely is the fact that since the end of the Cold War, and despite the "zero problems with neighbors" policy, internal and external threats to Turkey's security have multiplied, while the military's role in civil politics has declined. The military has viewed the rise of political Islam and Kurdish separatism as pressing internal security problems, as PKK terrorists have increased attacks on Turkish targets from northern Iraq, and Turkey has been flooded with refugees from violence in Syria and Iraq. The civil-military reforms of the past decade were implemented despite a relatively unfavorable security environment.

The impact of expectations of declining U.S. military aid should also be considered as a factor when examining the relationship between the external threat and
the military's role in politics. While destabilizing for bilateral relations, disruptions in military aid did serve to motivate Turkey's leaders both to strengthen ties with regional neighbors as well as develop the industrial capacity to support indigenous defense production. This provided a strong common interest in economic development during the 1980s, as junta leader and President Kenan Evren guaranteed a stable political environment for Turgut Ozal's economic reforms, even though Ozal's Motherland Party was not the favored party of the Turkish general staff. This is particularly significant considering the difficulty politicians like Suleyman Demirel and Bulent Ecevit had in passing necessary reform legislation throughout the 1970s because of the volatile political environment. It is often assumed that the middle class that emerges during periods of economic development will be less tolerant of behavior that undermines democratization, meaning civil society in 2010 would be more averse to military interference in Turkish politics than it was thirty years earlier. This suggests that in the long-term, the expectation of declining U.S. military aid, despite the continued presence of external threats, could have positive implications for civil-military relations by motivating the government to implement economic reforms that promote development.

American Political Support for Turkey's Civilian Political Leaders

This case study has highlighted both the importance and limitations of the American political support for Turkey's civilian leaders that accompanies U.S. military aid. While external political support combined with strong domestic political support has successfully limited the political options for military interference, particularly in 1950, during Turgut Ozal's premiership, and under Erdogan, discontinuities in American political support have given small but influential right and left-wing parties opportunities to undermine the more moderate parties at the center of Turkish politics. The resulting political instability pulled the military into politics in 1971, 1980, and 1997. This case also reveals the power alternative providers of external political support can have on a state's domestic political stability, as the EU accession process facilitated the implementation of dramatic civil-military reforms in the 2000s.
While U.S. political support for Prime Minister Menderes in the 1950s provided a boost to his government, particularly following visits with Washington leaders and commitments of U.S. military aid, the Turkish public largely supported the military intervention in 1960, because the Democrat Party had lost legitimacy through its authoritarian policies. In the 1960s and 1970, U.S. support was characterized by discontinuity, particularly with respect to the Cyprus issue, and anti-Americanism was fueled both by the Johnson letter and the American military presence in Turkey. U.S. political support subsequently became a liability, rather than a precondition for political stability, and even traditionally Western-oriented parties such as the Republican People’s Party began to distance themselves from pro-West policies. The lack of strong external political support, combined with the military’s post-1960 institutional prerogatives, inhibited the ability of civilian leaders to establish objective civilian control over the military. Rather, the multiple prime ministers who served during this period adopted a policy of acquiescence, mindful of the military’s guardianship role in civil politics.

The Turkish military’s restrictions on political participation after the 1980 coup, combined with strong political support from the Reagan administration, changed the tone of Turkish-American relations, restoring to an extent the positive relationship between U.S. military aid and the political power of the civilian leadership. Ozal’s successful economic policies were grounded in neoliberal economic reforms favored by many of Turkey’s NATO allies as well as Western institutions such as the IMF and the OECD. While Ozal accepted the military’s institutional prerogatives, adopting a policy of acquiescence, it is possible that as president in the 1990s he might have been able to establish objective civilian control over the military, particularly as he enjoyed strong political support from the U.S. for Turkey’s participation in the Persian Gulf War.

Ozal’s liberalizing economic reforms drew millions from Turkey’s rural areas into its cities, not only creating a middle class less tolerant of military intervention, but also changing the landscape of Turkish politics and challenging the hegemony of Turkey’s secular elites. However, Ozal’s death preceded the return of Necmettin Erbakan, and popular support for his party worried military leaders, who orchestrated a “post-modern coup” in 1997. Ten years later, however, the military’s “e-coup” failed, partly because
Erdogan, who has insisted the JDP is a center-right party without an Islamist agenda, enjoys greater external political support than Erbakan, who was considered an extremist.

Turkey’s civilian leaders now have more alternatives when seeking external political support than in the immediate post-World War II period. Turkey began diversifying its diplomatic relations in response to the Cyprus crisis, as it sought political support from Arab neighbors. Discontinuity in American political support also provided an impetus for renewed relations with the Soviet Union in the late 1960s. The EU accession process gave the Justice and Development Party the political authority to implement civil-military reforms, and Davutoglu’s “zero problems with neighbors” promoted even deeper regional ties, with mixed success.

Rather than co-opt the military either through a policy of acquiescence or deliberate politicization, Turkey’s civilian leaders in the 2000s have endeavored to subordinate the armed forces with the political authority granted by the EU accession process, as well as more coercive means such as mass arrests and prosecution. The civilian leadership may have calculated that since the “guardian of the secular state” ideology is so deeply ingrained within the military establishment, such extreme measures were necessary to wrest control of national security and foreign policy from the outspoken Turkish General Staff. As Turkey's allies increasingly adapt to Turkish civilians as the chief interlocutors for international relations, the Turkish Armed Forces’ influence in civil politics, even with a resumption of major U.S. military aid, will likely continue to decline.

Thus at present the political options for military interference in Turkish politics have narrowed. Turkey enjoys strong external political support despite receiving minimal U.S. military aid, both the president and the prime minister belong to the Justice and Development Party, which has revoked nearly all of the institutional prerogatives expanded by the military in 1960 and 1980, and the opposition parties are divided and ineffective. While secular elites may long for the military to reemerge as a political actor in the absence of a credible opposition, a critical mass within Turkish society rejects military interference, and believes some reconciliation between the secular nature of the republic and society’s Islamic roots must be made. The military has enjoyed popularity among a public that strongly identifies the Turkish Armed Forces with Turkey’s modern
nationhood; nevertheless, as a society that has been committed to democracy for more than six decades, the Turkish people chafe against overt interference in political affairs or assertive public statements that undermine elected leaders.

_U.S. Military Aid and the Professionalism of the Turkish Armed Forces_

Professionalism is understood by civil-military relations scholars to be a precondition for achieving objective civilian control over the military. U.S. military aid contributes to the professionalization of the recipient’s armed forces by providing weapons, equipment, education, and training, improving the military’s competence, or ability to perform as an effective fighting force. Yet this case study reveals that military aid has a more limited, and sometimes contradictory, impact on other aspects of professionalism, namely, a military’s coherency, or sense of corporateness, its mission exclusivity, and its respect for civilian political authority. In other words, the civilian political leadership will have difficulty establishing objective civilian control over the military if the military is fragmented or characterized by factions, if the military is distracted by interests apart from external defense, or if the military fundamentally lacks respect for civilian political authority.

While U.S. military aid did not shape the Turkish military’s conceptualization of itself as the guardian of the Kemalist republic, U.S. security cooperation did transform the TAF from an ill-equipped and underpaid defensive force in a politically neutral, post-imperial, single-party state to a modern fighting force with the second largest standing army in the world’s strongest military alliance, NATO. This transformation had a decisive impact on the capacity of the TAF to play an assertive guardianship role in Turkish politics, just as the transition to multi-party rule complicated Turkey’s domestic political stability. In the post-Second World War period, U.S. military aid had the same impact on Turkey as the presence of an imminent external threat: resources were dedicated to building the state’s military capabilities, even at the expense of other sectors of society, leading to an imbalance in political power between civilian and military elites.

Since the founding of the republic, the Turkish military has imagined itself to be the guarantor of Turkey’s territorial integrity and domestic stability, as well as the
guardian of Ataturk’s secular democracy. As such it is driven by a strong ideology, Kemalism, that pre-dates American military aid and contributes to its coherency. Yet the education and training of Turkish officers in the late 1940s and 1950s, along with the Turkish military presence in Korea, may have contributed to a divergence in views between more junior officers and entrenched senior military leaders with respect to the role of the military in civil politics. Many junior officers marched alongside Turkish students protesting against Prime Minister Menderes, and it was in fact mid-level officers who organized the coup in May 1960. General Gursel expelled 14 officers who advocated military dictatorship from the Committee of National Union, the junta that governed Turkey for 17 months. The Turkish military thwarted two more coup attempts by disgruntled officers in 1962 and 1963. This internal friction reflects a lack of coherency that could partially be attributed to U.S. military aid, although in the long-term the impact of education and training could be expected to contribute to greater continuity within the armed forces.

While in the late 1940s and 1950s the military was focused on building its capacity to provide for external defense and collective security, the assertive guardianship role assumed after the coup in 1960 undermined its mission exclusivity. General Gursel insisted the military would return to the barracks, but the armed forces intervened in 1971 and 1980, each time expanding its institutional prerogatives and further undermining its mission exclusivity. For example, after the coup in 1980, the National Security Council extended its oversight into multiple civil spheres, from education to media. In addition, internal security crises frequently pulled the military into policing roles, particularly in response to political terrorism. Guardianship and maintenance of martial law distract the military from what should be its main focus, external defense, and undermine its military readiness.

Finally, the Turkish military has struggled with how it defines respect for civilian political authority. Influential military figures such as Ismet Inonu and Cemal Gursel advocated for the supremacy of elected civilian government, but other officers have been frustrated by civilian corruption, incompetence, and pettiness, and have adopted a paternalistic attitude toward Turkish society. The military officers have often felt it is their duty to intervene when politicians who undermine secularism threaten to dominate
Turkish politics. While the EU reforms of the past decade have limited the institutional options for military interference in domestic politics, the degree to which respect for civilian authority has been internalized remains uncertain.
CHAPTER IV

EGYPT: MILITARY AID AND THE CONTEST FOR INFLUENCE IN EGYPTIAN POLITICS

Introduction

American policymakers pursued a defense arrangement and political alignment with Egypt in the early postwar years, trying unsuccessfully to link U.S. military aid to an agreement that would keep the Soviet Union from gaining a foothold in the Middle East. While some Egyptian officials saw the benefits of political alignment with the United States, many in Egyptian society associated Western defense cooperation with Britain’s colonial domination. In addition, while the Truman and Eisenhower administrations identified the Soviet Union as the primary threat to Middle East security, Egyptians perceived a greater threat from Israel. This disconnect complicated President Eisenhower’s efforts to reach an agreement on a defense arrangement, and provided an incentive for President Gamal Abdel Nasser to seek military support from the Soviet Union. Nasser’s pursuit of a pan-Arab agenda that undermined American interests in the Middle East prompted then-Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to conclude, the U.S. must “let Colonel Nasser realize that he cannot cooperate as he is doing with the Soviet Union and at the same time enjoy most-favored-nation treatment from the United States.”

Nasser’s successor, Anwar Sadat, quietly held the view that alignment with the United States was in Egypt’s best long-term interest, and spent his eleven years as president pursuing the U.S. military aid that has underpinned the strategic partnership with Egypt since the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty was signed in 1979. Strong bilateral ties between the U.S. and Egypt have contributed to regional stability by ensuring peace with Israel, privileged access to the Suez Canal by U.S. naval forces, and intelligence-sharing, interests that are just as critical in the post-Cold War period as they were in the 1980s.

1Memorandum from the Secretary of State to the President, March 28, 1956, FRUS 15, no. 223.
Mubarak enjoyed the enhanced status that accompanied U.S. military and political support, which enabled him to play the role of mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While Egypt was initially isolated from the Arab world in reaction to its separate peace with Israel, its political, strategic, and economic importance has rendered it the object of rivalry as regional and great powers compete for influence in the post-Mubarak period.

This chapter will examine the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of the Egyptian military in civil politics. U.S. military aid since 1979 has not only contributed to a balance of capabilities between Egypt and Israel, but also has encouraged security cooperation between the two states despite the fact that many Egyptians consider Israel to be the principle external threat to their security. In addition, political alignment backed by U.S. military aid bolstered President Hosni Mubarak’s regime stability by allowing him to satisfy the corporate interests of his military while directing resources that might otherwise have been spent on defense toward welfare programs. American political support was also instrumental in leading international efforts to rescue Egypt from economic crises in the 1970s, late 1980s, early 1990s, and most recently during Egypt’s short-lived democratic transition. Defense cooperation that includes the biannual joint military exercise Bright Star, information sharing, International Military Education and Training, and the extension of credits for the sale of modern equipment and weaponry have contributed to the Egyptian Armed Forces’ (EAF) professionalization.

By bolstering Egypt’s defense capabilities, supporting the political leadership, and contributing to the professionalization of its armed forces, U.S. military aid should have rendered military intervention in civil politics less likely. However, since the end of Hosni Mubarak’s presidency, the military has deepened its involvement in Egypt’s political sphere by carving out a preeminent role in foreign and national security policymaking, protecting its corporate interests from civilian oversight in the 2012 and 2014 constitutions, directly intervening to remove an elected president in the summer of 2013, and co-opting the civilian security services to minimize political opposition ahead of the presidential elections in March, 2014.

How can we explain the expansion of the Egyptian military’s role in civil politics despite more than thirty years of U.S. military aid? President Nasser was determined to depoliticize and professionalize the military after their disastrous defeat against Israel in
June, 1967. The Soviet Union sent thousands of military and civilian technical advisors to Egypt, satisfying the military’s desire to prepare for a second war with Israel to reclaim territory lost in 1967. Yet Sadat’s determination to realign Egypt with the West led to panic in the officer corps as Sadat began expelling the Soviet advisors, and military aid from Moscow slowed in the wake of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

Throughout the 1970s, the Nixon, Ford and Carter administrations supported Sadat’s efforts to open Egypt’s economy and improve relations with Israel, with the goal of leading the “only world power in direct contact with both sides” of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Sadat continued to subordinate the military to his political authority, but he did not establish objective civilian control; rather, he appointed top posts based on loyalty rather than merit, and assigned non-defense related activities to the armed forces. During President Mubarak’s rule, continuity in U.S. military aid ideally would have contributed to a stable domestic political environment within which Egypt’s government could establish objective civilian control over the military. Military aid steadily grew through the 1980s during the Reagan administration, and has been consistently $1.3 billion annually since 1987. Yet rather than attempt to establish objective control over the military, President Mubarak filled top posts based on loyalty rather than merit, and encouraged the military to expand its economic enterprises to ensure the military’s interests were linked with the survival of his regime. Mubarak also granted the military a great deal of autonomy, which precluded civilian oversight over military affairs.

The expectation that U.S. military aid would continue regardless of regime behavior, as it had from 1980 through 2010, may have reassured the Egyptian military leadership that aid would persist despite the expansion of the military’s political role after the January 25 Revolution in 2011, including the intervention that removed democratically - elected leader Mohamed Morsi from power in July, 2013. Egypt’s leaders might also have been reassured by the multiple alternative suppliers of military, political and economic support; regional powers such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and Iran vie for influence and U.S. rivals such as Russia and China seek closer defense

---

cooperation with the latest Egyptian regime, led by former defense minister Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

This case study examines the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of the Egyptian military in civil politics during four periods: from the initial postwar effort to secure a defense arrangement with Egypt to President Nasser's unexpected death in October, 1970, during Anwar Sadat's presidency from October, 1970, until his assassination in October, 1981, during the Mubarak era, from October, 1981 until his resignation in February, 2011, and in the post-Mubarak period. While military aid, along with the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty of 1979, decisively reduced the likelihood of hostilities erupting between the two countries, Mubarak continued to link the transnational threat posed by militant Islamic extremism with non-violent Islamist opposition groups to justify their exclusion from Egyptian politics. Mubarak also relied on the police security services of the Interior Ministry, rather than the military, to monitor and suppress these groups, in an effort to keep the military out of politics and minimize the chances of a political rival emerging from the officer corps. More recently, Egypt's military leaders have linked non-violent Muslim opposition groups with the terrorist threat to justify violence against activists and pro-Morsi supporters, and have even extended these measures against virtually any party that criticizes the regime of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

American political support, patronage networks that connect the interests of the business elite and public sector with the survival of the regime, and a willingness to use police to monitor and intimidate civil society, contributed to the regime stability of President Mubarak. U.S. military aid also allowed Mubarak to placate the military in spite of its diminished political status by bolstering the development of independent economic enterprises. While U.S. military aid facilitated military – to – military contacts that provided some opportunities to model liberal-democratic norms of civil-military relations, aid has been disproportionately spent on sophisticated weaponry at the expense of training that might have increased the competency of the EAF. Keeping the military out of politics was likely beneficial to the military's coherency, but the inclination to use American military aid to enhance the productivity of the military's commercial enterprises has undermined the military's mission exclusivity. The post-Mubarak era has
been a test of the military’s professionalism; while the initial observations gave Egyptians and U.S. officials reason for optimism, the expansion of military’s role in civil politics necessitates a critical reappraisal of the military aid program.

The Nasser Era

In the early postwar period, the United States sought to mitigate the potential Soviet threat to Egypt’s security by establishing a Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO) centered around Egypt. In anticipation of a formal arrangement for mutual defense, the U.S. provided political support to both the monarch and coup-leaders Mohammed Naguib and Gamal Abdel Nasser, until Egyptians’ reluctance to “take sides” in the competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union and the perception of the Israeli threat prompted Nasser to turn to Moscow both for arms and political support. The professionalism of Egypt’s armed forces eroded as Nasser relied on officers’ personal loyalty to guarantee the security of his regime. After slowly losing control of the armed forces to its popular leader, Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer, Nasser used the military defeat in 1967 to purge politicized officers, and turned to a newly-empowered civilian security sector to protect his regime. Relations with the Soviet Union deepened as Soviet arms and advisors were invited to professionalize and modernize the Egyptian Armed Forces in preparation for the liberation of the Sinai.

This section is divided into three parts. The first will recount the security concerns of Egypt’s government in the postwar period, as demands for the expulsion of British troops and the termination of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty prompted the Egyptian government, the United States and its allies, and the Eastern bloc to pursue alternative defense arrangements that would provide for regional stability while advancing their own strategic interests. Despite the external threat posed by Israel, Nasser and his group of Free Officers were likely more driven to overthrow King Farouk because of growing resentment for the monarch, who regularly interfered in military affairs and was thought to be overly-deferential to the British; rather than build a professional army capable of meeting the Israeli threat, Nasser relied on loyal, politicized officers to lead his nation-building efforts, which ultimately led to the disastrous military defeat in June 1967.
The second part will examine both the external and internal political support that bolstered President Nasser’s government throughout his rule. While the U.S. wanted to maintain access and influence even in the absence of military aid, the Johnson and Nixon administrations concluded that as long as Egypt remained a client state of the Soviet Union, the U.S. would provide only minimal political support for his presidency while increasing military and political support to Egypt’s regional rivals, including Israel and Saudi Arabia. Nasser’s inability to establish a broad social base of political support undermined his presidency, leaving him few options when the military’s senior leadership began to challenge his authority ahead of the 1967 war with Israel. Finally, the third part will discuss how Nasser’s politicization of the military undermined its professionalism despite Soviet attempts to modernize the EAF from the mid-1950s through the 1960s. Nasser blamed Egypt’s defeat in 1967 on the military’s presence in civil politics, and used the public criticism following the war to purge politicized officers and improve the military’s competency, coherency, mission exclusivity, and respect for political authority, in preparation for reclaiming Egypt’s lost territory.

Divergent Threat Perceptions: U.S. Versus Soviet Military Aid

With respect to American foreign policy in the Middle East, protecting the region from Soviet expansion and maintaining control over oil lanes in the Persian Gulf were the most important strategic objectives in the post-World War II, Cold War period. From the perspective of Egypt’s leaders, however, the threats posed by the new Jewish state and other regional rivals were more urgent. The Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy administrations struggled to accommodate the rise in pan-Arab nationalism, minimize Communist gains, and maintain a balance of capabilities that would mitigate Arab-Israeli tension and bolster the region’s external defense. As Nasser’s Egypt increasingly began to resemble a Soviet client state, however, the Johnson administration’s policy shifted; U.S. support for a preponderance of Israeli capability contributed to Egypt’s disastrous defeat in 1967, precipitating a dramatic change in Egyptian civil-military relations.

In the early postwar period, U.S. policymakers envisaged Egypt, as the most populous Arab country and the gatekeeper of the Suez Canal, at the center of a NATO-
like defense arrangement that would keep the Soviets out of the Middle East. American war planners believed access to British military installations, particularly those in the Suez Canal Zone, would be critical for protecting the Middle East in the event of war with the Soviet Union. However, Egyptians became increasingly discontent with the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty, which committed the United Kingdom to Egypt’s external defense and legitimized the presence of nearly 75,000 British troops stationed alongside the Egyptian military to secure the Suez Canal. In January 1947, the Egyptian government appealed to the United Nations Security Council to terminate the treaty, and later that year the Egyptian Prime Minister, Mahmoud Fahmy Nokrashy Pasha, travelled to Washington to ask for U.S. assistance in modernizing the Egyptian Armed Forces and constructing a small arms production industry in anticipation of assuming greater responsibility for regional defense. Nokrashy Pasha desired close military-to-military relations, with Egyptian officers enrolled in U.S. Army and Navy training schools.

While the U.S. was focused on the threat posed by the Soviet Union, however, King Farouk ordered an ill-prepared Egyptian military to join Palestinians in attacks on Jewish settlements, cities, and Jewish armed forces in response to the creation of an independent state of Israel on May 14, 1948. The king’s order to attack against the advice of the military’s general staff incurred deep resentment on the part of Egyptian officers, particularly those belonging to Gamal Abdel Nasser’s secret society of Free Officers.

Understanding that Arab-Israeli enmity was complicating efforts to negotiate a new defense arrangement, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France committed to the maintenance of stability in the Middle East through the Tripartite Declaration of 1950, although American officials were reluctant to make Arab-Israeli peace a precondition for MEDO. State Department officials believed U.S. military aid would not only encourage Egypt to formalize ties with the U.S., but could also promote a balance of

---

capabilities between the Arab states and Israel that would lead to a more stable
environment for future peace negotiations.  

U.S. policymakers were hopeful that the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC),
the military junta established to govern after the coup in July, 1952, would be amenable
to peace with Israel, as officers had confided to Washington officials that mitigating the
external threat would allow them to focus attention on domestic reforms. In addition,
some, including the Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, predicted Egypt
would request military aid once an agreement was reached regarding regional defense
and the Suez base. 

Unfortunately, the nationalist sentiment that called for the abrogation of the
Anglo-Egyptian treaty worked against the government’s entry into a formal arrangement
with the United States. Egyptians suspected Western efforts to establish the headquarters
of a Near East Command in their country was another attempt to dominate their politics.
Many Egyptians preferred to maintain the country’s neutrality, and perceived approving
the U.S. intervention in Korea, the Atlantic Pact, and MEDO as “taking sides,” which
would preclude Egypt’s efforts to establish positive relations with Soviet bloc countries.
While Egypt’s leaders announced, “Egypt today stands in every respect with the West,”
they insisted they could not join a formal defensive alliance because the Egyptian public
would consider it “another form of colonial domination.” The U.S. promised military
aid to Egypt in return for assurances the Egyptians would secure the Suez Canal upon the
withdrawal of British military personnel, and the Western powers agreed to sell defensive
weapons to both Arabs and Israelis “without favoritism.” 

---

7 F.R.U.S., Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State, September 23,
1952, FRUS 9, no. 492.
8 Memorandum of Conversation by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and
African Affairs (Henry A. Byroade), August 8, 1952, FRUS 9, no. 82.
10 Albion Ross, "U.S. Said to Lose Backing in Egypt: Korean War Turn is Reported to Have Switched
Pan-Arabism," in The Middle East and the United States, ed. David W. Lesch and Mark L. Haas (Boulder,
treaty signed in October, 1954, would allow British military personnel to return if there was a Soviet attack on Turkey or any Arab state.\textsuperscript{13}

Yet Israel's Gaza raid on February 28, 1955, once again put the Arab-Israeli conflict ahead of U.S. Cold War concerns, and Nasser rejected the U.S. condition that a small U.S. military mission be allowed in Egypt to administer military aid.\textsuperscript{14} U.S. officials were frustrated months later by the revelation that Egypt had reached an arms deal with Czechoslovakia.\textsuperscript{15} President Nasser and Dr. Ahmed Hussein, the Egyptian Ambassador in Washington, argued U.S. delays in providing military aid forced the Egyptian government to accept the Soviets' offer to exchange arms for Egyptian cotton and rice.

The Eisenhower administration grew more alarmed as Nasser's long-term vision of establishing a union of Arab republics became apparent. The anti-monarch campaign included efforts to overthrow the Hashemite families in Iraq and Jordan, and, most dangerously, the removal of King Saud in Saudi Arabia, which would directly threaten American strategic interests.\textsuperscript{16} Despite these concerns, the U.S. intervened on behalf of Egypt during the Suez Crisis in late 1956, when Britain, France and Israel decided to use force to regain control of the nationalized Suez Canal. Israeli troops landed near Port Said and advanced into the heavily populated Gaza Strip on October 30, followed by British and French air attacks on October 31. The U.S. forestalled a Soviet intervention by pressuring France and the UK to accept a UN Security Council resolution calling for their retreat.\textsuperscript{17} Nasser agreed to host an emergency international UN Force (UNEF), composed of approximately 6,000 men from ten countries, to monitor the cessation of hostilities, and the U.S., Italy and Switzerland provided logistical support.

American policymakers continued to believe a balance of military capabilities between Israel and Egypt was crucial for Middle East stability, and John F. Kennedy pledged to maintain that balance in his presidential campaign.\textsuperscript{18} Yet regional conflict,

\textsuperscript{13} Hahn, "National Security Concerns in U.S. Policy Toward Egypt 1949-1956," 84.
\textsuperscript{14} Malik Mutti, "The United States and Nasserist Pan-Arabism," ibid., 130.
\textsuperscript{16} Message from Prime Minister Eden to President Eisenhower, March 15, 1956, \textit{FRUS} 15, no. 197.
\textsuperscript{17} Hahn, "National Security Concerns in U.S. Policy Toward Egypt 1949-1956," 86.
including the overthrow of the Yemeni monarchy and Syria’s withdrawal from the United
Arab Republic, complicated Kennedy’s efforts. Kennedy sent a circular to Arab leaders
in August 1961, and Nasser, hoping to preserve bilateral ties, responded positively,
leading to two years of personal correspondence during which 75 letters were
exchanged.\(^1\) Wary of the improvement in Egyptian military capability, however, in
August 1962, the U.S. decided for the first time to provide a major weapons system,
Hawk missiles, to Israel. Kennedy also agreed to send a wing of jet fighters and bombers
to Dhahran Airbase to demonstrate Washington’s commitment to Saudi Arabia’s defense
after Egyptian air and naval forces bombed the Saudi cities of Najran and Jizan during
Yemen’s civil war.

The Johnson administration grew increasingly worried that Soviet aid to Egypt
was shifting the Arab-Israeli balance of power, and Johnson decided to put more pressure
on Nasser than his predecessor. He suspended American wheat shipments to Cairo
(subsidized under U.S. Public Law 480), and proposed a generous military aid package to
Israel that would convince Arab leaders they could not hope to win a regional arms race.
Military assistance to Israel surged from $44.2 million in 1963 to $995.3 million by
1968.\(^2\) The American commitment to supporting the Yemeni monarchy, also backed by
the British, Israelis, and Saudis, pushed Egyptian forces, which had intervened to support
the Yemeni revolutionaries, deeper into a quagmire as Nasser was forced to expand the
Egyptian troop deployment. President Nasser, who accused Washington of making
“astonishing” demands on the Egyptian government in exchange for aid, balked at U.S.
efforts to undermine his regime.\(^3\)

Nasser cut ties with the U.S. after Egypt’s defeat in 1967, blaming the Johnson
administration’s support of Israel for the Israeli Defense Force’s overwhelming military
superiority. On June 5, between 8 and 11:30 am, Israel sent 196 fighter-bombers into
Egypt, and destroyed 85% of their air force. Over the next six days, the EAF lost 700
tanks, 450 field guns, and 17,500 soldiers.\(^4\) Nasser then looked to Soviet weaponry and
advisors to help prepare the Egyptian Armed Forces for their next war, during which they

\(^2\) Mufti, "The United States and Nasserist Pan-Arabism," 141.
\(^4\) Kandil, Solders, Spies, and Statesmen, 79.
would try to reclaim the territory lost to Israel. Rather than use the external threat to justify an expansion of the military’s role in civil politics, however, Nasser used the defeat to purge politicized officers and subordinate the military to his political authority. He believed that this was the only way to instigate the professionalization necessary to build an army capable of facing Israel.

Domestic and International Political Support for Nasser

The United States wanted to reach an agreement on military aid to Egypt in order to secure its political alignment at the expense of the Soviet Union. For Nasser, however, the pan-Arab movement was far more important, and he recognized early in the Cold War how to exploit the superpower rivalry to gain concessions from both that served the cause of Arab unity as he envisioned it. He capably took advantage of Washington’s fears of Communist party gains to neutralize regional rivals such as the Hashemite regime in Iraq. While the perception that American policymakers favored Israel at Egypt’s expense complicated U.S.-Egyptian relations throughout the Nasser era, U.S. political support was instrumental in bolstering Nasser’s regional prestige, for example when Washington tacitly condoned the military coup of 1952, and when the U.S. pressured Israel, France, and Britain to retreat during the Suez crisis in 1956. The Johnson Administration more assertively supported Israel as well as Saudi Arabia as Soviet aid to Egypt threatened the Egyptian-Israeli balance of capabilities, and as Nasser’s radical Arab nationalism disrupted Washington’s other Middle Eastern allies. Nasser increasingly looked to the Soviet Union for political support as U.S. – Egyptian relations deteriorated in the mid-1960s, and Nasser found it difficult to extricate his military from Yemen’s civil war. The Six Day War would be the most disastrous political defeat of all, however, heralding the end of Nasser’s pan-Arab movement. While Nasser had relied on the military for political support throughout his rule, it was that defeat that convinced him that politicization had ultimately weakened his presidency, and he turned to the Egyptian public, the Soviet Union, and a newly empowered Interior Ministry for support in the last years of his rule.

The U.S. offered political support for Egypt’s leadership in the late 1940s, but Egyptians were reluctant to take sides in the Cold War. In addition, Egyptian officials
recognized they could manipulate the competitive nature of superpower relations to gain concessions that served Egypt's interests. For example, after the start of the Korean War, Egyptian politicians suggested if Egypt blocked the passage of Korean aid through the Suez Canal, the U.S. would pressure the Great Britain to concede to Egyptian demands to evacuate British troops. Legislators also proposed agreements with the Eastern bloc and the recognition of Communist China that could be used as leverage in negotiations with the Western powers. While Egypt finally made a statement condemning North Korean aggression on July 11, 1950, they made an effort to maintain their neutrality by abstaining from the UN Security Council resolution that authorized sending armed forces into Korea.

Egyptian leaders insisted they could not formally align with the U.S. because their public would perceive it as another form of colonial domination. Yet along with the anti-colonial, nationalist sentiment brewing among the Egyptian public was growing frustration with the political establishment. Between 1923 and 1952, Egypt's constitutional monarchy had been governed by a tripartite arrangement that included the monarchy, the ruling political party (al-Wafd), and British authority. Egyptians were frustrated by what they perceived as the monarchy's over-accommodating stance toward the British. U.S. policymakers, many of whom believed a strong, popular leader was necessary to drive Egypt's post-colonial modernization, discreetly offered support to Colonel Nasser and the Free Officers in their bid to overthrow Egypt's monarch. On the evening of July 23, 1952, eighty junior military officers from all service branches seized control of the Egyptian armed forces. The top military leaders were arrested, and officers who did not support the coup were dismissed. The coup-plotters had alerted the American Embassy shortly before, pledging to protect U.S. interests. When King Farouk appealed to the U.S. to intervene on his behalf, the U.S. refrained, and urged the British not to intervene. The king abdicated on August 2, 1952, and shortly thereafter the republic was born.

25 Mufti, "The United States and Nasserist Pan-Arabism," 129.
26 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 15.
Despite the support from the U.S., President Naguib (the senior officer asked to serve as figurehead for the more junior coup-plotters), and later President Nasser would continue to resist entering a formal arrangement with the U.S., possibly out of concern this would endanger the political support from fellow Arab League states that they relied on for a range of issues, including British expulsion from the Suez Canal Zone.\textsuperscript{27} While some army officers had tentatively acknowledged the benefits of a peace agreement with Israel,\textsuperscript{28} by June, 1953, the prospects of a unilateral peace agreement between Egypt and Israel were fading, particularly as these Arab League states were against breaking the "united Arab front against Israel."\textsuperscript{29}

The charismatic Nasser won support for pan-Arab nationalism by evicting the British from Egyptian bases; however, he established a loyal domestic following by initiating redistributive land reforms and constructing a system of generous welfare benefits that included subsidies for basic commodities and guaranteed state employment for all university and high school graduates.\textsuperscript{30} The land reforms not only boosted his popularity among Egyptian peasants, but also diminished the political and economic power of the landed elites. Remaining political challenges posed by monarchists or landlords were neutralized by loyal military officers. Nasser and the RCC also minimized political opposition from the private business and commercial sectors by nationalizing numerous companies and industries.\textsuperscript{31}

The provisional constitution of 1953 created a legal-constitutional framework that privileged a strong executive at the expense of the legislative and judicial branches of government. While Nasser enjoyed political support from the U.S., the USSR, and fellow Arab League states, he was determined to destroy internal political challengers before they could emerge. Al-Wafd and the Muslim Brotherhood were disbanded, and Nasser purged nearly anyone he thought could threaten his rule. Within the military he

\textsuperscript{28} "Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State."
\textsuperscript{29} Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Parker T. Hart), June 23, 1953, \textit{FRUS} 9, no. 629.
established multiple overlapping security institutions, several of which were tasked with domestic surveillance and intelligence gathering.

The U.S. provided nearly $86 million in economic assistance from 1952 – 1956, but military aid was stalled by Nasser's unwillingness to accept U.S. conditions, particularly the presence of a military mission to oversee its administration. U.S. officials' grew frustrated when Nasser chose to purchase weapons from Czechoslovakia in 1955, and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles concluded Egypt could no longer enjoy most favored nation status while obstructing U.S. interests in the region. Dulles thus retracted the offer to finance the Aswan High Dam, prompting Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal.

U.S. support during the Suez War provided a political victory for Nasser that emboldened him to expand the public sector even further, and the crisis served as a pretext for government seizure of British and French assets in Egypt. Nasser's decision to send Egyptian troops to the Syrian port of Latakia in October, 1957, in response to the massing of Turkish troops on the Syrian border, boosted his popularity throughout the Arab world and set the stage for the Egyptian-Syrian unification. Nasser's anti-Communist speech on December 23, 1958, frustrated Soviet General Secretary Nikita Khruschev while reassuring Washington, where lawmakers subsequently approved millions in economic aid and development loans.

Nasser's political strength would ultimately be undermined by the failure of his economic policies. While some within his closest group of advisors believed the state had gone far enough in public ownership, after launching Egypt's Five Year Plan for economic development in 1960, Nasser announced the "socialist decrees" in July 1961, giving the state an unprecedented level of control over the economy. All of the remaining private banks and insurance companies were nationalized, along with shipping companies, firms in heavy and basic industries, pharmaceuticals, utility companies, and construction firms; companies were required to sell majority shares to public agencies, and the state took control of all aspects of foreign trade. In addition, a new land reform law lowered the ceiling on individual land ownership even further. According to historian

32 Ibid., 68.
and political economist John Waterbury, Syria’s business community was so alarmed by the decrees they were motivated to align with Syria’s military to plot the coup that precipitated the end of the UAR in 1963, dealing a major blow to Nasser’s prestige.\textsuperscript{35} The collapse of the pan-Arab union increased Nasser’s anxiety over political opposition emerging from the private sector, prompting him to sequester the property of 167 “reactionary capitalists” and suspend the political rights of thousands of bourgeoisie.\textsuperscript{36}

Syria’s abrupt secession from the UAR may have prompted Nasser’s intervention in Yemen’s civil war, where Nasser hoped to keep the pan-Arab movement alive by supporting Nasserist Yemeni officers in their battle against Saudi-backed royalists. While the Kennedy administration offered greater economic assistance (including the three year PL-480 agreement to sell $430 million worth of surplus food) in exchange for Nasser’s continued anti-Communist stance, U.S.-Egyptian relations broke down once again as Washington, taking advantage of Nasser’s waning influence, strengthened relations with Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel.

Nasser tightened his grip on Egyptian politics by forming a new political party, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU). Nasser ensured the 1964 constitution left little room for opposition forces to challenge his political authority. The constitution stipulated that only ASU members could participate in elections to the National Assembly, the body tasked with nominating the president, where half of the legislative seats were reserved for “peasants and workers” tied to the government’s patronage networks.\textsuperscript{37} Rather than serving as an active political base, however, the ASU was filled with people looking for special privileges and rents from the state. Nasser relied on his security services to guarantee his election: his presidency would be affirmed by a popular referendum closely supervised by the Ministry of the Interior and the ASU, which was staffed with military personnel and included a security organization called the Vanguard that was tasked with monitoring political trends among its members. State security courts were established to address political insubordination. Thus Egypt’s deteriorating security environment from 1963 – 1967, including a weakening of U.S. support, prompted a greater reliance on the

\textsuperscript{35} Waterbury, \textit{The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat: The Political Economy of Two Regimes}, 73-74.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 74-75.
\textsuperscript{37} Kassem, \textit{Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule}, 18-19.
military for political support. Yet the military, under the leadership of Field Marshall Amer, would soon reveal itself to be a major challenge to Nasser's presidency.

Khruschev's visit to Egypt in May 1964, led the Johnson Administration to cut aid altogether. Meanwhile, Nasser's socialist state began to crumble under the weight of its expansive public sector. The intervention in Yemen was becoming increasingly expensive, but Nasser could not find a face-saving way to extract his forces. His second five-year plan was put aside while he dealt with economic crisis, and he was losing his control over the military. The June war, which Nasser might have thought could provide a political victory for the Arab unity movement, was instead a decisive blow to Nasserism. The heavy losses of military equipment and personnel, along with lost revenue from the Suez Canal, the Sinai Oil Fields, and tourism, exacerbated Egypt's economic problems. Estrangement from the U.S. left Nasser with little choice but to deepen ties with the Soviet Union. The economic and political fallout of the war forced Egypt to retreat from its ambitious development programs and redirect resources to rebuilding the armed forces.

The Nixon Administration made an effort to repair relations after the Six Day War. After trying unsuccessfully to negotiate a Middle East settlement by advancing the "Rogers Plan," which called for Israel to withdraw to 1949 armistice lines, Nixon heeded National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger's advice that the U.S. should not push Israel for concessions as long as the leading Arab state, Egypt, was aligned with Moscow.

The Politicization of the Egyptian Armed Forces

The Egyptian military played a dominant role in civil politics after the military coup of 1952. President Nasser relied on loyal military personnel to fill political posts throughout the government and in the countryside, and the military staffed security institutions to monitor dissent within the government bureaucracy and society. Yet the military became increasingly loyal to the popular Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer, who

---

38 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 79.
40 Waterbury, The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat: The Political Economy of Two Regimes, 112.
established patronage networks among the officers and allowed their discipline and military readiness to deteriorate. Nasser's lack of control over the military was frighteningly evident when Amer decided to stage a show of force in the Sinai against Nasser's wishes. The military defeat gave Nasser an opportunity to fire Amer and set about de-politicizing the military, and Nasser looked to the Soviet Union to modernize and professionalize the military in preparation for its next war against Israel.

In the months after the 1952 coup, President Muhammad Naguib and other officers, particularly from the artillery and cavalry, favored a "return to the barracks," with a gradual de-politicization of the military, return to constitutional government, and military subordination to civilian authority. Nasser and his circle of loyal Free Officers favored a revolution imposed from above, and believed an immediate return to multi-party politics would allow al-Wafd and the Muslim Brotherhood to reestablish the old order. Nasser used the post-coup governing military junta, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), to contain Naguib and minimize his influence on policy. Despite a strong following among the public and within the military, Naguib was marginalized by Nasser, and eventually forced to retreat from Egyptian politics.

Nasser undermined the mission exclusivity of the military by using loyal military officers to staff multiple competing security institutions with overlapping responsibilities. While independently-minded officers were reassigned to administrative positions or given civilian posts, loyal military personnel were given domestic intelligence and security responsibilities. For example, the Office of the Commander in Chief for Political Guidance (OCC), tasked with monitoring suspicious activities and political views within the army, including the Free Officers, created a network of politically ambitious officers that by 1967 exceeded 65,000 in number. A Republican Guard was established and given the task of protecting the regime from the rest of the military, and a National Guard was created to train civilians loyal to the revolution.

While initially the RCC formulated national policy, the constitution of 1956, drafted once Nasser had thoroughly consolidated his political authority, gave Nasser the right to appoint and dismiss ministers, allowing him to replace many of the Free Officers

---

42 Finer, The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics, 37.
43 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 18-22.
with civilians. Thus by this time there was a clear distinction between Nasser's political authority and the military as an institution. The 1956 constitution created a political organization called the National Union, which ideally could be used to mobilize popular political support for the regime. Nasser staffed the National Union with loyal military personnel, enabling him to personally screen nominees for election to the National Assembly, which was reinstated in 1957 but dissolved by a new constitution in 1958.

There is little evidence that the military's professionalism improved between its defeat in 1948 and the Six Day War in 1967. While the Egyptian armed forces were receiving some military aid from the Soviet Union, corruption and rent-seeking behavior ensured that funds that might have been used to bolster Egypt’s military capability were often spent on patronage networks or personal privileges. The military’s coherency was undermined by the fact that officers were in constant competition with one another, with promotions based on loyalty rather than merit. The focus on domestic intelligence, including monitoring political trends and neutralizing political challengers, violated the principle of mission exclusivity, which calls for a singular focus on defense against external threats. In addition, a good portion of the officer corps came to lack respect for Egypt’s political authority.

By the time of the Six Day War in 1967, Nasser had lost his grip on the military, which had become increasingly loyal to its commander, Field Marshal Amer, a long-time confidante of Nasser. The ASU was becoming more dominant just as the Yemen campaign was eroding the political influence of the military. To make matters worse, Egypt’s Arab neighbors accused the Egyptian forces of "hiding" behind the United Nations forces stationed in the Sinai since 1956. Amer believed the only way to restore the reputation of the EAF was a demonstration of force; thus when the Soviets reported that Israeli troops were positioning on the Syrian border, Amer, citing the Egyptian-Syrian mutual defense pact, demanded that Nasser order Egyptian troops to the Sinai.45

Amer calculated that the military’s presence in the Sinai would be enough to restore the popularity of military, and advocated for the closing of the Strait of Tiran despite Nasser’s reservations. Even though the bulk of the armed forces were untrained,

---

undisciplined, and ill-prepared for battle, and lacked the skill to operate the military equipment provided by the Soviet Union, Amer told his chief of operations, “There is no need to worry, this is nothing but a military demonstration.”

Nasser used the defeat as an opportunity to force Amer to resign over the objections of Amer's allies, some of whom were willing to stage a coup to oust Nasser. Nasser, who still enjoyed Egyptian public support, was not only able to expel Amer, but also purge his loyal security forces, arrest hundreds of officers, and set about depoliticizing and professionalizing the military, to include restoring foreign intelligence gathering as the primary mission of the military intelligence services, which had been focused on domestic spying for over a decade. Nasser, along with the war minister and the chief of staff, reduced the number of higher-ranking officers, canceled the rank of field marshal, and assumed responsibility of the armed forces, including its personnel and defense budget.

Nasser recognized he had to demilitarize politics, and would assign another intelligence body to monitor political trends within the armed forces. Nasser had relied too heavily on the military to secure his regime; with the military subordinated, he would need to find another guarantor. Nasser chose to empower the Interior Ministry, and established a civilian security system with a massive coercive arm called the Central Security Forces (CSF). The CSF, a paramilitary force with antiriot shock units comprised of military conscripts, responded forcefully to massive student and worker protests in February and November of 1968. The police forces' use of live ammunition to quell the demonstrations marked the transition from military to police repression.

Sadat's Pursuit of U.S. Military Aid, Western Political Alignment, and the Subordination of the Egyptian Military

By the time of Nasser's unexpected death on September 28, 1970, the U.S. was perceived as increasing the principal external threat to Egypt by providing Israel with

---

46 Ibid., 79-80.
48 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 93-97.
military aid and withholding political, economic, and military support from the Egyptian regime. While the prospects for a coup had increased when Nasser was trying to expel the popular Field Marshal Amer, military intervention in civil politics was unlikely by 1970, as Nasser had thoroughly purged politically-minded officers, and the newly empowered Interior Ministry brutally suppressed dissenting views within society.

Anwar al-Sadat’s preference for alignment with the United States offered new opportunities for Washington to influence Egypt’s foreign policy and contribute to Egypt’s political stability and external defense. The widely-held perception that the “weak” Sadat’s tenure would be short-lived allowed Sadat to outmaneuver the well-entrenched powers within Nasser’s security establishment, including the leader of the ASU and the Interior Minister.49 As the decade progressed, rapprochement with the West, accompanied by the political support of Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter, made Egypt safer from external threats by guaranteeing an Israeli-Arab balance of military capabilities and culminating in a peace treaty with Israel. Yet Egypt’s military was frustrated by Sadat’s post-October War concessions, and felt less secure after the conditions placed on their presence in the Sinai. Sadat’s foreign policy also isolated Egypt from the rest of the Arab world, and his economic policies provoked domestic discontent. His subordination of the military was taken to an extreme, as he purged talented, experienced officers and dismissed the professional expertise of the military leadership.

This section is divided into three parts, the first of which explains how Sadat’s pursuit of U.S. military aid, which he believed would bolster Egypt’s security, required the subordination of the military to his political authority. The second part will review how Sadat continued Nasser’s practice of minimizing potential political rivals by appointing only the most loyal personnel to top government and military posts, and relying on an expanding civilian security sector, a new capitalist elite, and external political support from the West to support his regime.50 The section will conclude by examining the impact of Sadat’s policies on the professionalism of the military; while professional officers welcomed the de-politicization of the military, they became

49 Ibid., 99-111.
50 Hashim, "The Egyptian Military, Part One: From the Ottomans Through Sadat."
increasingly alarmed as Sadat obstructed the promotion of the most qualified personnel, pushed for economic development roles for the military, and allowed the military’s competency to decline precipitously from its peak during the October War until Sadat’s assassination in 1981. Thus while Sadat successfully subordinated the military to his political authority, he did not establish objective civilian control, and his policies undermined the professionalism of the Egyptian armed forces.

Sadat’s Shift: Seeking U.S. Military Aid for External Defense

When Sadat assumed the presidency, the military high command was focused on preparing to liberate the occupied Sinai from what they believed to be the principle external threat to Egypt’s security: Israel. While Nasser and the military believed Soviet advanced weaponry was indispensible if the EAF was going to launch a successful campaign against the Israeli Defense Forces, Sadat quietly held the view that Egypt’s security would best be guaranteed by a U.S.-brokered peace agreement with Israel. From this perspective the 1973 war can be seen as a demonstration of Egyptian force designed to change the status quo just enough to bring the U.S. and Israel to the negotiating table. The Egyptian-Soviet client-patron relationship was terminated, and Egypt began receiving military aid from the U.S. Sadat’s efforts to find a political solution to the Israel problem culminated in the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of 1979.

While the Soviet Union continued to send military aid to Egypt, and a treaty of friendship was signed in 1971, relations were increasingly strained as Sadat moved further away from the economic and political policies Moscow favored. Moscow was irritated by Sadat’s lack of commitment to socialist principles and Communist ideology, and under pressure from allies who opposed sending Soviet military aid to non-Communist states.51 The tension culminated in a seemingly abrupt change of policy when Sadat expelled 20,000 Soviet military experts (without prior consultation with his military) in July 1972.

---

However, in the context of Sadat’s repeated (but unsuccessful) overtures toward Washington, the move might be interpreted as an attempt to demonstrate his determination to align with the West and pursue a political, rather than military, solution to the Arab-Israeli problem. While Sadat had been impressed with President Eisenhower’s ability to turn Egypt’s military defeat into a political victory in 1956, even his advisers who favored rapprochement with the West wanted to do so from a position of strength, which they believed possible only with a strong, well-equipped military capable of driving the Israelis out of the Sinai by force.52

However, the U.S. did not have the same sense of urgency in reaching a political solution as did Sadat. The Nixon administration had decided not to pursue an Arab-Israeli negotiated peace as long as Egypt was a client state of the Soviet Union. National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger was reluctant to endanger détente ahead of the Moscow summit scheduled for May 1972, and Nixon had no desire to spark an Arab-Israeli dispute prior to the 1972 elections. In addition, Kissinger believed that as long as Israel thought it could preserve its position, which along with the Golan Heights and the West Bank provided strategic depth, Israel would not pull back.

With the support of the Arab League, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Organization of African Unity, Sadat agreed to go to war in the Fall of 1973, and Syria committed to joining Egypt in a military offensive. Sadat hoped launching a military campaign to free the occupied territory of the Sinai would be the catalyst that brought the U.S. and Israel to the negotiating table. By October 6th, Egypt was able to mobilize an army of 1.2 million capable of executing “the largest crossing in military history,” and the senior military leadership recommended the forces advance quickly to the strategically indispensable Sinai passes before the Israelis would have time to react. Yet Sadat, hoping not for a spectacular battlefield victory but for a diplomatic intervention, halted the offensive on October 9.53

Unfortunately, Sadat’s hope for a political solution to the crisis did not come as soon as he had hoped. Kissinger and Nixon also wanted to negotiate from a position of strength, which would require a decisive Israeli military success. Kissinger passed along

52 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 121-23.
53 Ibid., 126-28.
Sadat’s intentions to the Israelis, allowing them to regroup and focus their efforts on the Syrian front before turning their attention on the Egyptians. By this time the Americans had rearmed the IDF through one of the largest airlifts in history, and were aiding Israel through U.S. aerial reconnaissance. The IDF swept past the Egyptian front lines and drove all the way to the west bank of the canal. On October 24, when the Soviets threatened to intervene to prevent Egypt’s total defeat, Kissinger and James Schlesinger elevated the American combat alert, including the nuclear Strategic Air command, and sent another aircraft carrier to the U.S. Sixth fleet. Kissinger looked to Sadat to tell the Soviets not to intervene, which Sadat did on October 26.

Sadat insisted that Egypt’s performance in the war meant the country could maneuver both domestically and internationally from a position of strength. Sadat rejected Soviet requests to return military advisors to Egypt even though the Soviets had committed to replacing weaponry lost during the war. Soon, Sadat insisted, Egypt would no longer be exclusively dependent upon the Soviet Union for military aid.

While Sadat believed a political agreement that included the U.S., Egypt and Israel was the best way to mitigate the threat to Egypt’s external security, the military disagreed. The concessions Sadat made after the October War meant the EAR would not be able to train or operate in the most strategic part of the country: the Sinai. In addition, they believed Sadat was mismanaging relations with their security patron, the Soviet Union, which they depended upon for weapons and training.

The Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty of March 26, 1979, allowed Egypt to regain control of the Sinai in May 1982. The U.S. agreed to supply $800 million a year in credits for five years to modernize the Egyptian armed forces, allowing Cairo to purchase F-16 fighter aircraft and M-60A3 tanks as well as other equipment. Despite Israeli objections, U.S. officials argued Egypt had legitimate security issues, for example along its border with Libya, a Soviet ally that had purchased billions of dollars worth of sophisticated weaponry from Moscow.

Yet from the armed forces’ perspective, the settlement reached at Camp David, which included demilitarization of the Sinai, would impede Egypt’s ability to defend

itself against a future Israeli attack. Aggravating the sense of vulnerability was the reaction from the rest of the Arab world, which isolated Egypt and seemed to diminish its regional influence. But Sadat saw the negotiations from an entirely different perspective; for him the peace process presented an opportunity to deepen Egyptian relations with the United States, which in the long term would elevate Egypt's regional standing.

By taking over the role of security patron, Washington was in a position to maintain lines of communications with both sides of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which U.S. officials believed would give Washington a preeminent role in the Middle East at Soviet expense. The security relationship was elevated in the wake of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in early 1979, as well as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan later that year. In November 1980, Egypt agreed to conduct the biannual joint military exercise Bright Star with U.S. troops, which would facilitate interoperability and familiarize American soldiers with desert operations. In return, Egypt would be the recipient of advanced military weaponry and equipment, including more than one hundred F-5 fighter aircraft.\textsuperscript{57} Given the U.S. interest in maintaining a balance of capabilities between Egypt and Israel, the intent was not to bolster Egypt's ability to meet what many among the public and military continued to believe was the principle threat to Egypt's security. Rather, U.S. military aid would contribute to the United States' ability to co-opt Egypt into serving as a bulwark against Communist expansion (and later religious extremism) in the Middle East, and mitigate the risk of renewed Egyptian-Israeli hostilities.

Sadat Builds Domestic and International Political Support

While Nasser had relied on military personnel to provide political support and regime security to his presidency, the pitfalls of this approach became devastatingly apparent during the Six Day War in 1967. Nasser initiated a process of de-politicization and subordination of the military that would continue under President Sadat. Both reached the conclusion that a civilian security sector, under the control of a loyal interior minister, should be expanded to take over the role of surveillance and domestic intelligence, to minimize the chance a political rival would emerge from the military. In

\textsuperscript{57} Terence Smith, "U.S. Jets to Arabs: Legacy of the Kissinger Years," ibid., February 17, 1978.
addition, a paramilitary force, the CSF, would serve as the rapidly-deployable, coercive arm of the Interior Ministry. Unlike Nasser, Sadat believed political support from the U.S. was preferred over that from the Soviet Union, particularly as it facilitated the development of a new capitalist elite who, eager to seize investment opportunities with the West, would have a strong interest in actively supporting Sadat. This new business class would be nurtured by Sadat to form the base of the ruling party, which by 1981 was renamed the National Democratic Party. Despite increasing support from the United States, dependence on civilian security forces for internal security, and the support of the National Democratic Party, Sadat did not attempt to establish objective civilian control over the military.

Even though Sadat’s policy preferences differed substantially from his predecessor, he also maintained a personal authoritarian rule that did not allow for political opposition. For example, the constitution of 1971, like Nasser’s 1964 constitution, legally gave the president a dominant position relative to other government and state institutions. The president had the authority to promulgate as well as object to laws, rule by decree, declare a state of emergency, appoint and dismiss cabinet members, draft the state’s budget, and formulate the state’s policies. While the constitution allowed the legislature to question or dispute presidential authority, the president had the legal authority to bypass the People’s Assembly and call for a referendum of the people. A direct outcome of these policies was to undermine the ability of other social sectors to support alternative political opponents.\textsuperscript{58} Sadat was thus able to preserve his policymaking autonomy by minimizing the political options of potential competitors.

Sadat also had control over the coercive apparatus of the state as the supreme commander of the armed forces as well as the supreme chief of police. Sadat continued to worry that the public would rally behind a popular military figure, and habitually jailed potential rivals once he was certain he had secured the loyalty of their replacements.\textsuperscript{59} Sadat also limited the percentage of military officers working in government ministries.

Sadat recognized while his loyal security officers could be counted on to quell dissent, they lacked the capacity to run the government. Long-term regime stability

\textsuperscript{58} Kassem, \textit{Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule}, 23-24.

would require an active social base beyond the peasantry, public sector, and security apparatus, particularly as none of those groups was enthusiastic about realigning Egypt’s foreign policy with the United States. Sadat’s *intifah* (economic open door) policy was an effort to win the support of Egyptian entrepreneurs who were eager to establish business ties with the West.\(^{60}\) *Intifah* would enable Sadat to cultivate a social grouping of business elites that could serve as the base of Sadat’s ruling party. The interests of the new business class would be linked to the state, where the bureaucracy could provide privileged access to foreign trade and building permits, provide loans through public banks, offer tax exemptions, and allocate public land for private development.

After the October War, Sadat launched a campaign to convince the U.S. that Egypt could be a reliable partner. Sadat pledged to the Nixon administration he would abandon the Nasser-instigated effort to develop nuclear weapons, and in June 1974, Sadat ensured Egyptians lined the streets to welcome the American president, who promised cooperation on nuclear energy and rebuilding the Suez Canal Zone.\(^{61}\) A few weeks after meeting President Ford in Salzburg, Egypt reopened the Suez Canal to international shipping more than eight years after it was closed by the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.\(^{62}\) In November, 1975, Sadat travelled with his family to the U.S., where he addressed Congress. After the People’s Assembly abrogated the treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union in the summer of 1976,\(^{63}\) President Carter advised Sadat that U.S. support would be facilitated by “a bold, statesmanlike move to help overcome the hurdles” facing peace talks, inspiring Sadat’s trip to Israel in 1977.\(^{64}\)

Meanwhile Sadat’s effort to nurture a new Egyptian political elite was a success. A “multiparty” system was established by transforming the center platform of the old ASU party into the new National Democratic Party, creating two loyal “opposition” parties from the right and left of the ASU. The fact that new parties would have to be approved by the secretary of the ruling party further ensured political stability, and when the ASU was dissolved, its six million members simply transferred to the NDP. In the

---


\(^{63}\) Eric Pace, "Last of the Russians Are Leaving Egypt," ibid., July 31, 1976.

\(^{64}\) Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 150.
new political landscape, the business elites dominated the ruling party, which enjoyed privileged access to state resources, followed by former ASU personnel, rural allies, state employees and public sector workers.

Yet Sadat’s new economic policies provoked public outrage when Sadat lifted government subsidies on basic commodities. Rioting broke out on such a scale that the CSF was quickly overwhelmed. Despite his efforts to reduce his dependence on the military, Sadat was forced to call on the EAF to intervene to restore order.\(^6^5\) Minister of Defense Mohamed Abdel Ghani al-Gamasy, reluctant to use the armed forces against the civilian population, agreed to act only if Sadat committed to reinstating the subsidies. Sadat agreed, and the public’s confidence in its military that was restored by the October war was reinforced by its restrained reaction to the 1977 food riots.

Egypt’s new western partners sought to ease Sadat’s transition to a market economy.\(^6^6\) The IMF agreed to a three year, $720 million loan in May 1978, although failure to meet IMF conditions, particularly to cut subsidies to basic commodities and manufactured goods, caused the second and third payments to be suspended.\(^6^7\) Liberalization did not mean the state reduced its role in economic life; rather, “it shifted its function from taking accumulated surplus toward development to becoming a middleman between public resources and acquisitive foreign and domestic capitalists.”\(^6^8\) Corruption was endemic, as connected businessmen were awarded lucrative public contracts, then developed patronage networks by sharing profits with public employees in exchange for access to government resources such as bank loans and land. To secure the loyalty of the new business class, Sadat allowed public assets to be passed into private hands at well below market value. For example, after \textit{intifah}, more than half of the public land along the Mediterranean was allocated to private interests without any payment made to the state; this land would later be sold on the private market for billions. Real estate became the most profitable venture, instigating a process of deindustrialization.

While Sadat successfully built Western political support for his presidency and cultivated a business elite that, along with the public sector, had a vested interest in his

\(^{65}\) Raymond Baker, \textit{Sadat and After: Struggles for Egypt’s Political Soul} (Harvard University Press, 1990), 118.


government, his policies were unpopular within the military, with the poor who suffered from declining subsidies, and among Islamists. Early in his tenure, part of Sadat’s grand strategy to promote domestic political stability and broaden public support for his rule included the relaxation of some restrictions on Islamists, who he believed could balance the forces of Arab nationalism and Marxism. While he continued to ban the Muslim Brotherhood from politics, he allowed them to publish a monthly magazine, gave members amnesty in 1975, and freed Muslim Brothers from concentration camps. Yet Sadat’s tactic of appealing to the more pious members of the Egyptian public faltered as these Egyptians rejected Sadat’s efforts to reach a peace agreement with Israel and objected to Sadat’s secular policies.

When a coup plot by the radical Egyptian Islamic Jihad was discovered in February 1981, non-state media was banned and Egyptian authorities arrested more than 1500 people, including Jihad members, Copts, intellectuals, and activists. Sadat fumed he was wrong to be lenient with religious fundamentalist groups, including those Islamic associations found in the universities, and pledged a state crackdown on those who fomented sectarian strife. Despite the crackdown, an extremist cell within the military survived, and collaborated with the Egyptian Islamic Jihad to assassinate Sadat during a military parade on October 6, 1981.

The Marginalization of the Egyptian Armed Forces

The subordination of the military to the political apparatus initiated by Nasser after the 1967 war was continued under Sadat. Within the military there were many who understood that the deliberate politicization of the military in the early days of Nasser’s rule had contributed to the sorry state of the armed forces under Field Marshal Amer. These officers welcomed a return to professionalism that included improving the quality of serving military personnel, emphasizing discipline, competence, and technical expertise, merit-based promotions, and mission exclusivity. However, Sadat was often less concerned with professionalization than with marginalization and control, conscious

of the threat that a charismatic officer, particularly a popular "war hero," could pose to his regime. Sadat's habit of dismissing the most experienced and well-respected leaders deprived the military of its expertise and undermined its quality as a professional institution. In addition, his designation of an economic role for the military after the October war violated the principle of mission exclusivity, further imperiling military readiness.

The military, anxious to rearm itself with Soviet weaponry and redeem itself in a successful drive to liberate the Sinai, was furious Sadat decided to expel the Soviet advisors prior to the October War. Sadat's willingness to forgo Soviet military aid suggests his priority was not a decisive military win, which risked bringing the military back to the center stage of Egyptian politics, but rather to convey a willingness to change the status quo via force, which hopefully would be enough to induce Israel and the United States to reach a political solution.

Tensions between Sadat and his senior commanders grew as the military warned they could not successfully fight Israel without the advanced weaponry provided by the Soviet Union. They advised against launching a military campaign before they were ready, worried another loss to Israel would be demoralizing for both the military and the Egyptian people. After one particularly contentious meeting of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces on October 24, 1972, Sadat dismissed all of the officers who had disagreed with him, as well as more than 100 high-ranking officers in the next few weeks.70 Sadat not only dismissed officers he felt were insubordinate; he also purged leaders whom the General Intelligence Service warned were becoming popular figures within the military. He appointed his long-time friend Ahmed Ismail, a man he knew could neutralize political factions within the armed forces, to be Minister of War in October 1972.

For the military the struggle was existential. If Sadat pushed them into a war before they were prepared, the armed forces could be destroyed. They had been defeated in 1948, drawn into a protracted civil war on behalf of Yemen's revolutionary forces in the 1960s, and humiliated by Israel in 1967. Sadat's preference for a "limited war," as he

70 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 117-20.
understood it, would likely expose the EAF to grave danger, leaving them exposed and vulnerable to an Israeli counterattack.

The 1973 war demonstrates the extent to which the EAF had become professionalized. The military that successfully crossed the canal on October 6, 1973, was likely the most capable, well-trained and disciplined force assembled in Egypt’s modern history. Later, despite the misgivings of military commanders, the armed forces followed Sadat’s orders throughout the campaign. While the armed forces were eager for a battlefield victory, however, Sadat wanted a diplomatic victory. The performance of the EAF stands in stark contrast to the war in 1967, in which undisciplined troops broke ranks and the senior commanders acted independently of the political leadership.

After the October war, Sadat reiterated his expectation that the military would not intervene in politics at a meeting of the SCAF on November 21, 1973. Sadat declared the October War was “Egypt’s last war,” and that the military would now focus on the “war of economic development.” He blamed military expenditures for Egypt’s stalled economic development, and announced his plan to reduce the defense budget and open the economy to foreign investors. The National Services Projects Organization (NSPO) was established in 1978, and included multiple commercial enterprises (construction, land reclamation, factories for civilian durables and weapons) that would be led by retired generals and colonels.

By October 5, 1978, the entire leadership of the October War had been replaced. The following May, Sadat furthered sidelined the “October generation” by issuing Presidential Decree 35, which stated officers in leadership positions during the October War would remain military advisors for life, meaning they could not occupy military posts within the armed forces nor would they be allowed to enter politics. Sadat did not bring a representative of the military with him when he travelled to the United States for the Camp David accords, which prohibited the EAF from using any of the Sinai’s airfields or building new ones. When the highly respected Abd al-Ghani Gamasy and the rest of the General Staff protested, they were fired.

Despite the progress made toward professionalization and de-politicization of the EAF, frustration with Sadat’s marginalization of the military and disagreement with how

---

71 Ibid., 138.
Sadat was approaching relations with Israel led to multiple unsuccessful coup plots throughout the 1970s. For example, 14 paratroopers were arrested in July 1977, when former Chief of Staff Saad al-Shazly, a well-respected and experienced war hero who had been exiled by Sadat, called for the army to rise against its dictator. Yet the military found it increasingly difficult to confront the new political apparatus that emerged under Sadat, which included a new business elite tied to the benefits of preferential access to the state bureaucracy and public sector. In addition, the police capacity for domestic surveillance and intelligence gathering continued to grow, with the SSIS alerting Sadat when senior figures became too popular within the ranks, or when they criticized the president’s policies. Throughout the 1970s, thousands of officers were purged, the leadership constantly changed, and the loyal civilian security forces became more aggressive. Sadat no longer led a military regime; he led a police state.

In the tradition of Egyptian autocrats, Sadat chose a loyal but weak vice president, Hosni Mubarak. Mubarak was from the air force, which was considered to be the weakest of the services and thus the least likely to plot a coup against the president. Mubarak supported Sadat’s rapprochement with the United States as well as the intifah. He would benefit from the increasingly stable configuration of external and internal political support constructed by Sadat during his presidency.

The Mubarak Era: U.S. Military Aid, Political Stability, and the EAF

During the three decade long period of Hosni Mubarak’s rule, U.S. military aid contributed to the balance of military capabilities that underpins the Egypt-Israel peace treaty. Considering the frequency of Egyptian bellicosity from the 1948 Arab-Israeli war to the October war of 1973, and the decades-long struggle to negotiate an Arab-Israeli peace agreement, this has been a major accomplishment. Mubarak’s longevity has often been attributed to U.S. political support, and during the Arab uprisings of early 2011, the decades of American-Egyptian military cooperation was credited with the restraint demonstrated by the Egyptian Armed Forces when called upon by Mubarak to defend his regime. This section will discuss the nature of that military cooperation and examine
other factors that might have contributed to the EAF’s decision to side with Egyptian people rather than Mubarak and the ruling party.

This section is divided into three parts, the first of which will examine if U.S. military aid, which mitigated the principal external threat to Egypt’s security by ensuring a balance of capabilities between Egypt and Israel, discouraged the military from intervening in Egypt’s civil politics. The second part will ask if U.S. political support for Mubarak’s regime limited the political options for the military, rendering it more difficult for the military to expand its role in the civil sphere. The final part will scrutinize how U.S. military aid might have improved or undermined the professionalism of the Egyptian military. While U.S. military aid did enhance President Mubarak’s ability to subordinate the EAF to his political authority, Mubarak did not attempt to establish objective civilian control over the armed forces. Rather, in an effort to placate the military, Mubarak encouraged the expansion of its economic activities, undermining the professionalism of the EAF and creating a reserved domain that future leaders with an interest in establishing objective civilian control over the military would be challenged to overturn.

U.S. Military Aid and Egypt’s National Security

During Mubarak’s thirty years as President of Egypt, the United States provided billions of dollars worth of military aid through the Foreign Military Financing Program (FMF). This aid was conditioned upon Egypt’s respect for the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, which included allowing Multinational Force Observers from twelve countries to monitor activity within four identified zones, three of which are in the Sinai, and one which is located in Israel along the international border. While the treaty placed limitations on military forces and equipment within each zone, U.S. military aid strengthened the EAF’s ability to meet external threats posed by, for example, a Soviet-aligned Libya, the Iran-Iraq war, and the First Gulf War in 1990-1991. The Egyptian Armed Forces, particularly under the leadership of defense minister Abdel-Halim Abu Ghazala, used the external threat to argue for the expansion of the military’s commercial economic interests in an effort to bolster defense spending. While the development of a
defense-industrial base was consistent with U.S. strategic interests and not necessarily an obstacle to objective civilian control, the spillover into military-run commercial economic enterprises created a reserved domain that the military establishment would be committed to protect. President Mubarak, meanwhile, used the increasing threat posed by transnational terrorism to justify the extension of his rule and the heavy-handed treatment of Islamist opposition forces within Egyptian society. In an effort to keep the military out of politics and prevent the emergence of a political rival, Mubarak relied on the massive police services managed by the Interior Ministry to secure his regime.

Mubarak had supported Sadat’s alignment with the United States and the peace process with Israel, and Washington committed to providing billions of dollars worth of military credits to facilitate the purchase of advanced fighter aircraft such as F-5E and later the F-16. With the fall of the Iranian shah in 1979, along with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Egypt’s importance to U.S. efforts to prevent Soviet gains in the Middle East grew, and President Reagan called for increases in military aid to Egypt and Israel, rendering Egypt and Israel the recipients of the largest outlays of U.S. military aid. Reagan met little resistance in Congress, which authorized $900 million in 1982.

Not everyone agreed that U.S. military aid and the peace accords made Egypt safer from external threats, however. For example, Abdel-Halim Abu Ghazala, Egypt’s Defense Minister from 1981 until 1989, argued in December 1982:

Israel still adheres to the pre-peace strategy of military superiority over the entire Arab world, and its military strength is still growing...Therefore, as Egyptians and Arabs we must view very cautiously the peace treaty with Israel, because of this steady Israeli military growth, and prepare ourselves to be strong and enhance our military deterrent capability so as to neutralize this force and create a balance in the area. Israel has still not declared the extent of Jewish immigration or defined its borders. It wants to create strategic depth for itself in this area.74

Abu Ghazala had supported the peace process with Israel but was disturbed by the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, "Operation Peace for Galilee," that targeted Palestinian guerrillas but resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Palestinian civilians. He advocated for an all-Arab defense force with Egyptian troops at its core, a concept that almost came to fruition after the Damascus Declaration in March, 1991, but ultimately fell apart as the wealthy Gulf states preferred to reach bilateral security arrangements with the United States rather than rely on the EAF for their security. Abu Ghazala drove the effort to develop a military manufacturing sector that was facilitated by U.S. military aid, and negotiated a deal to co-produce the M1A1 Abrams tanks, with tank kits being sent from the United States and assembled in factories in Egypt. Thus the external threat was used to justify the expansion of the military’s role in the civilian sphere, largely through the military’s economic projects, which not only included a defense-industrial base, but also extended into construction, food production, and other commercial enterprises.

While skeptical of Israel’s territorial ambitions, Abu Ghazala served as an important promoter of U.S. strategic interests during his tenure. Even though Abu Ghazala spent five years in the Soviet Union, where he earned a military degree, he was considered to be fiercely anti-Communist and pro-American. While serving as military attaché in Washington under Sadat, he made many connections, including Texas Congressman Charlie Wilson, who worked with Abu Ghazala during the 1980s to covertly supply weapons to the mujahideen forces fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. Fearing Ayatollah Khomeini’s hegemonic ambitions, Abu Ghazala also sold billions of dollars worth of weaponry to Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, to bolster their defenses against Iran during the Iran-Iraq war. In addition, Egypt contributed nearly 34,000 troops to the U.S.-led coalition that confronted Saddam Hussein’s military in the first Gulf War.75 The presence of troops from the most populous Arab country served a military and political purpose in legitimizing the U.S.-led operation that drove Iraq’s forces from Kuwait.

Nevertheless, Mubarak, Abu Ghazala, and other members of the EAF were frustrated that U.S. military aid was designed to guarantee Israeli military superiority.

Some military leaders believed Mubarak's policies caused Egypt to fall behind Israel as well as other Arab states in the Middle East arms race, and lamented the decline in Egypt's regional power. In addition, U.S. military assistance privileged the air force and the navy, and to a lesser extent the armored corps, at the expense of Egypt's air defense and the artillery. The demilitarization of the Sinai, which prohibited military airfields and Egyptian training exercises, also hindered the EAF's capacity to defend its territory. The disclosure that President Reagan had authorized the sale of weaponry to Iran during the Iran-Iraq war alarmed Egyptians and other Arab moderates, who worried an Iranian victory would destabilize the region by encouraging the spread of revolutionary Islamic fundamentalism.76

An argument could be made that Mubarak was able to keep Abu Ghazala, a highly respected figure throughout Egypt and particularly within the military, out of politics because of the extent to which U.S. military aid had reduced the external threats to Egypt's security. However, Mubarak was unable to dismiss Abu Ghazala until a scandal erupted in which Abu Ghazala allegedly conspired with others to illegally import banned materials from the U.S. into Egypt. While no public explanation for Abu Ghazala's removal was given, some Egyptians speculated he had become too influential, and Mubarak sought to distance Abu Ghazala from his military power base. This suggests the balance of power between the executive and the military had a greater impact on Mubarak's ability to subordinate the military than the degree of external threat. Not long after Abu Ghazala's departure, Mubarak designated the loyal and uncharismatic Hussein Tantawi to serve as his defense minister for the next two decades. The appointment reflects Mubarak's determination to limit the military's influence in politics; Mubarak preferred to rely on the civilian security services to secure his regime and suppress his political opposition, including Islamist groups that Mubarak regularly linked to the threat posed by transnational terrorism.77

For example, in 1995 the Egyptian government rounded up Muslim Brotherhood leaders ahead of parliamentary elections, sentencing 54 to prison.78 Despite the Muslim

Brotherhood’s professed commitment to non-violent political change, President Mubarak linked the organization’s meetings and anti-government publications with recent terrorist attacks, and shut down the Brotherhood headquarters in Cairo. Mubarak insisted the leaders be tried in military courts, where sentences could not be appealed. Among those convicted to five years of hard prison labor were a highly-respected doctor, Essam al-Aryan, and a science professor, Mohamed Habib.

Mubarak also used the threat of Islamic extremism to justify banning the Muslim Brotherhood from politics just two years after their electoral gains in 2005, and to explain the extension of Egypt’s oppressive Emergency Law, which had been active continuously since the assassination of Sadat in 1981. Unfortunately, in Egyptian law the definition of terrorism included not only violent attacks but also “any threat or intimidation” capable of “disturbing the peace or jeopardizing the safety and security of the society.”79 Related law also prohibited activity that could inhibit the ability of public authorities to carry out their duties. The laws allowed police to arrest and detain individuals in the absence of formal charges, try civilians in military courts, and restrict freedom of speech and assembly.

From Washington’s perspective, military aid was successful in that it created an obstacle to Soviet expansion into the Middle East, provided an Egyptian-Israeli axis of stability within the region, allowed preferential access for U.S. warships through the Suez Canal, and allowed for the close bilateral intelligence sharing necessary for counterterrorism operations. From President Mubarak’s perspective, U.S. military aid bolstered Egypt’s capabilities and thus mitigated the threat posed by regional rivals. From the perspective of the Egyptian military, however, U.S. military aid, while furnishing the EAF with sophisticated weaponry, limited its ability project regional power, and favored Israel at Egypt’s expense. While the military did not use the external threat to justify interference in civil politics, the external threat did provide motivation for the development of a military-run defense-industrial base that spilled over into the civilian sphere, and gave Mubarak an excuse to neutralize the political threat posed by nonviolent Islamic groups.

Mubarak’s Political Longevity

Like Sadat, Mubarak would rely not only on external political support from the U.S. for his regime stability, but also on a ruling party comprised of wealthy business elites, an expansive bureaucracy, and public sector workers. Mubarak also continued the tradition of domestic surveillance and repression, and like Sadat turned to the Interior Ministry rather than the military to secure his regime. This combination – U.S. political support, generous patronage networks that ensured the loyalty of his ruling party, and a repressive civilian security service - contributed to the stability of his authoritarian regime, allowing him to maintain his rule, and the status quo, for nearly thirty years. Despite this stability, Mubarak would not attempt to establish objective civilian control over the military, preferring instead to link the military’s interests with the survival of his regime by granting them an expanded role in commercial economic enterprises.

Regionally, however, alignment with the U.S. and the peace accord with Israel isolated Egypt from its Arab neighbors and diminished Cairo’s influence during the 1980s. On March 31, 1979, the Arab League issued a communique that suspended Egypt from the twenty-two member Arab League; Arab states withdrew their ambassadors, the league’s headquarters was relocated to Tunis, and political and diplomatic relations with the Egyptian government were severed. Arab League members imposed economic and political sanctions upon Egypt, including revoking Egypt’s membership in several Arab financial and economic institutions like the Federation of Arab Banks, and the Organization of Arab Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OAPEC). The most populous Arab country, whose president in the 1950s and 1960s led the drive for pan-Arabism, now had very little control over Arab affairs. Egypt would not be reinstated in the Arab League until 1989.

President Reagan sought to strengthen the new Egyptian president’s position by inviting him to the United States shortly after Sadat’s assassination in October, 1981, and Reagan pledged to increase military aid to Egypt. Mubarak adeptly leveraged his role in the Middle East peace process for increased aid, and while economic aid would vary considerably, by 1987, the U.S. was committed to $1.3 billion in military aid annually.

---

Despite political and economic support from the U.S., however, Egypt suffered from mounting debt that rendered it nearly impossible to repay American loans, risking a cutoff in military aid.\(^8\) The First Gulf War cost Egypt billions in decreased regional trade as well as lost remittances from Egyptian migrants working in Persian Gulf’s oil sector.

Political support from the United States ultimately helped Mubarak manage economic crises throughout this thirty-year rule. Conscious of the massive rioting that followed Sadat’s attempts to decrease food subsidies in 1977, Mubarak found it difficult to meet the IMF’s terms for a balance-of-payments support in 1987. Exacerbating Egypt’s large foreign debt problem was the interest due on U.S. military loans, $500 million of which was to be paid back annually.\(^8\) As Egypt’s economic situation worsened, the U.S. led an effort to “reward” Egypt for its support of the U.S.-led coalition in the Persian Gulf War by arranging a package of debt forgiveness and international economic assistance.\(^8\) The U.S. not only forgave $7 billion in Egyptian debt, but also encouraged other governments to do the same.

Many of Egypt’s creditors would only do so with an IMF “seal of approval,” meaning Egypt had to commit once and for all to economic reforms. Washington and other government lenders pressured Mubarak to adopt the IMF-tailored Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Program, which called for reducing social welfare and selling public companies in order to bring state expenditure and debt under control.\(^8\) By 1995, the government had cut three-quarters of the subsidies it had provided in the 1980s, and withdrew its commitment to hiring university graduates. Despite a fund established by 17 nations to mitigate the impact of privatization, unemployment led to increasing discontent among Egypt’s youth as they graduated from university and found few opportunities. Fearing social disruptions, Cairo hesitated to implement the next phase of reforms, which were linked to another $3 billion in debt forgiveness.

The fact that Mubarak’s regime could remain so stable even when confronted by economic crises is a testament to the entrenched and interlinked interests of the state bureaucracy, including the Interior Ministry, and the business leaders who formed the

---

base of the ruling party. Despite the upheaval the economic reforms created within Egyptian society, the state’s ability to access rents and redistribute them to bolster patronage networks contributed to the Mubarak regime’s stability. While efforts such as worker retraining were discussed in order to mitigate the negative effects of the reforms on Egyptian society, in many cases public sector firms were sold at a bargain to businessmen with close political connections to Mubarak and his family, and profits were used to pay off cronies’ bad debts. Some new jobs were created and the country’s economy grew, but many formerly middle class families became poor, public sector workers’ salaries stagnated, and those Egyptians without skills or connections saw their quality of life deteriorate.

In addition to benefiting from the corruption that accompanied the privatization process, Mubarak’s regime stability was enhanced by the legal-constitutional framework that masked the extent of his authoritarianism and allowed him to retain his control over Egypt’s political institutions. Like Sadat, Mubarak retained the authority to appoint and dismiss cabinet members as well as judges, and only candidates “known” to the regime could run for the legislature. Mubarak’s grip on the public sector gave him mechanisms to restrict the freedoms of legislative members; for example, politicians who chose not to join the ruling party might have their debts unexpectedly called in by the Bank of Cairo. As a result, the legislature was passive compared to the executive.

While Mubarak had initially implied he would lead a gradual transition to democracy and that his presidency would not exceed two terms, by 1987, he insisted the country’s economic challenges required political stability, and by 1993 he dismissed the idea of popular elections altogether. In consultations with the United States, Mubarak argued democracy risked bringing Communists, nationalists, and Islamists into the political arena. While opposition parties made some gains in 1984 and 1987, during the elections in 1990, 1995, and 2000, political participation declined, as did the representation of opposition parties in parliament.

85 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 206.
86 Kassem, Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule, 27-36. President Sadat had done the same thing; Article 77 of the 1971 Constitution called for a two-term limitation, but Sadat amended it so he could serve a third term.
87 For example, after the parliamentary elections in 1987, considered to be the peak of multiparty participation, 659 bills were initiated by the executive, with only 10 from legislators.Ibid., 30.
88 Hedges, "As Egypt Votes on Mubarak, He Faces Rising Peril."
No institution was more effective at guaranteeing the success of the regime than the Interior Ministry, which was tasked with ensuring the NDP never received less than 95% of the vote during elections. To distance themselves from the impression of political interference, the police hired petty criminals to intimidate opponents prior to elections, creating what a U.S. State Department’s human rights report warned was a “culture of impunity” in which ordinary citizens were routinely bullied. Under President Mubarak the ministry exploded from 150,000 men in 1974 to more than a million by 2002, with 450,000 military conscripts serving mandatory three-year obligations, 60,000 National Guards, and 12,000 Border Patrol soldiers. By 2010, there were more than two million security personnel available to the Egypt’s Interior Minister. Under Egypt’s Emergency Law, the Interior Ministry was authorized to break up labor strikes and public demonstrations, censor the press, detain civilians for extensive periods without trial, and try political prisoners in special courts. Within the Interior Ministry, the State Security Investigations Sector, SSIS, assumed a more prominent role, recruiting informants and scrutinizing candidates for government posts, university chairs, editorial boards, public-sector companies and banks, and even the military. Comparatively, the military was more removed from domestic matters, with the General Intelligence Service focused on foreign relations, and personnel numbering consistently around 460,000 throughout Mubarak’s presidency.

The George W. Bush administration’s pressure on Mubarak to allow for broader political participation has been credited with the Muslim Brotherhood’s electoral gains in the 2005 elections. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Bush administration linked democracy promotion with national security, and began openly criticizing President Mubarak for his undemocratic record. In 2002, President Bush explicitly linked Egypt’s aid to human rights. Congress increasingly demanded to place conditions on economic aid to pressure Egypt to initiate democratic reforms. In FY2005, Congress insisted, “democracy and governance activities shall not be subject to the prior

---

89 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 195-97.
approval of the government of Egypt.”\textsuperscript{91} Responding to both external and internal pressure, President Mubarak announced multiparty elections would be held in 2005.

In the 2005 elections, the Muslim Brotherhood secured 20% of the seats in Parliament, which was stunning considering in sixty years no opposition force had won more than a tenth of the vote. Years later a spokesman from the group revealed that state security had provided a list of districts in which Muslim Brotherhood candidates could run, and promised they would win most of them.\textsuperscript{92} The most likely explanation for the SSIS’s behavior is it wished to offer a warning to those calling for democratization; in fact the Bush administration’s democracy rhetoric waned following electoral gains of the Islamic parties in Egypt and the Palestinian territories. Mubarak subsequently banned the Muslim Brotherhood with an amendment to the constitution in 2007, which stipulated that “political activity within a religious frame of reference” would be is illegal. After the 2010 elections, the number of Muslim Brotherhood seats in the People’s Assembly fell from 88 to zero.

In the final decade of Mubarak’s presidency, the business elite began to cluster around Hosni Mubarak’s son Gamal. The public resented Gamal, whose corrupt business associates dominated the ruling party, led business lobbies and ran the cabinet.\textsuperscript{93} Under the pretext of civilianizing the presidency, Gamal’s supporters recommended Gamal succeed his father, and constitutional amendments in 2005 and 2007 eliminated judicial supervision over the voting process, and outlined conditions for presidential elections that fit only Gamal. Mubarak retreated from promises of political liberalization, and justified the two year extension of Egypt’s emergency law by insisting it was necessary to deal with the threat of terrorism.

The Obama administration reacted cautiously to the massive demonstrations in Cairo’s Tahrir Square following Tunisia’s successful overthrow of longtime autocrat Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton initially advised against a “hasty exit” for Mubarak, warning it could lead to instability that would undermine Egypt’s

\textsuperscript{92} Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 198.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 210.
transition to democracy. However, by February 1, it was apparent to President Obama that the Egyptian president would be incapable of satisfying the demands of his people, and he publically announced the transition to democracy would need to begin right away, signaling the end of the United States’ political support for Hosni Mubarak.

U.S. Military Aid and the Professionalism of the EAF

The immediate concern for new President Mubarak after Sadat’s assassination was that the cohesiveness of the military had been compromised by the rise of extremism in the ranks. Mubarak was able to use U.S. military aid along with other economic incentives to satisfy the military’s corporate interests, thus minimizing discontent within the ranks and the risk of military interference in civil politics. U.S. military aid contributed to the EAF’s professionalization by improving their competence, particularly their technical capability as they learned to use new, modern equipment and weapons. While American military advisors sought to model liberal-democratic norms such as mission exclusivity and respect for civilian political authority, throughout this period Mubarak undermined the professionalization of the armed forces by allowing active and retired officers to dominate the military-industrial-business-commercial complex (MIBCC), ordering the SSIS to spy on military personnel and purge independently-minded, talented and popular officers, and filling the top military posts based on personal loyalty rather than merit.

Starting in 1987, the $1.3 billion in annual military aid provided by the U.S. has been primarily directed toward acquisitions, upgrades to existing equipment, and support for maintenance contracts. In 1988, the U.S. and Egypt began co-producing the M1A1 Abrams Battle Tank, with tank kits manufactured by General Dynamics in the U.S. and then shipped to Egypt, where they are assembled in Egypt’s military factories. The U.S.

---

95 David E. Sanger, "Obama Urges Quick Transition in Egypt," ibid., February 1, 2011.
also sends hundreds of millions of dollars worth of Excess Defense Articles from the U.S. Department of Defense, and $1 million is typically granted to fund the IMET program.  

From Mubarak’s perspective, however, U.S. military aid alone would not be enough to ensure the loyalty of his military. Sadat’s assassination brought forth new concerns that religious extremists might have gained a following in the armed forces. The Mubarak government initiated a study to gain a better understanding of the surge in Islamist militancy, particularly among enlistees and junior and middle-ranking officers. The main problems, the study concluded, were related to the lack of economic growth. Mubarak subsequently encouraged the development of economic interests within the armed forces establishment. Under the direction of the Minister of Defense, Abdul Halim Abu Ghazala, the military became more involved in the industrial, military and agricultural sectors, which gave the armed forces an independent source of revenue, untaxed and free from civilian oversight.

There has been disagreement among analysts of Egyptian politics over the extent and purpose of the military’s economic interests. Some argue the commercial enterprises bolstered patronage networks that linked military officers to the Mubarak government, ensuring the interests of the military were inextricably tied with the survival of the regime. They cite as evidence the fact that when Mubarak, under pressure from the U.S., the EU, and the IMF, began implementing neoliberal reforms in the 1990s, the military’s business interests remained untouched.

Under this system, officers enjoyed privileges like discounted apartments and vacation homes, membership to fancy clubs, subsidized food and services, and perhaps a position in the bureaucracy or in one of the military-owned commercial enterprises after retirement. The MIBCC, a “vast military run commercial enterprise that seeps into every corner of Egyptian society,” produces a wide range of items, including food, cement, gasoline, and infrastructure, with subsidized energy and cheap conscript labor. U.S. military aid, consistently $1.3 billion throughout this period, bolstered the EAF’s

---

commercial enterprises. For example, the EAF uses the M1A1 tank factory not only to assemble the tank kits shipped from General Dynamics, but also to build construction vehicles for sale in its domestic market. In 2010, an EAF company, Arab American Vehicles (AAV), used U.S. military aid to purchase $33 million worth of unassembled Jeeps and other parts from Chrysler. The company not only produces armored versions of Jeep vehicles for military use, it also produces civilian versions for commercial sale. Revenues from AAV are tax-exempt and go directly to the military. A fleet of Gulfstream jets the EAF insisted was necessary for military purposes has been used for VIP travel.

Some analysts have argued that the military was willing to watch Mubarak lose his grip on power because his son and likely successor, Gamal Mubarak, posed a threat to the military’s material interests. The EAF suspected upon assuming the presidency, Gamal would use neoliberal reforms as a pretext for liquidating the military’s lucrative businesses, selling them on the cheap to his close, personal business associates. With Mubarak and Gamal gone, the military would be in a position to protect their autonomy and shield their economic interests from civilian oversight.

Others argue that the economic projects were necessary because the military was chronically under-funded under Mubarak. Military spending in the mid-1970s was as high as 33% of the GDP, but since then it has steadily declined. By 1980 it had fallen to 19.5%, and by 2010 it was just 2.2% of the GDP, the lowest level in Egypt’s history and a reflection of Mubarak’s ambivalence toward the armed forces’ military readiness. The $1.3 billion from the U.S. has depreciated in real terms since the peace treaty was signed in 1979. The military companies allowed the armed forces to be self-sufficient and contribute to national economic development by providing cheap goods and services. Also, in the absence of war, the army needed to find a way to employ its conscripts. During the 1980s, Defense Minister Abu Ghazala argued that officers struggled with high inflation and low defense spending compared to their counterparts in

---

105 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 183.
the upper middle classes, and that the military was barely able to cover basic necessities like soldiers' wages, uniforms, housing and equipment maintenance.  

Whether the economic enterprises of the military allowed serving and retired officers to grow wealthy at the expense of the civilian entrepreneurs or maintain a minimum standard of living, the fact that the military has been allowed to cultivate such extensive economic interests has undermined its professionalism. The state should fund its military at a level high enough to attract quality personnel without granting privileges and preferential treatment to such an extent as to encourage corruption, clientelism, or patronage. Economic interests distract the armed forces from their primary responsibility, which is to defend the country from external threats. In addition, the economic enterprises have created a reserved domain that military leaders in the post-Mubarak period would publically refuse to submit to civilian oversight.

The professionalism of the armed services was further eroded as Mubarak, like Sadat, appointed officers to top military posts based on personal loyalty rather than merit. He chose the professional Abu Ghazala, a former Free Officer who had participated in the 1948, 1956, and 1973 wars, to be chief of staff in 1980 and defense minister the following year because of his commitment to staying out of politics. Abu Ghazala had served as military attaché to Washington between 1977 and 1980, so he was supportive of Egypt's ties with the U.S., unlike many military personnel who were still resentful of the concessions granted to the U.S. and Egypt during the Camp David Accords. Abu Ghazala was professional and attentive to his soldiers' needs, raising wages and upgrading military facilities, vehicles and uniforms.

Over time Mubarak became resentful of Abu Ghazala's popularity not only among the troops but also within U.S. policy circles. Abu Ghazala was a fervent anti-Communist, and emphasized the role a strong Egypt could play as a bulwark against Soviet expansion in the region. He advocated building up Egypt’s military power, particularly as Egypt sat at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and the

106 Ibid.
Indian Ocean. He argued Egypt should contribute to safeguarding these three maritime routes to guarantee the uninterrupted flow of oil to the non-Communist world. Abu Ghazala’s popularity was broadened by his image of devoutness and his criticism of the police’s treatment of Islamists.

Mubarak was far less interested in building a powerful armed force, mindful of the threat a confident, popular and muscular military could pose to his regime. Nevertheless, when 20,000 CSF conscripts took to the streets on Feb 25, 1986, protesting rumors of a one-year extension to their three-year service obligation, the president was forced to call in the army. Abu Ghazala ordered his soldiers back to the barracks once order was restored, and his popularity soared. His men had been disciplined and efficient, in sharp contrast with the abusive, underpaid, illiterate conscripts in the CSF.

Abu Ghazala’s position would be downgraded not long after. Eventually Mubarak appointed Hussein Tantawi, formerly the head of the Republican Guard, to the post of defense minister in May 1991. Tantawi held the job for 20 years, until he was dismissed by then president Mohamed Morsi in August 2012. Mubarak relied on the state security sector to monitor political trends within the officer corps, and alert the president if any officer stood out as a potential challenger.

Mubarak refrained from calling in the military to combat religious extremism during the 1990s, relying instead on his security forces for counter-insurgency. While protective of their economic interests, the military was reluctant to intervene in domestic affairs, although they likely would have intervened if they perceived extremism was out of control. The military did, however, run tribunals to try terrorism suspects, train and advise paramilitary units, and sometimes lend expert units to local forces.

As Mubarak’s son Gamal gained the support of the business elite, the defense minister and chief of staff privately criticized the direction the regime was taking. Defense Minister Hussein Tantawi advised Mubarak it would be unwise to force the people to accept the unpopular Gamal as president. The military leadership “fiercely resented Gamal Mubarak...who preferred to build his influence through business and

political cronies rather than through the military, and those connected to him gained huge profits from government monopolies and deals with foreign investors.”\textsuperscript{110}

When Egyptians began to gather en masse in the streets and Tahrir Square in January 2011, the military was faced with several options. They could oppose the revolution through the use of force, stay neutral, fracture into pro-revolutionary and anti-revolutionary factions, or join the revolution. The impotency of the CSF, which was quickly overwhelmed and demoralized by the numbers of Egyptians out in the streets, rendered neutrality tantamount to taking sides in favor of the protestors.\textsuperscript{111} The military was not necessarily on the protesters’ side from the beginning, as much of the senior military leadership benefited from Mubarak’s patronage. Yet the military, which retained its cohesiveness throughout the crisis, ultimately chose to support and defend the revolutionaries, demand the resignation of President Mubarak, and assume governance responsibilities until a civilian political leadership could be elected. The fact that the military retained its cohesiveness is important: cohesion suggests if the military decided to defend Mubarak’s government and did not fragment, it would have likely been successful despite pressure from the Obama administration for Mubarak to resign. If some of the military decided to back the revolutionaries while others were determined to defend the regime, the protests might have devolved into a civil war. With the military acting as one body, it would have a major influence in shaping Egypt’s post-Mubarak political order.

Beyond Mubarak: The Military Reemerges as a Political Actor

The primary strategic concerns for U.S. policymakers in the context of the Arab Spring in Egypt was the maintenance of the peace treaty with Israel, continued cooperation with the Egyptian Armed Forces in combating militant religious extremism, and continuity in the security of the Suez Canal. The U.S. withdrew its political support for President Mubarak as it became increasingly apparent he could not survive the domestic upheaval represented by the Tahrir Square demonstrations in early 2011.

\textsuperscript{110} Kandil, \textit{Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen}, 118.
\textsuperscript{111} Hashim, "The Egyptian Military Part Two: From Mubarak Onward," 115.
During and after the Arab uprisings in Egypt, a narrative emerged that the United States’ close ties with the EAF were decisive in the army’s decision not to fire on protesters in Tahrir Square. Analysts insisted decades of funding, access to advanced military hardware, training from the world’s predominant military, and the socialization that was a natural product of close defense cooperation with the liberal-democratic American military had fostered a sense of professionalism among the members of the Egyptian armed forces. Compared to the personalistic, patronage-based security services of Bashar al-Assad in Syria or the weak, fragmented security forces of Muammar Qaddafi in Libya, Egypt’s armed forces seemed competent and cohesive. The army’s conception of itself as a professional entity dedicated to national defense rather than the guardian of Mubarak’s regime was credited with the relatively peaceful outcome of the Egyptian uprisings. However, since then the influence of U.S. military aid on the Egyptian armed forces’ role in civil politics has been less certain.

This section is divided into three parts, the first of which will discuss how U.S. military aid, which is intended to mitigate external threats to Egypt’s security, did not discourage the military from expanding their institutional prerogatives or removing democratically - elected President Mohamed Morsi from power. The military’s leadership has taken advantage of the weakness of Egypt’s institutions to consolidate its power and expand its foreign and national security making authority. In addition, like Mubarak, the military has linked the transnational threat of militant religious extremism to non-violent Islamic political groups to justify the use of force against its political opposition.

The second part will discuss the Obama administration’s challenge to provide political support for Egypt’s revolving door of post-Arab Spring leaders while avoiding the appearance of condoning practices that violate democratic norms. This part will also expose the limitations of American political support as the democratically - elected President Morsi struggled to implement objective civilian control over the military, choosing instead a policy of “acquiescence,” whereby Morsi accepted the preservation of

---

the military's reserved domains in exchange for tacit approval of his presidency. The
final section will review how events since the Tahrir Square demonstrations in early 2011
have been a test for the Egyptian armed forces' professionalism. While the military
initially showed great competency and coherency in dealing with Egyptian demands for
democratization, events since have exposed the negative implications of Mubarak-era
policies that granted the military autonomy from civilian oversight and encouraged the
development of independent economic interests. These policies undermined the military’s
mission exclusivity and rendered it hostile to attempts to impose civilian oversight. The
brutal repression of Islamic groups and civil society in the post-Morsi period have
seriously damaged the prestige of the Egyptian Armed Forces and the thesis that
American military aid contributed to its professionalization.

External Threats and Military Intervention After Mubarak

The Egyptian Armed Forces' willingness to remove President Mubarak from
office rather than act on his behalf against Egyptian demonstrators was not related to an
external threat, but a calculated political decision based on the desire to protect the
military’s reserved domains, which include the retention of $1.3 billion worth of U.S.
military aid that allows the EAF to purchase and maintain advanced, American-made
weaponry and contribute to the military’s economic enterprises. These reserved domains,
rather than an external threat, also explain the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces’
attempts to expand their political authority, and willingness to retreat from civil politics
once President Morsi provided assurances that those interests would be protected from
civilian oversight.

The social disorder caused by Morsi’s controversial policies prompted the
military to intervene again, yet this time, rather than retreat from politics, the military
linked the threat of transnational terrorism and religious extremism with Islamic political
groups, using this threat to justify the maintenance of a central role in Egypt’s civil
politics. The military under the leadership of its new president, Morsi’s former defense
minister and retired general Abdul Fattah al-Sisi, has extended this linkage to almost any
individual who criticizes the state, justifying the arrest of anyone perceived as
undermining Egypt's security, broadly defined. With Egypt’s external security threats worsening, primarily in response to Morsi’s removal and the repression of the Muslim Brotherhood as well as spillover from conflicts in Syria and Libya, the military’s use of the external threat to justify a central role in Egyptian politics is likely to increase, despite the restoration of American military aid that includes counterterrorism cooperation.

Three decades of political stagnation under President Mubarak rendered the Egyptian Armed Forces the only credible institution capable of restoring order during the Tahrir Square uprisings in January of 2011. The police forces under the Interior Ministry and the rest of the state bureaucracy were loyal to Mubarak, and had thus lost legitimacy in the eyes of the pro-democracy revolutionary forces. The military’s return to Egyptian politics was thus less in reaction to an external threat than the result of being “pulled” in by Egyptians to usher their corrupt president from power and supervise a transition to a democratic system of government.

In a highly contested political arena, however, the military could not help but consider the implications of electing an untested, inexperienced president on the EAF’s ability to meet external threats to Egypt’s security. These threats included extremist activity in the Sinai, where groups linked to al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for rocket attacks on Suez Canal traffic, bombings of oil and gas pipelines, and missile launches against Israel. Thus despite U.S. military aid, which ideally should contribute to the mitigation of those threats, the SCAF sought to establish a formalized role in foreign and national security policymaking, thus expanding the military’s presence in civil politics.

Just prior to the final runoff in the presidential elections in June, 2012, the SCAF announced its intention to revive the National Defense Council (NDC), a body that according to the 1971 constitution would meet during national security crises. The council would provide expertise on national defense, would be led by the president, and take decisions based on the absolute majority of the members in attendance. Early reports indicated that ten of the council’s sixteen members would be from the SCAF.113

In exchange for returning executive and legislative authority to the government of democratically - elected leader Mohamed Morsi, the military pressed for an expansion of

its institutionalized policy-making prerogatives, in direct violation of the liberal model of
civil-military relations. The constitution drafted by Morsi’s constituent assembly
stipulated that the NDC would have to be consulted before the president and parliament
could declare war, and that eight of the fifteen seats on the council would be filled by
officers of the Egyptian Armed Forces. In addition, the minister of defense would be
an actively serving military officer rather than a civilian appointee. Decisions regarding
the defense budget, including the distribution of the U.S. military aid, would be kept out
of the legislative bodies and remain under the control of the military.

American policymakers avoided calling the controversial intervention to remove
the government of Mohamed Morsi a coup, out of concern cutting military aid would
threaten the Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement and undermine the fight against Islamist
militants. Under increasing pressure, however, the U.S. suspended military aid for the
first time in decades. $575 million was frozen until June, 2014, when Congress
authorized the release of the U.S. aid after the election of retired general Sisi in May,
2014. Most of this aid would be used to pay for existing defense contracts. The U.S.
also promised to send ten Apache attack helicopters to be used against militants in the
Sinai peninsula. President Sisi continues to link the threat posed by transnational
terrorism with non-violent Islamic political groups to justify banning them from politics
and using force against activists.

The military leadership further strengthened its role in civil politics ahead of the
presidential elections of 2014. In February, interim president Adly Mansour issued a
presidential decree that reconstituted the National Defense Council, which would be
composed of top military leaders and cabinet members. In addition, a decree from the
SCAF stipulated that for the first time in Egypt’s history, the minister of defense rather
than the president would sit at the head of the SCAF. The SCAF would consist of 23
top military generals from the army, navy, air force, air defense, and military intelligence,
and be responsible for all armed forces issues such as declaring war and sending troops

114 Yezid Sayigh, "Morsi and Egypt’s Military," AlMonitor The Pulse of the Middle East, www.al-
monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/01/morsi-army-egypt-revolution.html.
115 "U.S. Unlocks Military Aid to Egypt, Backing President Sisi," BBC News,
116 "Egypt's President Mansour Reconstitutes the National Defence Council," Ahram Online,
http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/95451/Egypt/Politics/-Egypts-President-Mansour-
reconstitutes-the-Nationa.aspx.
abroad. The defense minister has the prerogative to pick council members from among his own aides, and decides which deputies can join the SCAF. The National Defense Council (NDC) will also be a fixture in Egyptian politics. Led by the president, the fourteen-member council consists of top officials from the army, police, intelligence, and the cabinet. For the next two presidential terms, the SCAF retains the right to approve the defense minister, who must be chosen from the country’s most senior generals.

The 2014 constitution, passed by referendum in January, 2014, also strengthens the military’s role in national security policymaking. For example, Article 201 mandates that the minister of defense be an officer, violating the principle of civilian supremacy over the military. In addition, the responsibility for the military budget rests with the NDC rather than within the legislature, and the NDC must be consulted before any decision is made which affects the armed forces.\(^{117}\) The constitution grants greater powers for the military judiciary, increasing the opportunities to try civilians in military courts.

While U.S. military aid may help to mitigate the threat posed by transnational terrorists, the battle against extremism is likely to keep the EAF at the center of Egyptian politics for some time to come. U.S. military aid and counterterrorism cooperation should help Egypt confront the transnational threat posed by militant extremist groups based in the Sinai, where the violence surged after Morsi’s Islamist government was forced from office. The militants have bombed oil and gas pipelines, sent rockets into Israel, and targeted security forces with suicide bombings and assassinations. The threat has grown to such an extent that Israel has permitted Egyptian forces to exceed the number of forces allowed by the original peace treaty.

The effort to place new conditions on military aid to Cairo is undermined by the fact that Egypt’s military leaders do not have to rely exclusively on the United States for military aid. In August, el-Sisi travelled to Sochi, Russia, to discuss weapons sales with Russian president Vladimir Putin. Sisi was reportedly shown a selection of Russian military hardware available for sale, and the two discussed opportunities for military cooperation. Whether Egypt’s leadership truly seeks to diversify its weapons supplier or

just wants to send a message to U.S. lawmakers who call for the reassessment of U.S. military aid to Egypt is uncertain. However, the spike in extremist violence emanating from the Sinai after the collapse of Morsi’s government continues to pose a dangerous threat to Egypt’s national security. Fighters who have honed their skills battling against the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria are returning to the Sinai, and recruiters are seizing the opportunity to radicalize embittered young Muslim Brotherhood supporters. Reports indicate some extremists operating from Egypt are sympathetic to ISIS, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Thus while external threats played a minimal role in the EAF’s decision to withdraw support for Mubarak, the threat posed by extremism is likely to keep the EAF at the center of politics, as leaders conflate the Muslim Brotherhood with transnational terror groups, allowing them to justify a military presence in nearly all aspects of civil life and neutralize their most powerful and organized political opposition.

Post-Mubarak Political Uncertainty

The Obama administration has struggled in its effort to be a stabilizing influence by providing political support to Egypt’s post-revolution transitional leaders without appearing to condone policies that violate democratic norms and inflame Egyptian public opinion. The decision to withdraw political support for Hosni Mubarak was taken in the context of the “Arab Awakening,” during which citizens throughout the Arab world called for greater political representation and freedom from repressive, authoritarian governments. While Mubarak had been a “stalwart ally,” the repression of Egyptian society, and the economic stagnation and corruption that often accompanies autocratic regimes, likely fuels religious extremism and contributes to regional instability. The U.S. supported the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces while also pressuring the military body to follow their roadmap to elections and refrain from violence against protesters. A post-Mubarak crackdown on democracy-promoting non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) created discontinuities in American political support, as outraged American legislators called for a reevaluation of U.S. military aid. Despite these pressures, military aid continued unabated, and the Obama administration reached out to the first democratically - elected Egyptian president, Mohamed Morsi, and encouraged an
international effort to assist in Egypt's economic recovery. Morsi, who had a powerful incentive to establish objective civilian control over the Egyptian military, chose instead to acquiesce to the armed forces' demands for autonomy in exchange for their tacit approval of his regime. Yet this arrangement, along with U.S. military aid and the political support that accompanied it, was not enough to prevent Morsi's removal a year later through a direct military intervention. Now U.S. officials are in the untenable position of supporting a regime that has used brutal force against its political opposition, reinstated an atmosphere of fear and suspicion in Egyptian society, and severely restricted the freedoms of civil society.

After an initially cautious response to the Tahrir Square demonstrations in January of 2011, the Obama administration voiced its support for the democratic aspirations of the Egyptian people, and committed to $1 billion in debt relief and $1 billion in loan guarantees to help Egypt's transition to democracy. The Egyptian military formed the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, (SCAF) a committee of twenty senior generals, and on February 11, 2011, the SCAF assumed all executive and legislative power. The SCAF suspended the constitution, disbanded parliament, and announced they would supervise elections for a new parliament and president as well as preside over the drafting of a new constitution.118

The Egyptian military, after years of being at the margins of Egyptian politics, was now front and center. After the uprising, SSIS was replaced by a “National Security Sector,” and hundreds of senior police officers were purged. Rather than completely dismantle the much-maligned, oversized civilian security apparatus, however, the military, concerned about its ability to maintain civil order and not wishing to get pulled into a policing role, decided to rely on the repressive Interior Ministry.119 The police, who had been ill-prepared for the massive demonstrations in January 2011, reemerged on June 28, 2011, when CSF units assaulted protestors who called for harsher measures against the old regime. This incident sparked a “Second Day of Rage” on July 8, with a million-man march followed by a three week long sit-in in Tahrir.

---

119 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 238.
In an effort to support Egypt’s transition to democracy, the Obama administration redirected some of Egypt’s economic aid to democracy assistance, and the United States Agency for International Development used Egyptian newspapers to encourage grant proposals for a $100 million economic development program as well as a $65 million democratic development program that would focus on civic activism, human rights, and elections. U.S. policymakers were taken aback by Egyptian officials’ hostility to the initiatives, however.\textsuperscript{120} The U.S. Ambassador to Egypt, Margaret Scobey, explained that American NGO’s assumed that in a post-Mubarak environment, efforts to strengthen civil society would be welcomed.\textsuperscript{121} However, in July of 2011, the Ministry of Justice, supported by the military and the foreign ministry, began investigating the activities of as many as 400 NGOs operating in Egypt.

Members of Congress were even further outraged in December, when Egyptian security forces raided several NGO offices.\textsuperscript{122} In February of 2012, Egyptian prosecutors charged 40 NGO personnel, including 16 Americans, with operating without a license. The SCAF also refused to lift the Mubarak-era “emergency law” that allowed the security services to send as many as 12,000 civilians to military trials. U.S. officials were also concerned by the SCAF’s announcement they would postpone the presidential elections.\textsuperscript{123} Obama administration officials wanted to maintain their ties with the military, but were reluctant to appear as if they were condoning military rule, which would exacerbate their credibility problem with the Egyptian public. While President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had little success in reaching out to activists and opposition leaders, in anticipation of a Muslim Brotherhood victory, Clinton conveyed her willingness to cooperate with Islamist parties that were committed to nonviolence and respected democracy.

Lawmakers pushed for conditionality on U.S. military aid to Egypt, stipulating in the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2012 that the $1.3

\textsuperscript{121} Ambassador Margaret Scobey, "Ambassador Scobey’s Letter to Al Akhbar Editor," egypt.usembassy.gov/tr041711.html.
billion in military aid would be contingent on the peaceful transfer of power from the SCAF to elected civilian leaders, requiring Clinton to certify certain democratic principles were maintained throughout the transition.¹²⁴ Yet Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was outspoken in her opposition to imposing conditionality on military aid to Egypt:

The longstanding relationship between the United States and Egypt is of paramount importance to both of us. We support the democratic transition, and we don’t want to do anything that in any way draws into question our relationship or our support. We also believe that the army has played a very stabilizing, important role during this period....Egypt’s strong institutions, longstanding respect for the army, and the role the army played was absolutely critical for the revolution.¹²⁵

President Obama had similar reservations about conditionality, which he believed would undermine his foreign policy prerogatives.¹²⁶ Despite vociferous criticism from Congress, on March 23, 2012, Clinton waived the restrictions on U.S. aid to Egypt, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the continuity of U.S.-Egypt relations and the Camp David Accords.¹²⁷ In addition, the U.S. brought more than 100 business executives to Cairo in September, 2012, to encourage trade and investment, although protests and demonstrations at the U.S. embassy discouraged new business activity. The U.S. and Europe also agreed to loan Egypt money once an agreement with the IMF was reached.

The SCAF supervised elections held for both the lower house (the People’s Assembly) and upper house (the Shura Council) of parliament. The Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), the only opposition party with a strong national organization, won 45% of the seats in the lower house, and 58% of the contested

seats in the upper house. The Salafists’ al-Nur Party won 25% of the seats in the lower house, and 25% of the contested seats in the upper house. In May 2012, during the first round of presidential elections, the former military officer Ahmed Shafiq came a close second to Mohammed Morsi, the president of the FJP. Two days before the runoff that was scheduled for June 16-17, the SCAF, citing the authority of the Supreme Constitutional Court, dissolved the lower house of parliament. Morsi’s charge that the SCAF’s ruling was a violation of democratic principles boosted his popularity, and he won 52% of the vote during the runoff election. The military accepted Shafiq’s loss, and Morsi assumed the presidency.

What intra-regime power arrangement would Morsi settle on to provide political stability? While the Muslim Brotherhood provided a well-organized base of political support, members of the former ruling party as well as the more liberal, secular elements of the revolution withheld support, offering only criticism for Morsi’s policies. Morsi hoped to co-opt the Interior Ministry to ensure social order, and appointed Ahmed Gamal, a corrupt and “ruthless” police officer, to be the interior minister. Yet Morsi struggled to maintain control over the police forces, which failed to help him reign in the popular protests against him.

In August, 2012, the military, in a sign of their willingness to withdraw from politics, accepted a decree that returned executive and legislative authority to Morsi’s government. Some analysts speculate President Morsi, along with the Islamist majority in the Constituent Assembly, protected the EAF’s autonomy in exchange for its tacit acceptance of the new constitution, which expanded the military’s institutional prerogatives. For example, the constitution stipulated that eight of the National Defense Council’s (NDC) fifteen seats would be designated for EAF officers. The NDC would have to be consulted before the president and parliament could declare war, and would retain oversight of the defense budget. The arrangement gave the military the final say in military and national security affairs, and protected the military’s vast economic interests from civilian oversight. Thus rather than aggressively move to establish

---

130 Sayigh, "Morsi and Egypt's Military".
objective civilian control over the military, Morsi "acquiesced," accepting their reserved domains.

The military's quiet support provided a modicum of regime stability despite frequent challenges by the fragmented but outspoken liberal and secular opposition. Morsi's prestige was bolstered by his role in brokering a cease-fire between Israel in Hamas in November, 2012. Later that month, however, President Morsi's ill-advised decree that placed his actions above judicial review inflamed public opinion. While the controversial declaration, intended to prevent the dismissal of an Islamist-dominated constitution-writing panel by the Supreme Constitutional Court, allowed the panel to pass a draft charter that was approved in a national referendum on December 15, 2012, Morsi's legitimacy was seriously damaged, and protesters staged anti-Islamist sit-ins around the presidential palace.

The decree rendered the domestic political environment even more hostile to the economic reforms necessary for President Morsi to secure the $4.8 billion loan he desperately needed from the IMF. By the end of March 2013, Egypt was running out of the hard currency needed for fuel and food imports. Despite U.S. pressure, Morsi delayed implementing the reforms, which included tax increases and subsidy cuts, hoping to wait until after the parliamentary elections scheduled for April. Morsi was able to do this in part because of aid from Qatar and Turkey, where leaders hoped to expand their influence on the Muslim Brotherhood-led regime at the expense of their regional rivals.

Meanwhile opposition groups such as the National Salvation Front (an umbrella opposition group that included Nasserists as well as former presidential candidate Amr Moussa) announced their intention to boycott the parliamentary elections. Tamarod ("Rebellion") called for Egyptians to "take to the streets" on June 30, 2013, to force early presidential elections. Millions of non-Islamist Egyptians, both supporters of the old regime and revolutionaries, joined together to demonstrate against Morsi's agenda. On July 26, the defense minister, General Abdul-Fattah el-Sisi, sent the military out to

---

133 Farah Halime, "Egypt Shies Away from Economic Overhauls," ibid., March 6, 2013.
134 "Qatar Doubles Aid to Egypt," ibid., January 8, 2013.
protect the demonstrations, later boasting not a single soldier defected. While the military had earlier been willing to quietly support Morsi’s regime, it was unwilling to act on the regime’s behalf against the protestors. The military removed Morsi from office on July 3rd, 2013. Almost immediately, though, clashes ensued between the military and Morsi’s supporters.

The Obama administration initially endorsed the military intervention; if officials called Morsi’s removal a coup, the $1.5 billion aid package bound for Egypt would have to be suspended, which risked exacerbating the economic crisis while costing American companies millions. On August 1, 2013, Secretary of State John Kerry said Egypt’s military leaders were “restoring democracy” by removing Morsi on July 3rd. Morsi’s Defense Minister, General Abdul-Fattah el-Sisi, insisted he advised Morsi to change course, and explained he was only “carrying out the people’s will” by deposing him. Many Egyptians accepted the transitional government’s designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization because of the alarming rhetoric that had emanated from the pro-Morsi supporters at the Rabaa al-Adawiya mosque in Cairo. However, even those who welcomed Morsi’s departure were horrified by the bloodletting as security services cleared the sit-ins on August 14. The military and police then initiated a massive crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood organization before turning their attention to other “revolutionary” actors such as secular activists, artists, human rights groups, and foreign journalists. The military’s heavy hand exposed the limitations of American influence; Secretary of Defense Hagel pleaded repeatedly with General Sisi to show restraint, but was virtually ignored.

The violence against Morsi supporters, particularly the brutal clearing of the sit-in at the Rabaa al-Adawiya mosque in Cairo, escalated to a point where President Obama was forced to reprimand the Egyptian military and cancel the joint military exercise Bright Star, which was scheduled for September, 2013. The U.S. suspended the delivery of four F-16 fighter jets to the Egyptian Air Force. Once again U.S. policymakers were

137 Kandil, "Sisi's Turn".
torn between the need to preserve relations with the EAF and their objections to flagrant human rights abuses. Obama stated, "While we want to sustain our relationship with Egypt, our traditional cooperation cannot continue as usual when civilians are being killed in the streets and rights are being rolled back."\textsuperscript{139}

In March of 2014, Sisi expressed his intention to resign from the army and run for president. In the tradition of Egyptian autocrats, he sidelined a charismatic officer with the potential to develop his own popular following, General Ahmed Wasfi. Wafsi had suggested in a television interview that if officers who had intervened in civil politics were subsequently promoted, that would seem to indicate the intervention had in fact been a coup.\textsuperscript{140} Sisi enjoyed the backing of the country’s business elite, and faced little opposition since the Muslim Brotherhood had been decimated and street protests were now illegal; in June, Sisi won 97% of the vote. An apathetic public ridiculed the low voter turnout online, and international observers reported that the "election fell short of international standards."\textsuperscript{141} With democracy activists and Muslim Brotherhood leaders in jails, public faith in democratic processes was at an all-time low. Nevertheless, by June, Washington announced Congress had approved the restoration of military aid, with Secretary of State John Kerry stating, "the United States remains deeply committed to seeing Egypt succeed."\textsuperscript{142}

While Americans continue to scrutinize its military aid for a regime that violates liberal-democratic processes, no Egyptian regime has to rely exclusively on political support from the United States. Regional competition for influence on Egyptian politics puts discontinuities in American political support in perspective, and explains the durability of Egyptian patronage networks that underlie regime stability and impede economic and political development. For example, in the wake of Mubarak’s ouster, Saudi Arabia pledged $4 billion for development projects, including loans for small


\textsuperscript{142} "U.S. Unlocks Military Aid to Egypt, Backing President Sisi".
businesses and financing for Saudi exports. After President Morsi’s election, Qatari Prime Minister Sheik Hamad bin Jassem al-Thani announced Qatar would double its financial aid to Egypt, providing $8 billion to the Muslim-Brotherhood led regime. In an effort to support Egypt’s post-Morsi transitional government at the expense of its Islamist rivals, the Saudis and the United Arab Emirates pledged $8 billion in cash and loans to Egypt. The pledge from the UAE came in the wake of military violence against Muslim Brotherhood members protesting the removal of President Morsi. Putin supported Sisi’s bid for the presidency, and offered $2 billion worth of arms to the new president.

The Limitations of U.S. Military Aid on the EAF’s Professionalism

The Egyptian public’s demand for President Mubarak’s resignation in January 2011 provided a test of the military’s professionalism, pulling the military into civil politics by forcing it to choose whether or not to act on behalf of Mubarak to save his regime. Initially it seemed U.S. military aid, by establishing contacts between officers and providing a liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations, had contributed decisively to the armed forces’ relative calm, discipline, and cohesiveness in the face of massive assemblies of people. This gave U.S. officials hope that the military could be good shepherds of the historic transition to democracy. Unfortunately, Egypt’s domestic political turmoil since the January 25 revolution reflects the negative implications of maintaining interests apart from national defense on a military institution’s respect for civilian political authority. The military’s economic interests, and the autonomy granted under President Mubarak to administer those interests, rendered the EAF’s top leaders contemptuous of civilian oversight, and gave them a powerful incentive to negotiate for the expansion of the military’s institutional prerogatives in exchange for its tacit acceptance of Mohamed Morsi’s presidency.

143 "Egypt has Received Sizeable Chunk of Saudi Aid Since 2011: IMF," Ahram Online, www.english.ahram.org/eg/NewsContent/3/12/53305/Business/Economy/Egypt-has-received-sizeable-chunk-of-Saudi-aid-sin.aspx
144 "Qatar Doubles Aid to Egypt."
Thus even though the armed forces demonstrated a willingness to "return to the barracks," a positive sign of professionalization, within the military establishment exists the sense that the military deserves to be an autonomous political actor, entitled to a guardianship role in Egyptian politics. It remains to be seen if the newly civilian, former defense minister Sisi will be the transitional leader Egypt needs to restore its path to democratic consolidation, perhaps by allowing for a peaceful transfer of power to an elected civilian leader at the end of his term, but the early indicators suggest Sisi lacks the skill to manage Egyptian affairs without relying on Mubarak-era tactics of coercion and repression. Egypt's government is thus likely farther away from establishing objective civilian control over its military than it was prior to the Arab Spring, and the limits of U.S. military aid in contributing to the professionalization of the recipient’s military have been exposed.

The Tahrir Square demonstrations in early 2011 raised the prestige of the Egyptian Armed Forces, thrusting them reluctantly back to the center of Egyptian politics. However, in the months following, the SCAF relied on the repressive security services to keep the streets and squares free from demonstrations rather than take the opportunity to dismantle and reform the oversized, corrupt, and ruthless Interior Ministry.147 Riot police and plain-clothed thugs forced demonstrators to leave Tahrir Square sit-ins on March 9 and April 8, and violently dispersed demonstrators in late June, when protesting families demanded security personnel be held accountable for violence against civilians. The Interior Ministry also hired thugs (posing as SCAF supporters) to harass a march to the Defense Ministry on July 23. Military-security violence against demonstrators became more routine as the year progressed, and the SCAF invoked the Sadat-era "emergency law" to allow police to arrest and detain civilians and try them before military courts.

The SCAF promised to lift the emergency laws and turn power over to civilians within six months, but within two months of the revolution, the people began to grow frustrated that the military was not reigning in the security services nor bringing former government officials to justice.148 The SCAF’s commitment to democratic processes came under greater scrutiny when they released the “El-Silmi Document” ahead of the

147 Kandil, Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen, 234.
parliamentary elections scheduled for November 2011. The document gave the SCAF legislative authority and complete autonomy over the military, protecting the armed forces from civilian oversight. While the military distanced itself from the document at the time amidst widespread public criticism, its principles resurfaced prior to the final round of voting in the presidential elections, when the SCAF issued a constitutional declaration that granted itself legislative powers, freedom from civilian oversight, and a role in drafting the new constitution.

SCAF member Major General Mamdough Shaheen explained Egypt’s new constitution must protect the armed forces against the “whims” of any future president, suggesting the military leadership’s desire to not only protect its reserved domains but also to establish a guardianship role for the military. The military’s subordination to civilian political authority was thus tenuous at best; retired General Hussam Sweilam stated in an interview with an American journalist, “We shall obey the president because he will be accepted by the people, but we will not accept any interference by the political parties in our military affairs.”

The military successfully negotiated a formal political role and expanded autonomy in exchange for tacit support of President Morsi and the Islamist majority in the Constituent Assembly. Violations of the liberal model of civil-military relations include the stipulation that the minister of defense be an actively serving EAF officer rather than a civilian, that the defense budget only need be approved by the National Defense Council (NDC), an entity led by the president but with 8 out of 15 seats

152 Cambanis, "Succession Gives Army a Stiff Test in Egypt."
designated for EAF officers, and that the EAF retains the right to try civilians in military
court if they “harm the armed forces.”

Beyond these institutionalized violations of the liberal model of civil-military
relations, the military’s professional competence has also been compromised by its
reluctance to transform from a cumbersome conventional force to a smaller, more agile,
rapid expeditionary force. In 2008, a secret American embassy cable warned General
David H. Petraeus, then head of U.S. Central Command, that under Egypt’s long-time
defense minister, Field Marshal Mohamed Tantawi, “The tactical and operational
readiness of the Egyptian Armed Forces has decayed.” While U.S. defense
professionals have recommended spending U.S. military aid on training, counterterrorism,
border security and counterinsurgency equipment, the EAF uses U.S. military aid to
purchase sophisticated and showy weaponry like F-16 fighter jets, which require
extensive training to fly and are also expensive to maintain. The Egyptian air force has
one of the worst crash rates of any F-16 fleet in the world, and Egypt, which lacks an
indigenous capacity to maintain its equipment, spends 15% of its military aid on
maintenance contracts. This issue raises serious concerns about the ability of the EAF to
manage the surge in extremist violence, particularly in the Sinai, following the removal
of President Morsi and the crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood.

While the military did briefly go “back to the barracks” during Morsi’s presidency,
its leadership seems increasing comfortable with assuming a more prominent role in
Egyptian politics, especially after more than forty years of marginalization by Presidents
Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak. While the military has displayed extraordinary cohesiveness
thus far, it is possible that junior and middle-ranking officers that sympathize with
Islamists become increasingly disturbed by the military’s use of violence to subordinate
Islamist groups. In addition, tensions between junior and middle-ranking officers and the
privileged senior command could lead to factionalism and intervention, particularly if

groups find common cause with pro-democracy civil society groups. The prospects for security sector reform on the whole, including the forces under Interior Ministry command, now seem dim. In declaring the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization, as well as banning public demonstrations and rounding up revolutionary activists, the military leadership has indicated its willingness to use force to remain at the center of Egypt’s politics.

Conclusions

From the signing of the Egypt-Israel Peace Agreement of 1979, U.S. military aid has decisively rendered hostilities with Israel, a country that fought in four wars with Egypt since 1948, less likely. At the same time, American political support bolstered Egypt’s regional prestige and contributed to the stability of President Hosni Mubarak’s authoritarian regime, minimizing the chance that the military would intervene in Egypt’s civil politics. The billions of dollars worth of credits for the purchase of American weapons, equipment, maintenance and training have contributed to the professionalism of the Egyptian armed forces. Why, then, in the four years since the January 25 revolution in 2011, have the military’s leaders expanded their role in Egyptian politics, and carried out a coup to remove a democratically elected leader?

This case illuminates the relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of the recipient’s military in civil politics. In particular, it challenges several assumptions one might make based on the civil-military relations literature, particularly with respect to the influence that an external threat, political strength of the executive, and the professionalism of the armed forces have on the incentives and opportunity for the military to intervene. This section will offer some conclusions based on observations of the four periods covered in this study. The goal is that these conclusions may inform expectations in future cases when U.S. military is deemed necessary in support of American strategic interests.

In the late 1940s, and early 1950s, different perceptions of the external threat to Egypt's security undermined U.S. efforts to reach a formal defense arrangement that would have been accompanied by U.S. military aid. While the United States was focused on meeting the external threat posed by the Soviet Union, Egyptians were more concerned with establishing their independence in foreign affairs and perceived Israel as a greater threat to their security than the Eastern bloc. Nasser's Free Officers intervened to remove King Farouk from power not necessarily in response to an external threat, but rather to embark on a post-colonial nation building effort that would transform Egypt into the leader of a pan-Arab movement.

Nasser, focused less on any external threat than on minimizing political challenges that would impede his ability to implement sweeping social, political, and economic reforms, deployed loyal military personnel to key political and economic posts throughout the country, and established a multilayered domestic security and intelligence apparatus to protect his regime. This massive politicization of the military undermined its military readiness, however, leading to the loss of political control over the military and culminating in the devastating loss of 17,500 military personnel and millions of dollars worth of military equipment in the 1967 war. Nasser subsequently looked to the Soviet Union to reform and modernize his military, as he purged the top-heavy, corrupt military leadership.

The most important observation regarding the relationship between the external threat and the military's presence in civil politics is that Nasser successfully depoliticized the military, subordinated it to his political authority, and enhanced its professionalism when the threat from Israel was arguably at its greatest. In other words, rather than using the external threat to justify a greater role for the military in Egyptian politics, Nasser used the external threat to justify removing the military from politics. In this case Soviet military aid was critical to his efforts to build up a military capable of winning back the territory lost. This highlights the role that the political leadership in an authoritarian regime plays in determining the extent of politicization in the armed forces. Nasser believed that he needed to politicize his officers in the 1950s to maintain control
over society as he was implementing his social and economic reforms. He learned, however, that this severely retarded military readiness, as promotions were based on patronage rather than merit, officers were distracted by interests apart from external defense, and the military's leader, Field Marshall Amer, came to rival Nasser as a political figure, undermining Nasser's control over the armed forces. Faced with a very real external threat, Nasser had to redefine his approach to civil-military relations.

The subordination of Egypt's military to political authority that was initiated by Nasser was continued by Sadat, who relied on an expanding civilian security sector to guarantee domestic order. Sadat maintained control over the military even as its leading generals disagreed with their president's managing of the impending military campaign against Israel. Sadat's efforts fell short of attaining objective civilian control over his military, however. Rather than value the professional expertise of his officer corps, Sadat downgraded the status of his armed force by assigning an economic development mission for the military, and sidelining experienced military officers. From Sadat's perspective, the only way to truly mitigate the external threat posed by Israel was to reach a political solution, which could only be attained with the support of the United States. He could not afford to allow a political rival to emerge from the military who might challenge his authority to negotiate a peace agreement.

Mubarak benefited from the peace agreement with Israel as well as guaranteed access to military technology and training from the United States, thus enjoying a more favorable security environment than either of his two predecessors. Nevertheless, he made no effort to establish objective civilian control over the armed forces. In addition, the reduced threat of interstate war did not prevent him from linking the transnational threat posed by militant religious fundamentalism to his political opposition to justify excluding Islamist opposition groups from politics. Rather than use the military to suppress the opposition, as Nasser did for most of his presidency, Mubarak relied instead on the civilian security apparatus, which was far less likely to produce a rival political figure.

Domestic instability, rather than an external threat, pulled the military back into politics in early 2011. Despite early evidence the military was willing to return to the barracks, however, the military responded to continued domestic unrest by removing
President Morsi from power; subsequently military leaders have linked the transnational terrorist threat to the Muslim Brotherhood to justify banning the group and its supporters from politics, just as Mubarak did during his rule. While such behavior risks American disapproval that could stem the flow of U.S. military aid, the military recognizes that the U.S. interest in continuing counterterrorism cooperation between Egypt, Israel and the United States means a cessation of aid is unlikely. In addition, Egypt’s wealthy regional neighbors have a vested interest in Egypt’s stability, and are willing to fund the purchase of arms from other sources such as Moscow or Beijing. The presence of alternatives continues to limit American influence on Egyptian policy.

**Political Support**

U.S. presidents from Truman to Obama have recognized not only the strategic importance of Egypt, but its political significance as the most populous Arab state and historical leader of the Arab world. Successive administrations have struggled to provide for the defense of the Middle East while managing intra-regional rivalries, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict. Egypt’s importance was such that the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations provided political support to President Nasser even in the absence of any formalized agreement on mutual defense. Despite this political support, which was decisive during the Suez crisis of 1956, President Nasser deliberately politicized his military to neutralize opposition from other sectors of Egyptian society.

The dissolution of the United Arab Republic, the protracted military engagement in Yemen, estrangement from the U.S. during the Johnson administration, and economic crisis contributed to the erosion of Nasser’s status both regionally and domestically. It is worthwhile to note that this political weakness rendered it more difficult for Nasser to maintain control over the armed forces ahead of the 1967 war. It was only after the military had been humiliated that he was able to purge the military’s bloated top ranks and launch a campaign to de-politicize and professionalize the armed forces. Sadat’s ability to maintain political control over the armed forces throughout the 1973 war with Israel, despite employing a strategy at odds with the preferred approach of the military’s experts, is a reflection of the success of Nasser’s efforts.
Presidents Sadat and Mubarak understood the risks inherent in politicizing the military to serve as a strategic partner for the regime, preferring instead to rely on political support from business elites and the expansive public sector backed up by the coercive arm of the interior ministry. Both presidents also recognized the need to satisfy the military's corporate interests, which Sadat pursued through U.S. military aid and Mubarak augmented by encouraging the development of independent commercial interests. Mubarak benefited from continuity in American political support that helped to bolster his regime stability until the administration of President George W. Bush, which pressured him to open Egypt's government to political competition. This galvanized civil society groups, particularly as it became increasingly evident Mubarak intended to pass the presidency on to his corrupt and profligate son Gamal. The extent to which the military as an institution felt its interests were distinct from President Mubarak's was evident following the Tahrir Square demonstrations, when, in close consultation with counterparts in the U.S., its leaders ushered Mubarak from power.

The swiftness with which the military expanded its institutional prerogatives in the post-Mubarak period is testament to the extent to which a formal political role for the military had been denied since Nasser's de-politicization campaign in the late 1960s. While initially willing to return to the barracks, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces first ensured it would retain a privileged role in foreign and national security policymaking through the National Defense Council. Egypt's first democratically-elected leader, President Mohamed Morsi, had a vested interest in establishing objective civilian control over the military, yet instead adopted a policy of acquiescence, allowing the military to retain its reserved domains in exchange for tacit approval of his government and the constituent panel in charge of drafting Egypt's new constitution. The constitution passed in 2012 would give the military even greater autonomy than in the past, and protect its interests from civilian oversight.

Capitalizing on Egyptians' exasperation with military rule since the resignation of Mubarak, President Morsi set out to subordinate the military to his political authority, firing the defense minister and head of the SCAF, Field Marshall Tantawi, along with the chief of staff, and the chiefs of the navy, air force and air defense within six weeks of taking office. Despite this early success, Morsi ultimately failed to establish objective
civilian control over the military. This failure stems not from a desire to politicize the military or co-opt the military as a strategic partner, but rather from political weakness. Morsi was elected by less than half of the population, and while he enjoyed steady support from the Muslim Brotherhood, both revolutionary and Mubarak-era liberal and secular groups opposed his policies. His inability to secure the allegiance of the Interior Ministry resulted in the deterioration of law and order, which exacerbated Egypt’s economic crisis as revenues from tourism and foreign investment plummeted. Had the military strongly resisted his presidency from the beginning, his tenure as president would have been even shorter.

Faced with mounting domestic opposition, Morsi was removed from office by the military despite having been the recipient of American political support throughout his presidency. Any chance that Morsi might have had to reclaim his post evaporated when U.S. policymakers explained the military intervened to restore democracy. Events since have proven the military successfully exploited public demands for Morsi’s resignation to use force not only against Islamist political groups but all opposition groups within Egyptian society, resulting in an atmosphere of fear and repression and leaving the military as the predominant force in Egyptian politics.

The Egyptian public may be in a mood to settle for gradual reforms rather than revolutionary change. While most disapproved of the violent crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters, few are eager to give the Islamist party another opportunity to govern. Also, the escalation of militant Islamist violence has highlighted the pitfalls of democracy in the absence of a countervailing organized liberal opposition.

Recent discussions of conditionality emanating from the U.S. Congress in reaction to the gross human rights violations of the Egyptian armed forces is unlikely to change Egypt’s political landscape anytime soon, for several reasons. First, the United States, Egypt, and Israel have a stake in confronting the extremist violence that has surged in the Sinai since Morsi’s ouster. While the dominance of the Egyptian military in its civil politics is damaging for the social and economic welfare of the country, the U.S. and Israel know they can depend on security cooperation from Egypt’s government as long as the SCAF and NDC retain their decision-making authority. Second, U.S. military aid pays for defense contracts that have been negotiated months, if not years, prior to the
The delivery of equipment and services. The termination of aid thus negatively impacts the
American defense-industrial base, costing the U.S. millions in lost revenues and
American jobs. Finally, even though Egypt relies on U.S. military aid for the
maintenance of existing equipment, wealthy regional neighbors are willing to provide the
Egyptian government funds to purchase arms from alternative sources such as Russia.
The U.S. desire to retain the market for Egyptian military goods and services provides a
powerful incentive to maintain the flow of American military aid.

**Professionalism**

U.S. military aid is expected to contribute to the professionalization of the
recipient’s military, which is a precondition for establishing objective civilian control. A
military’s professionalism has multiple dimensions, including competency, coherency,
mission exclusivity, and respect for civilian political authority. This case revealed that the
support of an outside power is critical for improving the competency of the military in a
developing country. Nasser and Sadat could not have prepared their military for its
successful crossing of the Suez Canal at the outset of the 1973 war with Israel in the
absence of military aid from the Soviet Union. This case also illuminates the extent to
which the leader of an authoritarian regime has control over the level of politicization of
the military, with direct implications for the armed forces’ coherency, mission exclusivity,
and respect for civilian authority. Nasser’s deliberate politicization of the military to
secure his regime resulted in the fragmentation of his officer corps, where members were
promoted based on loyalty rather than merit. The officers’ political roles distracted them
from their mission of defense from external threats, leaving them ill-prepared for Israel’s
military strike in 1967. Their lack of respect for civilian political authority stemmed from
their role in directly supplanting the political structures that existed at nearly every level
of society during King Farouk’s rule.

Nasser’s post-June War de-politicization campaign dramatically improved the
professionalism of the armed forces. No longer distracted by political affairs, the military
became a more coherent body, and focused on the mission of preparing a force capable of
meeting the Israeli threat. The core group of military leaders who understood that
professionalization enhanced the military’s readiness respected Nasser’s political authority, which Sadat was able to retain through the 1973 war. While the military’s respect of political authority is a precondition for the liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations, Sadat’s frequent dismissal of his most talented, experienced officers, including the “October Generation,” as well as his redirection of the armed forces toward national economic development, undermined the professional competency of the EAF. Designed more to marginalize the military than to actually serve a nation-building purpose, the military’s involvement in economic activities would evolve and expand under Mubarak until it festered into a reserved domain the military’s leaders would go to great lengths to protect. Whether these economic interests were intended to serve as a “coup-proofing” mechanism whereby the military’s interests would be linked to the regime’s patronage networks, or as a means to pay for the basic needs (wages, uniforms, food, housing) of a 450,000 man military while keeping defense expenditures low, the cultivation of economic interests undermined the professional integrity of the EAF.

This case demonstrates that U.S. military aid contributed to the productivity of the military’s commercial ventures, placating the military and minimizing the likelihood the EAF would interfere with Mubarak’s presidency. When those interests were threatened, however, the military allowed Mubarak to step down while ensuring its interests would be formally protected in the new constitution. These economic interests thus cultivated a disdain for civilian political authority, as the military proved unwilling to submit its activities to civilian oversight. The argument can be made that these interests have also undermined the competency of the military, as more emphasis has been placed on procuring showy items like tanks and jets and items that contribute to the military’s commercial enterprises than training, logistics, and communications technology that would improve the military’s competency in counter-terrorism operations.

In exchange for tacit acceptance of the Muslim Brotherhood, the military gained nearly complete autonomy from civilian oversight, more than four decades after being subordinated and marginalized by Nasser. The “tacit acceptance” proved short-lived as well, as the military abandoned Morsi, banned the Muslim Brotherhood, and rounded up democracy activists. Morsi’s defense minister retired, ran for president, and swiftly reasserted Mubarak-era authoritarian practices. While Sisi’s long-term vision for civil-
military relations is uncertain, the military’s formal political role has been strengthened through the constitution passed by referendum in January, 2014.

What this case reveals is that de-politicization and subordination to political authority can occur, even in the absence of U.S. military aid, and in the presence of an external threat, if deliberately implemented by a regime with strong internal and external political support. The subordination of the military under a weak democratic regime might prove more tenuous. It also reveals that de-politicization is not synonymous with professionalization; despite the presence of large outlays of U.S. military aid, the professional competency of the military was allowed to erode out of fear that a strong and capable military might pose a political challenge to the extant regime. After decades of comprehensive political repression that inhibited the ability of opposition forces to coalesce, however, the military emerged as the only institution capable of supplanting both Mubarak and the Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party. Despite being the recipient of billions worth of U.S. military aid over the past three and a half decades, the Egyptian military is back in the center of Egyptian politics.
CHAPTER V

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

This study began with some rather optimistic expectations about the role U.S. military aid might play in the civil-military relations of military aid recipients. As discussed, however, despite aid that mitigated the external threat to partners’ security, political support that bolstered civilian elites, and education and training that aimed to increase the professionalism of foreign armies, these three important allies, South Korea, Turkey, and Egypt, experienced multiple direct interventions, the expansion of their armies’ reserved domains, and periods of direct military rule. Each case study includes a brief comparative dimension that examines the balance of power within the military and between military and civilian elites across periods, in part to account for the role of individual political elites in efforts to establish objective civilian control over the military. This chapter will examine the similarities and differences in the relationships between U.S. military aid and civil-military relations across cases.

External Threats and Civil-Military Relations

In addition to stationing U.S. forces in the Republic of Korea and Turkey, the United States provided material defense support that included advanced weaponry, logistics and communications equipment, and surplus military goods. The U.S. also contributed to military readiness by providing training for foreign troops and servicing equipment. While the presence of American troops as well as improved military capabilities may have mitigated the external threat to the recipient nation’s defense, however, members of the armed forces in South Korea and Turkey actually expanded their role in civil politics, particularly after 1960. Not until the 1990s did society’s tolerance for military interference decline to a point where civilian leaders were finally able to roll back institutional gains. In the case of Egypt, the U.S. has provided billions in military assistance since 1979. Thirty – five years later, the Egyptian military is playing
its most prominent role in Egypt’s civil politics since the Free Officers overthrew the monarchy in 1952.

The evidence from the case studies suggests several explanations for the seemingly contradictory relationship between US. military aid and the role of the recipient’s military in civil politics, even when the United States mitigated the external threats to its partners’ security. These explanations are not necessarily analytically distinct from one another, but the discussion may provide some insight into the relationship between U.S. military aid and civil-military relations within a recipient state.

Military Motives: Beyond External Defense

Contrary to our expectations, the relationship between the external threat and military intervention is weak. In every instance of military intervention, the military, whether acting as an institution or a faction, responded to the political weakness of the government as exemplified by its divisiveness, incompetency, corruption, political violence, and/or authoritarianism. Even when the recipient’s security environment was improved by U.S. military aid, these internal issues retained the power to pull the military into civilian politics. In addition, political leaders were able to implement civil-military reforms that reversed the institutional prerogatives of the military even when confronted by serious security challenges.

An example of the primacy of domestic political issues over external security concerns is the Free Officer intervention in 1952. Britain was Egypt’s security guarantor, and had successfully defended Egypt from Axis forces during World War II. Yet the Free Officers were angered by King Farouk’s obliging attitude toward the British, resentful of the corrupt civilian political elite, and disdainful of the king’s lack of respect for the military high command’s advice prior to the Arab-Palestinian war in 1948. Even though Egyptians considered Israel a hostile neighbor, and the West worried about Soviet seizure of the Suez Canal, the Free Officers identified with the public surge of nationalism and called for the expulsion of all British troops from Egyptian territory. Had the Free Officers truly felt that Egypt faced an imminent external security threat, they might have been more amenable to British patronage, or accepted American offers to establish a
Middle Eastern defense architecture centered on Egypt. Instead, President Nasser exploited the Cold War competition to gain concessions from both the United States and the Soviet Union.

The intervention led by Park Chung Hee in 1961, was fueled by officers’ frustration with the failure of the democratically elected government of Chang Myon to implement necessary economic and military reforms after President Rhee’s resignation in 1960. While Rhee had insisted maintaining an oversized active force (as opposed to a smaller active force with a large reserve force) was necessary for South Korea’s security, Park shifted his focus to economic growth, working closely with the Kennedy administration to design a program that would improve South Korea’s self-sufficiency in the long-term. While Korea’s economic strength and national security were inextricably linked, the intervention in 1979, led by future president Chun Doo Hwan and members of the Hanahoe faction, occurred as South Korea was surpassing the North with respect to industrial capacity, modernization, and military capability. In other words, despite a dramatic improvement in South Korea’s security environment, members of the military were still willing to use force to maintain their political hegemony and institutional prerogatives.

Turkey perhaps enjoyed the most stable security environment of the three cases in 1960. Not only were bilateral relations with the United States strong, Turkey had the second largest army in NATO, and was a core member of CENTO. However, the Turkish public was frustrated by the undemocratic behavior of the Menderes government, which had suppressed almost all opposition activity, and the military was offended by Menderes’ attempts to use the armed forces against his opponents. After the coup, Turkey’s military junta worked closely with the Kennedy administration on an economic program, and drafted the most liberal constitution in Turkey’s history. The junta’s purge of “reactionary” military officers was designed to maximize the military’s ideological cohesion, even though in the short-term it undermined military readiness. The intervention in 1971 was conducted after the civilian government failed to carry out the reforms recommended by the military in 1970, which focused on economic issues. While the direct intervention in 1980 is widely recognized as a reaction to escalating political violence, the military had refrained from intervening earlier in the decade, even when
government weakness led to the American arms embargo that had a detrimental impact on the Turkey's military capability. The military's interference in 1980, 1997, and 2007 was more a reaction to the rise of political Islam, which the military considers a threat to the Turkish Republic as conceived by founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

This does not suggest that external, geopolitical circumstances had no relationship with military interventions. External threats were the impetus for U.S. military aid, which increased the strength of foreign militaries in relation to government and society. The invasion of South Korea was the driving force behind the U.S. commitment to expanding, equipping, and training South Korea's military during the Korean War, which rendered it an attractive strategic partner for Rhee and increased its capacity to dominate Korean politics. The threat of Soviet dominance over Turkey in the postwar period drove the decision to modernize the Turkish military. The military aid that underpins the Israel-Egypt peace treaty is designed to guarantee a balance of capabilities between the two military aid recipients, who fought four wars against each other from 1948 through 1973. In doing so, however, military aid has contributed to the strength of the Egyptian military in relation to civil society and state institutions. In other words, while U.S. military aid mitigated the external threat, in doing so it increased the capacity of the military to intervene.

Mitigating the threat also had the potential to disrupt dominant internal political narratives. For example, in South Korea and Turkey, it gave opposition parties an opening to challenge the "total national security" narrative that justified the centralization of political authority in Korea and political alignment with the United States in Turkey. Turkish opposition and radical groups exploited anti-American sentiment for domestic political gain, undermining the political authority of incumbent regimes. Thus the easing of tensions, or the sense of a reduced threat, led to an increase in political contestation. In a country with populations vulnerable to extremist messages as well as underdeveloped political institutions incapable of dealing with competitive politics, parliamentary deadlock and violence may pull the military into the civil sphere.

The weak relationship between the external threat and military intervention is also revealed by the fact that civilian leaders were able to subordinate the military to their political leadership even when the external threat was high. For example, when Egypt
was arguably at its most vulnerable to external threats, after the devastating Six Day War in June 1967, Nasser became determined to de-politicize the military. Nasser blamed the politicization of the military from 1952 onward for undermining the armed forces' professionalism, leading to the undisciplined, divided, and ineffective force that provoked Israel’s offensive by marching into the Sinai. Nasser exploited the political weakness of the military following its humiliating defeat to purge corrupt and politicized officers, then looked to the Soviet Union to modernize and professionalize the Egyptian Armed Forces. Nasser’s initiative was so successful that his unpopular successor, Anwar Sadat, was able to maintain firm control over the military despite disagreements with the EAF’s high command over the campaign against Israel in 1973.

Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey was able to implement civil-military reforms that dramatically reduced the TAF’s institutional prerogatives despite the collapse of his “zero problems with neighbors” policy, which has brought Ankara at odds with Syria’s Bashar al-Assad. Turkey’s external security has been threatened by Kurdish terrorism, Syria’s civil war, Iraq’s sectarian violence, and most recently by ISIS, and complicated by Western pressure to sanction Iran and Russia, and Arab pressure to censure Israel. Yet despite relying heavily on the military to carry out his foreign policy, throughout his premiership Erdogan, bolstered by society’s support of the EU accession process, removed many of the formal and informal mechanisms the military has relied upon to shape Turkish politics since 1960.

Finally, while this study made the point that during President Chun’s term the balance of power on the Korean peninsula tilted in South Korea’s favor, the ROK is still threatened enough by North Korea that in 2014, Korea’s government requested the plan to transfer wartime operational control from American to Korean forces be delayed until the 2020s. The U.S. maintains 28,500 troops in South Korea, and under the current arrangements, if war breaks out the 655,000-strong South Korean forces will fall under American command. The delay is in response to continued provocations by North Korea that include nuclear tests in 2009 and 2013, long-range rocket launches in 2009 and 2012, the sinking of a South Korean naval vessel in March, 2010, that killed 46 Korean sailors,

---

and the November 2010 artillery attack on the South Korean island of Yeonpyeong-do that killed four Koreans.²

Linkages: The External Threat and the Political Opposition

While the relationship between the external threat and military intervention in civil politics may be weak, U.S. military aid still lends legitimacy to political elites’ claims that security issues justify the centralization of their authority and lends credibility to linkages between the external threat and the political opposition. In doing so these political elites may, or may not, politicize the military by mobilizing armed forces against their critics. In some cases leaders’ may rely on another coercive apparatus, such as a special civilian security force, to restrict the opposition.

For example, in 1952, in the middle of the Korean War, President Rhee accused Chang Myon and other politicians of being Communist sympathizers, and used the military to arrest and intimidate legislators. President Park used the external threat posed by North Korea to discredit opposition leader Kim Dae Jung’s campaign in the 1971 presidential elections. President Park justified the repressive Yushin constitution, which he relied on the military to implement, by citing the administrative efficiency and political strength necessary to conduct reunification negotiations with North Korea. When General Chun Doo Hwan ordered the brutal military crackdown on pro-democracy activists in Kwangju in 1980, he insisted the demonstrators threatened to undermine Korea’s stability. In reality, he wanted to quell opposition forces within society to pave the way for his presidency.³

Authoritarian leaders do not necessarily pull the military into politics to suppress opposition activity, however. For decades President Mubarak of Egypt linked the external threat posed by transnational terrorism with political opposition groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood. Presidents Sadat and Mubarak relied on the civilian security apparatus to harass and intimidate the political opposition, mindful of the pitfalls of pulling the military into civil politics. The SCAF that governed after Mubarak resigned in

² Ibid., 10.
2011 continued to rely on the security services, as they were reluctant to be pulled into an internal policing role. However, since the coup that removed President Morsi, the SCAF and President Sisi have used both the civilian security apparatus as well as the military against opposition groups. President Sisi justifies the brutalization of Morsi supporters by insisting they are all religious extremists, trying civilians in military courts, and conflating terrorism with political Islam to justify banning the Muslim Brotherhood from politics.

Prime Minister Menderes' attempt to use the military against opposition leader Ismet Inonu provoked a strong reaction within the officer corps, and is thought to be one of the reasons for the coup in 1960. Yet the military junta that intervened in 1980 also restricted political activity throughout its nearly three-year period of military rule, arguing such constraints were necessary to minimize the risk of political violence. In particular, the military wanted to avoid the participation of Islamist parties such as Erbakan's National Salvation Party.4

The linkages between political opposition groups and external security threats are more difficult to defend when the threat recedes. For example, during the 1980s, as the balance of power on the Korean peninsula shifted toward South Korea, President Chun could not credibly accuse pro-democracy activists and other opposition groups of being North Korean sympathizers or Communists. Society was less tolerant of martial law and national security rhetoric, and Chun eventually conceded to modest political reforms.

**The Role of Expectations**

The nature of U.S. military support for Korea and Turkey provided in the 1950s and 1960s differed from the military support for Egypt appropriated in the last three decades. In the case of Korea and Turkey, U.S. officials wanted military aid to contribute to the modernization of their armed forces, which would allow for force reduction, creating less of a burden on the recipient's budget in the long-term. U.S. policymakers believed economic and political factors would be just as important to the long-term security of their allies as having a strong military. Thus they emphasized the importance

---

of industrializing and developing indigenous defense production capabilities in order to be self-sufficient in the future.

Economic development has been credited with a role in facilitating transitions to democracy in the long-term. Over time, economic growth contributes to a favorable balance of capabilities that renders it more difficult for ruling elites to credibly link the external security threat with their political opposition. While Korea and Turkey did not necessarily always follow Washington's economic advice, the expectation that U.S. military aid would decline in the long term had a powerful impact on their leaders' commitment to economic development. However, despite international pressure for Egypt to implement economic reforms, particularly since the late 1970s, there has been no comparable expectation on the part of Egypt's leaders that at some point in the future they will have to take full responsibility for maintaining their own military capability.

In the case of South Korea and Turkey, government officials understood from the mid-1950s onward that their military assistance was in decline. The Eisenhower Administration very clearly did not want the United States to bear the economic burden of its extensive network of allied nations indefinitely, as over time it would deplete the finances of the United States, causing balance of payments problems and other economic difficulties that would weaken the U.S. vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. The profuse economic advice provided by U.S. officials to the governments of South Korea and Turkey during these years reflects a desire by American policymakers to assist their partners in developing a viable economy that could provide for its own defense in the future. Thus policymakers in the recipient states were told repeatedly that while the American security guarantees and mutual defense treaties would endure, they could not count on the presence of U.S. forces and military grants forever. This lies in stark contrast with the expectations of President Mubarak's government, which likely never considered its military aid to be in jeopardy. In this way state leaders' expectations regarding the future of U.S. military aid flows may have impacted their decision-making with respect to economic development, motivating President Park and Prime Minister Ozal to implement

---

economic reforms that would facilitate the creation of an indigenous defense industrial base. President Rhee's single-minded determination to unify the Korean peninsula in his lifetime meant he was willing to suffer the economic burden of his armed forces, even though U.S. officials insisted his military was too large. Rhee pressed for more aid, more U.S. troops, and more materiel throughout his term, resisting American efforts to redirect resources to economic development. President Park, however, had a keen understanding of how dependence on U.S. aid undermined his national security policy-making autonomy, and knew the only way for Korea to be truly independent and face the North Korean and Chinese Communist threat was to industrialize. He emphasized the importance of self-reliance, and found the external threat posed by North Korea to be a powerful mobilizing tool for Korean society. By linking economic development to national security, Park legitimized the presence of members of the military establishment in government and industry, and established broad-based support for his austerity measures and other uncomfortable economic reforms throughout his first two terms. The Guam Doctrine, along with the prospect of American military withdrawal from South Korea, gave further impetus to his economic programs. When public support for his policies began to decline, Park restricted political activity and moved to consolidate his political authority in order to continue his economic programs through the 1970s.

Turkish officials also understood their economy would need to eventually support its own defense industrial establishment, but struggled to find a civilian leader with the political authority to implement unpopular economic reforms. Menderes' effort to liberalize the economy met early success in the 1950s, but public support dwindled when the economy later stalled. Senior military leaders were so frustrated with the inability of parliament to implement economic reforms throughout the 1960s, they put forward their own recommendations in 1970, and forced Prime Minister Demirel to dissolve his government in 1971, when it proved unable to pass necessary legislation. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit lost electoral support when he tried to introduce modest economic reforms in October 1979, and his successor Demirel's austerity measures caused discontent among Turks as prices, inflation, and unemployment soared.\(^6\) When the military

\(^{6}\) Howe, "Angry Turks Resist New Policies and Higher Prices."
intervened in 1980, the junta appointed the architect of the plan, Turgut Ozal, to implement the reforms. Unlike after the intervention in 1960, the military restricted political activity to guarantee political order during Ozal's premiership. The competent and respected Ozal, unlike Park, did not deliberately politicize the military to consolidate his political authority and guide the economic reforms; rather, the military acted autonomously to assume a guardianship role, even after military rule ended in 1983. President Evren and Ozal together were able to maintain political stability while implementing the economic reforms that allowed for a transformation of Turkey's economy in the 1980s, and the development of an indigenous defense industrial base.

Egypt turned down American offers for security arrangements in the first two decades of the Cold War primarily because of domestic and regional political concerns. President Nasser found it more profitable to exploit the Cold War rivalry for concessions that would advance his interests, particularly with respect to his vision of pan-Arabism and neutralizing regional rivals. With both the United States and the Soviet Union offering economic and military aid, Nasser was free to realize his vision of socialism, and set about expanding the public sector and constructing a massive social welfare system that would undermine Egypt's economy for the next five decades. Post-Suez crisis optimism emboldened him to launch his "Socialist Decrees" in 1961, initiating an unprecedented nationalization of private assets that further centralized the state's control over the economy. Only after the economic crisis in 1965, and the devastating June war in 1967, did Nasser give up on his economic program and turn decisively to the Soviets for military and economic aid.

While Sadat, unlike Nasser, was convinced Egypt's future was with the West, the economic reforms he implemented in the 1970s were targeted more toward linking the country's entrepreneurs and business elites with his regime for his own regime security than developing a viable economy that could provide for its own defense. The reforms he did introduce, including reductions in government subsidies, were met with riots in 1977. Unlike Korea and Turkey, Egypt under Mubarak had no expectation that U.S. military aid would decline (although in real terms it has, because $1.3 billion in 1987 is worth more than $1.3 billion in 2014.) Once Egypt had secured what Mubarak perceived as unconditional material support for the Egyptian armed forces, Mubarak would make no
serious effort to reform Egypt’s economy; in fact he worsened conditions by encouraging
the development of commercial enterprises within the military. The U.S. military aid to
Egypt that began in 1979 should have helped Egyptian policymakers implement
economic reforms by freeing government resources that could be invested in economic
development. However, Mubarak chose instead to rely on the political legitimacy
conferred by generous welfare programs and a bloated public sector, while securing the
military’s loyalty by expanding and protecting its material interests.

When Mubarak was faced with increasing international pressure to privatize state
assets in the 1990s, his closest associates were the beneficiaries, reinforcing his extensive
patronage networks. Meanwhile, Egyptians graduating from university found few jobs,
public sector jobs were decreasing, and the economy remained underdeveloped. In
essence, Mubarak squandered the opportunity to modernize his economy, choosing
personal political stability over long-term economic development. His attitude that the
U.S. owed Egypt military aid in exchange for privileged access to the Suez Canal and
peace with Israel undermined the ability of U.S. officials to influence Mubarak’s
economic policies. In addition, U.S. policymakers had a markedly different attitude
toward the aid appropriated to Egypt compared to the aid allocated to Korea and Turkey
in the 1950s and 1960s: aid sent to Korea and Turkey would continue only until those
countries’ economies were capable of supporting their armed forces on their own, while
aid to Egypt would continue indefinitely.

Undermining U.S. influence further has been the fact that Egypt has more
alternatives for political and economic support than South Korea or Turkey did in the
1950s and 1960s. South Korea has historically been the subject of great power rivalry in
North East Asia, and Turkey’s postwar relations with its regional neighbors were either
hostile or underdeveloped. Not only did Egypt enjoy support from the eastern bloc, other
than the post-Camp David Accords period of isolation from the Arab League, Saudi
Arabia and other GCC countries have been generous patrons, vying for influence over
their most populous Arab neighbor and more than willing to make up for Egyptian budget
shortfalls “with no strings attached.”
U.S. Political Support and Establishing Objective Civilian Control

The American political support for civilian leaders that accompanies U.S. military aid should make it easier for leaders to establish objective civilian control over their military establishments. There are multiple ways in which Washington can demonstrate its political support: state visits, positive public statements, sponsorship in international institutions, economic aid, cultural or student exchanges, preferential trade agreements, scientific cooperation, or support for the recipient’s regional policy preferences. These expressions of political support ideally provide a boost to civilian political leaders, lending legitimacy to their policies, and thus limiting the political options of anti-government forces within the military to interfere in civil politics. Reinforcing the political power of civilian elites should render it easier to establish and maintain objective civilian control over the armed forces.

Unfortunately, despite more than 160 years of cumulative American political support to South Korea, Turkey and Egypt, there is only one example in this entire study of a civilian leader who successfully established objective civilian control over the military. This section identifies three primary reasons for this unexpected, and discouraging, finding. First, political leaders did not necessarily attempt to establish objective civilian control. In some cases they deliberately politicized the military to reserve the option of mobilizing the armed forces in support of their party. In other instances, political leaders who had motivation to establish objective civilian control instead adopted a policy of “acquiescence,” whereby they accepted the military’s reserved domains in government or industry in exchange for the military’s tacit support of their government. Finally, American political support was at times characterized by discontinuity, even when the fundamental strategic alignment that underpinned military aid and bilateral ties persisted. These discontinuities could be highly disruptive to the recipient’s domestic politics, in some cases pulling the military deeper into politics.
American policymakers may assume that civilian leaders want to establish objective civilian control over the military, as minimizing officers' presence in civil politics ensures the military cannot pose a challenge to their authority. However, as these studies demonstrate, this is not always the case.

There are multiple incentives for politicizing the military. The armed forces can be highly effective strategic partners, particularly when their prestige and competency is enhanced by U.S. military aid. For example, if society holds the military in high esteem, then having the military's support expands the regime's political base, and may even in some circumstances provide economic support for a ruling party. Civilian leaders, understanding the military establishment is a potential political competitor, may seek to co-opt the military by deliberately pulling officers' into civil politics in exchange for their loyalty. This loyalty might ensure unpopular regimes can use the coercive apparatus of the state to intimidate the opposition or quell societal unrest.

The civilian, democratically - elected President Rhee enjoyed external political support from the United States, yet rather than establish objective civilian control over the military, Rhee deliberately politicized particular factions to reserve the option of mobilizing the military against his opposition. He also condoned corruption in exchange for the military's economic and political support. Rhee did not have to politicize all of the officers; many officers resented those who acted on Rhee's behalf and understood that politicization undermined the military's professionalism. Ultimately this eroded the cohesiveness of the military; Park's associates were motivated to intervene in 1961 in part because of the inability of the democratically - elected government of Chang Myon to remove corrupt officers from their privileged posts.

Park, who retired from military service and was elected president in 1963, also benefited from Washington's political support. Park wanted Korea to have a modern, professionalized armed service, but he also chose not to establish objective civilian control over the military. Park relied on the military to serve as his political base, and wanted to reserve the option of mobilizing select military personnel to suppress his political opposition and maintain domestic order. While Park's political authority
retained its primacy, he deliberately politicized officers in the "security track" to establish networks of loyal supporters within the military and intelligence communities. He ensured the loyalty of the rest of the military by protecting its corporate interests, and providing special incentives such as privileged positions in government and industry.

Former General Ismet Inonu discouraged the Turkish military from intervening to reverse the electoral victory of Prime Minister Menderes’ Democrat Party at the beginning of Turkey’s multiparty rule in 1950. Rather than establish objective civilian control over the military, however, Menderes later tried to mobilize the military on his behalf by using military personnel to harass the opposition. The Turkish military’s sense of being above politics and resistance to deliberate politicization is deeply ingrained, and the resentment incurred by Menderes’ attempt to politicize the military contributed to the military intervention in 1960. No civilian Turkish leader has attempted to politicize the military since; unfortunately, the TAF politicized itself by assuming a more assertive guardianship role over Turkish politics after the 1960 coup.

Both Park and Egypt’s President Nasser intended to stay in power indefinitely. Even though both were retired officers, they never had complete control over their respective militaries, and both relied on expanding the military’s reserved domains in exchange for political support. Park, however, insulated most of his military from politics, such that by the 1980s, the majority of Korean military officers were resistant to politicization, rendering the military leadership amenable to President Kim Young Sam’s reforms in the 1990s. Nasser, however, allowed all of his military to be politicized, with disastrous consequences in 1967. After 1967, Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak would each be determined to keep the military out of politics. Rather than establish objective civilian control, however, they chose to placate the EAF by encouraging the military to develop independent economic interests, creating a revenue stream for the military independent of the government, and a special interest the military would go to great lengths to protect.

Acquiescence

While not all leaders desire objective civilian control over the military, those who do may have difficulty achieving it if the military has already established reserved
domains in government and industry. This study has discussed how the political leadership can take decisive action, even in the presence of an external threat, to depoliticize the military. President Kim Young Sam, President Nasser, and Prime Minister Erdogan provide examples. Yet in all three cases these leaders were acting from a position of domestic political strength. External support can be useful; U.S. support lent legitimacy to Kim's efforts, Soviet support may have bolstered Nasser, while the EU encouraged Erdogan. Yet external support in the absence of domestic political support is unlikely to be decisive, and in some cases may be a liability.

For example, the elected civilian prime minister of South Korea, Chang Myon, had incentive in 1960 to establish objective civilian control over the military. He had long criticized Rhee's authoritarian behavior and advocated a return to democratic processes. The U.S. had supported Rhee's resignation and was optimistic that the new regime could implement much-needed economic and political reforms. Yet Chang found it difficult to rid the military of those officers who had been politicized by Rhee. Rather than expel these officers from the military, Chang adopted a policy of acquiescence, angering officers like Park who resented military corruption. After Park's death in 1979, the martial law commander and the acting president wanted to establish objective civilian control, but under intense pressure from General Chun Doo Hwan and his Hanahoe faction, instead allowed Chun to assume the presidency.

Roh Tae Woo, Chun's close associate who surprised critics by supporting democracy activists and advocating for elections in 1987, did not attempt to implement civil-military reforms, mindful of the tenuous nature of military support for liberalization. Roh's decision to peacefully transfer power to the first non-military president in more than three decades, Kim Young Sam, helped secure military support for Kim's successful drive to depoliticize the military. In addition to U.S. political support, domestic support, support from senior military leaders, and a mandate for reform, Kim's efforts were facilitated by the military's political weakness following a corruption scandal. While the post-Cold War security environment is often credited with Kim's ability to decisively establish objective civilian control over the military, Roh also enjoyed a favorable security environment and American political support; Roh's adoption of a policy of
acquiescence was more likely a recognition that his personal political strength still rested on the support of the Hanahoe faction within the military.

In Turkey after 1960, the armed services played an active guardianship role in government, monitoring the behavior of civilian politicians and intervening when they deemed necessary to restore democratic processes. They maintained the guardianship role by expanding their institutional prerogatives, and returning to the tradition of the presidency being held by the former chief of the general staff. After the execution of Prime Minister Menderes, Turkey’s civilian leaders understood the hazards of attempting to politicize the military for their own political purposes. In addition, no single civilian politician could acquire the personal political strength to challenge the military, as the 1961 constitution had expanded political participation, and parliamentary politics became increasingly unstable as political parties struggled to form coalition governments. Rather than attempting to force a military retreat from civil politics, civilian leaders such as recurring Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel adopted a policy of acquiescence, deferring to the military’s expanded institutional prerogatives.

While observers have noted Prime Minister Ozal’s ability to assign his preferred candidate for the chief of the General Staff, as well as break the post-1960 presidential tradition by running for president, Ozal also primarily adopted a policy of acquiescence. Ozal enjoyed the backing of the Reagan administration, yet he accepted the military’s expanded role in civil affairs exercised through the NSC. The extent to which the military retained its formal and informal political power was evident in 1997, when the military successfully mobilized civil society groups and the media to pressure Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan to resign. While political support from the EU is credited for Prime Minister Erdogan’s ability to implement civil military reforms, his efforts would not have been successful if the EU accession process did not enjoy support from the Turkish public as well as the military.

After his election victory, President Morsi demonstrated his desire to establish objective civilian control over the military when he fired the Defense Minister of twenty years, Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, who had led the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the junta that led Egypt from February 2011 until Morsi’s election. Yet

---

Morsi, too, ultimately chose a policy of acquiescence, as he lacked the broad-based domestic political support necessary to confront the military’s entrenched economic interests as well as the institutional prerogatives seized by the SCAF after the resignation of President Mubarak. Morsi allowed the military to expand its reserved domains in government and protect its autonomy in the revised constitution of 2012, in exchange for tacit approval of the new constitution and Morsi’s presidency.

Discontinuities

External political support did aid those leaders, such as Nasser, Kim, and Erdogan, who sought to establish civilian supremacy over the armed forces. External political support matters; for example, the Truman administration opted not to act on King Farouk’s behalf, and urged the UK not to prevent the Free Officers from seizing power in 1952. Washington ordered the UN military command in Korea not to use force against the coup leaders who displaced the Chang government in 1961, and the decision to recognize and provide military aid to the Park and Chun governments paved the way for other countries to continue diplomatic, political, and economic ties. The Reagan administration’s decision to recognize and support General Evren’s military junta in Turkey contributed to its ability to govern and implement economic reforms for nearly three years.

Yet American political support is not necessarily a constant, reassuring factor for civilian leaders. Political support for allies can be inconsistent from one administration to the next, characterized by disconnects between White House and Congressional attitudes, and even perceived as a liability when opposition groups accuse incumbents of being overly-eager to serve American interests.

For example, President Eisenhower had established strong relations with Turkey, but President Kennedy strained bilateral relations by bargaining away Turkey’s Jupiter missiles during the Cuban Missile Crisis. That was nothing in comparison to the damage done by the infamous Johnson letter, however. The letter, once released to the public, outraged Turkish society, which was insulted by the harsh tone toward Inonu, a revered statesman. That event fueled anti-American sentiment as Turks increasingly insisted a
“Greek lobby” was leading to American policies that favored Greek interests at Turkey’s expense, particularly with respect to Cyprus. These discontinuities undermined civilian leaders who supported pro-American policies, and opened the door for increased political contestation, particularly from fringe groups, which ultimately pulled the military into politics in 1971 and 1980.

American political support for Egypt was also problematic in the early years of the Cold War. The Egyptian public’s resistance to alignment with Western “colonial” powers is a primary reason why Egyptian leaders resisted a defense arrangement with the U.S. for three decades. In the minds of the Egyptian public, a defense agreement with the U.S. was tantamount to colonialism. The legacy of British colonial rule, plus the appearance of Congressional and public favoritism vis-à-vis Israel, rendered alignment with the U.S. a liability for King Farouk; Nasser would also explain to Washington officials that the particularities of Arab politics precluded formal bilateral arrangements.

The 1970s were perhaps the most politically incoherent in terms of the policy preferences of the White House and Congress. While Nixon and Kissinger favored a pragmatic, unsentimental approach to foreign affairs, and wanted the U.S. to engage in international politics from a position of strength, Congress was critical of President Park’s authoritarian behavior and Turkey’s intervention in Cyprus. When Secretary of State Kissinger tried to forestall the cessation of military aid to Turkey, and President Ford pled unsuccessfully with Congress to lift the arms embargo, America’s allies took note: no matter the assurances from ambassadors, the secretary of state, or the president himself, Congress could halt funding if it so desired. To literally add insult to injury, Congressmen could also release unflattering statements that embarrassed friendly incumbent regimes, damaging their domestic and international prestige.

Discontinuities in American political support can impact civilian political leaders in unpredictable ways that are potentially inimical to objective civilian control. President Park drew his military deeper into politics as Congress became increasingly critical of his authoritarian behavior in the 1970s, despite Nixon and Kissinger’s assurances. The dramatic shift in tone from the Nixon and Ford Administrations to President Carter, who sought to elevate the role of American values in the foreign policy agenda, increased Park’s insecurity, and he relied more heavily on his inner circle to suppress dissent.
through the use of force. While President Reagan also deplored the Korean military’s excesses, his administration believed engagement and continuity would be more beneficial to eventual long-term political liberalization than isolation. President Chun thus enjoyed strong political support from the U.S., which rendered him more amenable to modest political liberalization.

American political support largely served as a stabilizing force for Mubarak, who was able to maintain control over the military and Egyptian society for nearly three decades. However, President George W. Bush’s “freedom agenda” gave opposition forces an opening to challenge Mubarak’s legitimacy after 2001. When tentative political liberalization increased pressure on Mubarak’s regime, Mubarak reacted by banning the Muslim Brotherhood and restricting the activity of journalists, students and academics challenging his rule. His renewed authoritarianism, combined with the designation of his corrupt son Gamal as his successor, prompted the revolution of 2011 by Egyptians inspired by the success of Tunisians the month prior.

Professionalization and the Role of the Military in Civil Politics

U.S. military aid contributes to the professionalization of foreign armies through education and training programs designed not only to increase the technical and administrative expertise of foreign military personnel, but also to expose foreign armies to American political values. However, in the cases discussed in this study, armies that have received extensive U.S. military training intervened directly to unseat democratically elected leaders, and encroached on civil affairs by expanding their reserved domains in government and industry. This study defines a fully “professional army” or “democratic army” as being one that is competent, cohesive, focused exclusively on external defense, and respectful of the supremacy of civilian political authority. A close examination of civil-military relations in South Korea, Turkey, and Egypt allows for a discussion of how improving some aspects of professionalism through U.S. military aid may have undermined others, in some cases leading to a bigger role for the military in civil politics. In particular, efforts to increase the competency of foreign armies may undermine a military’s cohesiveness and mission exclusivity, particularly in
those countries challenged by internal security and development issues. Even though American instructors highlighted the importance of civilian control over the military, officers’ attitudes toward civilian political authority were often shaped by their particular domestic political circumstances, where civilian politicians were often viewed as elitist, corrupt, and incompetent.

**Competency and Coherency**

U.S. military aid had a significant impact on the competency, or expertise in the management of violence, of foreign militaries by providing modern defense equipment, training and professional military education. In addition, Turkish, Korean, and Egyptian troops gained valuable experience by fighting and training alongside American military personnel. Operating with American troops contributes to foreign armies’ technical capacity and understanding of American military doctrine. However, efforts to improve the competency of foreign militaries may undermine coherency in the short-term by introducing new ideas about military organization, empowering factions within the military, and/or inculcating some officers with a sense of “new professionalism,” leading to tension between officers who seek reforms and/or an expansion of the military’s role in society and officers who prefer the status quo. In addition, military advisors may find it difficult to overcome or prevent the formation of factions that dangerously undermine the cohesiveness of the armed forces.

While substantial U.S. military aid was sent to Korea and Turkey in the late 1940s and 1950s, the size of their forces combined with the poor state of their economies resulted in low standards of living for military personnel. American policymakers grew concerned these militaries were unable to absorb all of the arms and equipment being sent by the U.S., but civilian leaders were anxious to add state-of-the-art hardware to their national capabilities and eager to maintain oversized standing armies that improved their regional prestige. The emphasis on hard power capabilities, particularly given the geopolitical context, is understandable. However, in the Korean case, for example, after the rapid expansion of the military during the Korean War years, there were few

---

opportunities for advancement, and younger officers became frustrated by the dearth of promotion opportunities, both within the military and the private sector.

Finer points out that "the armed forces have always been – by the closed and intimate nature of the personal relations they foster – peculiarly susceptible to infiltration and the establishment of networks of conspiracy." Identity groupings based on shared class interests, regional ties, education, or prior military experience can predominate over the creation of a cohesive military institution with a sense of shared experience and national identity. These groupings, or factions, may be particularly effective in organizing coups because of their tight networks and intense camaraderie. This was the case with Park's faction in South Korea in 1961, Nasser and his Free Officers in Egypt in 1952, and Alparslan Turkes and his fellow officers in Turkey in 1960; in all three cases the officers acted outside of the military hierarchy. American military assistance proved unable to prevent the formation of these groups in Turkey and particularly Korea, where the Hanahoe faction persisted into the 1990s.

A common narrative regarding South Korea's democratic consolidation is that Korean society became less willing to sacrifice Korea's democracy for economic growth; as civil society became more sophisticated and the middle class grew, they increasingly challenged the authoritarianism of the military-aligned leadership. But Korean society, with its high literacy rates and history of Japanese colonialism, demanded democracy in the 1950s, through the 1960s and 1970s. It was the public's opposition to restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly that sent them into the streets calling for the resignation of President Rhee in 1960. What changed from 1960 to 1987 was the power of the Hanahoe faction within the armed forces, and the balance of power between hardliners and softliners within the Korean military. While one might argue the decades of socialization with the American military facilitated this shift, it's lamentable that it took more than thirty years for the softliners to prevail.

Like the Free Officers in Egypt, the Turkish officers wanted to lend legitimacy to their coup group by inviting an experienced and highly-respected officer from the senior ranks to lead the military junta that supplanted the civilian leadership. Unlike Egypt's Naguib, who was outmaneuvered and eventually ousted by the ambitious Nasser, General

---

9 Finer, The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics, 34.
Gursel maintained control over the junta by expelling, and exiling, fourteen of the more extreme officers, including Turkes, who advocated extended military rule; Gursel then consolidated his control over the military institution by retiring hundreds of the military’s serving officers. While Gursel’s victory over the hardliners was better for Turkish democracy – the new constitution promoted individual rights and expanded political participation, and Gursel supervised the return to competitive elections and civilian governance - the massive military purge undermined the cohesiveness of the military establishment, and led to several more coup attempts. Senior officers thus had to take heavy-handed measures to restore ideological cohesion within the armed forces. The Turkish military’s cohesion would continue to be challenged through the 1960s and 1970s, as disgruntled former officers planned unsuccessful coup attempts, and junior officers pressured the military to intervene in response to political dysfunction and violence.

The case of Egypt also demonstrates that increasing officers’ competency through professional military education is no guarantee against the formation of factions. In the mid-1930s, Nasser and his Free Officers were part of the first group of lower-class cadets admitted into Egypt’s Military Academy. Finer suggests that Nasser and his associates dreamed of a “purge of the state,” to include expelling foreign troops and reforming the army, from the moment they graduated. They resented the “effendi class,” the political and economic elite that ruled Egypt, whom they later blamed for the military’s defeat in Palestine. This helps explain Nasser’s sweeping moves to disband the existing political parties and redistribute wealth through his land reforms and socialist decrees. His social resentment preceded his military education, but his commission enabled him to challenge – and usurp - the civilian political elite in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the long term, however, U.S. military aid that includes security cooperation, joint exercises, education, and training should contribute to an increase in cohesiveness, as junior officers advance and there are more shared experiences and recognized norms of behavior within the officer corps. Professional military education reaches a relatively small number of officers and NCO’s year to year. This might make it difficult in the early days of bilateral relations to overcome values, ideologies, and identities carried over from

---

10 Ibid., 42.
previous experiences. In the Korean case, factions formed around those with shared prior military experience, regional orientations, and/or graduating classes of the Korean Military Academy, and within these factions officers enjoyed a deep sense of camaraderie. Because the Korean military lacked a shared historical experience prior to the Korean War, building that sense of camaraderie would take time.

Mission Exclusivity

Huntington argues that as warfare becomes more complex, it is “impossible to be an expert in the management of violence for external defense and at the same time to be skilled in either politics and statecraft or the use of force for the maintenance of internal order.” For this reason this study included “mission exclusivity” in its definition of professionalism, to highlight the fact that expanding the military’s presence in government or industry detracts from its professionalism by undermining its ability to successfully fulfill its primary role, defense from external threats.

U.S. military aid contributed to foreign armies’ competency, particularly through professional schools and training to teach recipient militaries how to operate and maintain American-made military equipment. Yet an emphasis on how the military might be used to meet internal security and development goals may have undermined the military’s mission exclusivity by encouraging a sense of “new professionalism of internal security and national development.” Military planners in the 1950s and 1960s became increasingly concerned with developing states’ vulnerability to Communist subversion, and began including counter-insurgency training as well as highlighting the social and political conditions conducive to Communist subversion. Yet critics worry teaching these “internal defense and development” (IDAD) skills encourages military officers to assume an expanded internal policing and nation-building role at the expense of the civil sector. Stepan argues exposure to this instruction encourages military officers to form

13 Ibid., 136.
their own views of national development, rendering them more likely to intervene when civilian governments are weak and prove unable to promote economic growth.

The idea of the military playing a constructive role in a state’s development is not unique to American policymakers; the conceptualization of the Turkish armed forces as drivers of modernization predates U.S. military aid, and Nasser used his military to oversee the nationalization of private enterprise in his effort to build a state-run economy. Many analysts have credited Park’s experience in the Japanese Imperial Army, rather than U.S. military education and training, with informing his ideas about state-directed development. However, it is still worth noting that increasing the military’s expertise in internal security and development through U.S. military training can potentially encourage the expansion of the military’s role at the expense of civilians.

The expansion of the military’s role into the civil sphere involves the expansion of both informal and institutionalized “reserved domains” that undermine the ability of democratically elected civilians to establish objective civilian control. While direct intervention draws international attention and is a flagrant violation of civilian supremacy over the military, reserved domains are often granted, or taken, quietly, and may be seen as a reflection of routine bargaining between military and civilian elites. Unfortunately, they allow the military to gain political power through both formal and informal processes, and give the military something to protect, meaning a civilian politician who threatens to intrude on these reserved domains is not likely to enjoy the support of the military. Whether the military’s reserved domains are granted by the political authority in exchange for loyalty, or seized during periods of military rule, the special privileges, political power, and/or institutional prerogatives will be difficult for future leaders to reverse.

Park Chung Hee had strong ideas about the relationship between South Korea’s economic development and its security against Communist subversion, and throughout his presidency justified the centralization of his authority based on the efficiency needed to industrialize and carry out economic reforms. Park granted reserved domains to his “security track” officers, including his closest associates within the Hanahoe faction, while maintaining the mission exclusivity of the rest of the Korean military. After Park’s unexpected death in October, 1979, the martial law commander and other senior generals
announced they would maintain political neutrality as the acting president moved to abolish the repressive Yushin Constitution; however, on December 12, “new professionals” Chun Doo-Hwan and other members of the Hanahoe faction moved to preserve their reserved domains by acting against senior military officers who desired a return to the military’s traditional role.\textsuperscript{15}

The power of the officers from the security track, particularly those from the Hanahoe faction, were such that to implement civil-military reforms and reverse the reserved domains of the military required a popular civilian leader with a mandate for reform, one who enjoyed external support from the U.S as well as the post-Cold War easing of tension with China and the former Soviet Union. On top of that, Kim Young Sam had the support of senior military leaders, and the military’s political power was weakened by a corruption scandal.

The formal and informal reserved domains of the Turkish military, particularly those exercised through the National Security Council, were steadily expanded from 1960 through the period of military rule from 1980-1983, and were also difficult to reverse. Like in the Korea case, implementing comprehensive civil-military reforms required a popular civilian leader with a mandate for reform, external support from the European Union and the U.S., plus domestic support from both civil society and the military for the EU accession process.

After Egypt’s 1952 coup, Nasser granted a privileged role in government and the economy for his military supporters; yet the expansion of the Egyptian military’s governance, internal policing, and economic activities undermined its military effectiveness, and led to its poor performance in 1967. Nasser was only able to reverse the military’s privileges and purge politicized officers after the 1967 defeat, which damaged the prestige of the military. Throughout the 1970s, Sadat continued to take away the military’s privileges and minimize its reserved domains; however, Mubarak allowed for an expanded economic role to discourage officers from seeking a more prominent role in politics. Once again, the expansion of the Egyptian military’s reserved domains undermined its effectiveness. Despite receiving billions in U.S. military

assistance, DOD officials have noted the military’s lackluster performance, and the EAF has been criticized for heavy-handed measures against Islamists. The SCAF expanded the military’s reserved domains even further, institutionalizing its autonomy from civilian oversight and guaranteeing a privileged role in national security policymaking. These reserved domains were impossible for the politically weak Mohamed Morsi to overturn, impeding his ability to establish objective civilian control over the armed forces.

Respect for Civilian Political Authority

Previous discussions have noted the importance of political elites establishing objective civilian control over the military, rather than adopting strategies of deliberate politicization or acquiescence. However, elected leaders will be hard-pressed to implement civil-military reforms if the armed forces lack a basic respect for civilian political authority.\(^{16}\) While U.S. military and political advisers might emphasize respect for civilian political authority as an important aspect of professionalization, domestic political circumstances often have greater sway over officers’ attitudes toward civilian elites. Prior to 1960, both the South Korean and Turkish militaries were reluctant to enforce martial law on behalf of the ruling political party. This reflects the level of professionalism that these militaries had already achieved, but also reveals the sense among military officers that their loyalty was to the state, rather than a particular party. Observers noted a similar phenomenon during the January uprising in Egypt in 2011; the EAF’s loyalty seemed to be to the state, rather than Mubarak’s ruling party.

The attempt to politicize the military, for example by imposing martial law to suppress popular demonstrations, or sending armed forces to intimidate opposition politicians, puts officers in an untenable position. Either they allow themselves to become an instrument of domestic politics by acting on behalf of one party against another, or they disobey the orders of the civilian leadership, which in some cases may even be their commander-in-chief. In either option they violate the liberal-democratic model of civil-military relations, which assumes the civilian leadership will not try to use the military

for domestic political purposes. The problem becomes more complex when there are no alternative institutions capable of restoring domestic order.

For example, while the Egyptian Armed Forces were perceived as being the only institution capable of restoring order in 2011, suppressing demonstrators on Mubarak's behalf would have been a political act, and the EAF chose to disobey his orders to maintain its legitimacy in the eyes of Egyptian society. In doing so they acted independently as an institution, ignoring the orders of their civilian leadership. Like the Korean and Turkish officers in the 1950s, the military had few options. In all three cases, the national police force lacked the capacity to restore order. A military may refuse the demands of the civilian political authority not only because it does not want to use violence against society, but also because such interventions undermine morale and cohesion, threatening the efficacy of the defense force.

Under these circumstances, however, it is not difficult to see why the military might develop a disdain for civilian political authority over time. Unfortunately, this sets a dangerous precedent with implications for future civilian leaders' attempts to impose their authority over the military. The perception of civilian corruption, pettiness, and incompetency became deeply ingrained within the minds of Korean, Turkish, and Egyptian military officers. In all three cases professional officers resented civilian politicians' attempts to co-opt the military, particularly by promoting officers to senior positions based on loyalty rather than merit. In addition, officers were put off by parliamentary deadlock, ineffectiveness, and opposition fragmentation. Turkey's generals installed technocratic governments in 1971 and 1980, hoping a break from party politics would give the country an opportunity to implement much-needed reforms. Park and his faction were incensed by Prime Minister Chang's reluctance to expel corrupt officers and politicians and implement economic reforms. While the SCAF governed in Egypt, officers were perplexed by the failure of the secular and liberal opposition to put aside their differences and advance candidates capable of competing against the Muslim Brotherhood. In the last decade, Turkey's military has been frustrated by the opposition's inability to organize a credible campaign to challenge the political hegemony of Erdogan's Justice and Development Party.
This frustration with the civilian political leadership may lead to a sense of entitlement among officers, motivating them to expand the military's institutional prerogatives at the expense of civilians when given the opportunity. In these three cases, some officers believed they were uniquely qualified to oversee the government's political, economic, and national security decision-making. American military training that increases the expertise of foreign militaries may contribute to this sense of superiority, particularly when the civil sector is underdeveloped and the political leadership is fragmented and weak. Yet this attitude also stems from the military's hierarchical structure, its emphasis on order and discipline, as well as its sense of national responsibility. Civilian politicians who aim to establish objective civilian control over the military will have a greater chance of success if they prove their competency, integrity, and discipline to the military officers who will serve them.

Conclusion

Three cases do not provide enough evidence to make sweeping generalizations regarding the relationship between U.S. military aid and civil-military relations, or put forward new theories on the effect of U.S. military aid on democratization. The goal of this study was not to assert a causal relationship between U.S. military aid and military interventions. Rather, in examining the military's role in civil politics in South Korea, Turkey, and Egypt throughout the duration of U.S. military aid, this study sought to challenge some of the assumptions that persist in both the academic and policymaking communities. Specifically, that by mitigating the external threat to the recipient's security, providing support for civilian leaders, and professionalizing foreign militaries, U.S. military aid will discourage a role for the military in civil politics, enabling civilian governments to establish objective civilian control. Establishing objective civilian control over the military is a vital precondition for democratic consolidation; in the absence of objective civilian control, dominant regimes may use the military against political opponents, and dominant militaries can undermine democratically - elected leaders.

U.S. military aid directly impacts the institutions that determine whether or not a government will successfully establish objective civilian control over the military.
Conforming to the liberal model of civil-military relations requires that the civilian political leadership take responsibility for national security policymaking while recognizing the professional expertise of the military in the management and application of force. It also requires that the armed forces internalize respect for the supremacy of civilian political authority. The durability of objective civilian control relies upon "the maximum possible depoliticization of the military." 17

What these cases demonstrate is that as military aid strengthens the military as an institution, through training, education, and modernization programs, as well as by establishing bilateral and multilateral networks of defense professionals, the military becomes an increasingly attractive strategic partner for dominant regimes. While co-opting the military may be easier for a former general with strong ties to the military, deliberate politicization is a tempting strategy for any dominant regime. A leader does not have to politicize the entire military to preserve the option of using force for political reasons. What results may be relatively stable compared to the competitive political process, but is inimical to political development. As long as a dominant regime can use force against political opponents, opposition groups within society will be hampered in their ability to organize and freely express dissenting views.

When states do respect the competitive political process, democratically-elected leaders will find it difficult to compete with military institutions whose administrative and technical skills have been enhanced through U.S. military aid. Officers whose professional competence has been dramatically improved through U.S. military training may act against the military hierarchy and incumbent regime if they believe they are uniquely skilled to establish order and lead the country's economic, political, and social development.

In both scenarios, if the military is granted, or assumes, reserved domains in the civil sphere, such as a privileged role in national security policymaking or economic interests, democratically-elected leaders will find it exceedingly difficult to reverse these prerogatives, both formal and informal. The socialization that accompanies the administration of military aid has had a limited impact on these militaries' receptiveness to objective civilian control. What appears to be Washington's historical ambivalence on

17 Ibid., 12.
this point may just be recognition that there are often few alternatives to military participation in politics, as long civilian expertise is lacking, institutions are underdeveloped, and opposition forces are weak and disorganized.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This dissertation studied three military aid recipients in pursuit of a better understanding of the relationship between U.S. military aid and the implementation of objective civilian control over the armed forces, which is a vital precondition for democratic consolidation. This issue is particularly important given the high percentage of U.S. military aid recipients who are stuck in a political “grey area,” not quite dictatorships but not yet fully-functioning democracies. Proponents of security cooperation believe military aid has the potential to support transitions to the liberal model of civil-military relations, by diffusing democratic norms of professionalism and establishing contacts with key political actors who may play a future role in regime change. By improving the security environment, supporting the civilian political leadership, and professionalizing the military, military aid should render military interference in the civil sphere less likely. However, as the three studies demonstrate, this is not always the case. This chapter offers some conclusions based on a review of the factors that might inhibit the ability of a state to establish objective civilian control over its military, with the aim of encouraging future efforts to mitigate the unintended consequences of security cooperation.

The Potential – and Limitations – of U.S. Military Aid

Because of the potential for military aid to influence political actors who may play a critical role in a country’s democratic transition, it does not make sense to study the relationship between foreign aid and democratization and exclude military aid. Military aid can play a decisive role in regime survival, as well as the ability of society to freely organize and express opposition to a ruling party. A fragmented, ill-equipped, and untrained military will be unable to secure a country’s borders, manage its airspace, or protect its coastlines. Without a capable military, governments will be hard-pressed to defend their territorial integrity, and vulnerable to the preferences of well-armed internal
and external actors who challenge the state’s sovereignty. In addition, fragmented militaries that lack any sense of professionalism can be exploited by civilians to create party armies, militias, or oppressive security agencies, increasing the risk of violence against citizens.

The extensive U.S. military training and education infrastructure enables American advisers to take scattered militias and merge them into one national army, encourage a sense of unity and responsibility, teach modern administrative and technical skills, enhance communication, diffuse democratic norms, and promote positive bilateral as well as multilateral relations. U.S. military aid not only bolsters the ability of foreign armies to defend their country, but can also provide a collective good by enhancing the capacity for foreign armies to manage transnational threats, participate in peacekeeping operations, and contribute to collective security arrangements. Military aid is largely non-fungible, and can play a positive role in development over time by contributing to the establishment of a defense industrial base, and educating personnel who later take their skills into the private sector.

Aid can also provide a lever of influence at critical junctures when Washington wants to shape the policy of a foreign government or the behavior of a foreign military. While this study did not attempt to systematically analyze the effectiveness of donor conditionality, a review of the bilateral relations in these three cases highlights both the potential and limitations of American influence. While no aid from the U.S. is unconditional, as the Arms Export Control Act outlines the terms and conditions for the sale of defense articles, attempts to leverage the role of military aid donor to shape regime behavior has had mixed success.

Keeping in mind the positive impact of U.S. military aid on a recipient’s ability to provide basic national security and contribute to regional security, this study explores the possibility that military aid is potentially inimical to political development, as it strengthens an institution that has the power to supplant the government using force. What did we learn about military aid’s influence on foreign armies’ role in civil politics? The three countries featured have very different historical experiences – two post-colonial, one of which had no alternative patrons and one that had many; one post-imperial, with an increasingly beleaguered political elite determined to orient the country
with the West. Despite their diverse patterns of civil military relations over the past seventy years, these three cases, by challenging our expectations about the relationship between U.S. military aid and the military's role in politics, draw attention to the limitations in our understanding of the effect the external threat, strength of the political leadership, and the professionalism of the military have on the ability of foreign governments to establish objective civilian control over their armed forces.

Security Threats and Objective Civilian Control

The fact that U.S. military aid helps a government manage security threats – external, internal, and transnational – does not necessarily make it more likely that a government will attempt to establish objective civilian control. The existence of mutual defense treaties, presence of American military personnel, sophistication of the military hardware, and extensive education and training, do not discourage those political leaders who use security threats as an excuse to delay implementing civil-military reforms that include establishing objective civilian control over the military.

This is astonishing, given that a military that a professional military is more capable of meeting any threat than one that is politicized or focused on activities unrelated to national defense. In addition, the liberal-democratic model of civil military relations provides the best guarantee that the military will defer to the judgment of civilian experts, fulfilling their duties to the best of their ability while leaving policy to the civilian political leadership. Yet dominant regimes find it tempting to deliberately politicize the military, granting reserved domains in exchange for loyalty, and to preserve the option of using force against political opponents.

In all three cases, political elites exploited the security threats to justify the use of force against members of the opposition. This linkage between external threats and domestic opposition has unfortunately been just as common in the post-Cold War era of transnational terrorism as it was when authoritarian leaders justified extreme measures to mitigate Communist subversion. Political leaders rely on the coercive apparatus to harass, arrest, and incarcerate journalists, intellectuals, activists, artists, and politicians, and security threats are used to justify trying civilians in military courts. This behavior
indicates that a government has no serious intention of establishing objective civilian control over its military, because it wants to preserve the option of using force to maintain social order and suppress dissent. This behavior also reveals that a government has no serious intention of transitioning to, or consolidating, democracy.

While this study finds the relationship between the external security threat and the decision of political leaders to establish objective civilian control is weak, an improvement in the security environment does make it more difficult for political leaders to credibly link security threats with their opposition. If society feels more concerned by economic, social, or political issues, it may be less tolerant of a regime’s heavy-handed measures. Unfortunately, this does not naturally lead to liberalization. A regime that wants to maintain its dominance and has the loyalty of the coercive apparatus of the state – particularly the military – retains the option of using force to quell anti-government forces. This was all too evident during the so-called “Arab Spring” in 2011. In this case the relevant questions will be, how far is the regime willing to go to stay in power, and can they get away with it?

Policymakers in the late 1940s and early 1950s believed military aid would be just one part of a comprehensive effort to promote not only the security of recipients, but also economic and political development. While this study focused primarily on the relationship between military aid and one aspect of political development, the establishment of objective civilian control over the military, the observation that South Korea and Turkey may have been motivated to become self-reliant in the defense sphere because of the expectation that U.S. military aid would decline over time warrants further study. While U.S. officials throughout the 1950s emphasized that South Korea and Turkey would eventually assume the financial burden of their armed forces, once Egypt became a U.S. military aid recipient, there was far less uncertainty regarding American annual appropriations. In addition, South Korea and Turkey lacked any serious alternative patrons for external defense, whereas Egypt has historically enjoyed far more options with respect to material and political support, including Britain, the U.S., the Soviet Union, and the wealthy Persian Gulf states. Is there a relationship between aid expectations and a government’s motivation to implement certain economic policies that will, for example, enhance productivity and develop an indigenous defense industrial
base? A comprehensive analysis of the political economy of military aid recipients was beyond the scope of this study; still, a deeper understanding of how expectations regarding future U.S. military aid might affect a regime's economic policies would be useful, particularly given the relationship between economic growth and political liberalization.

External Political Support – a Necessary, if not Sufficient, Condition

Political support from foreign governments can bolster the credibility of a state's civilian political leadership. That support demonstrates that the leadership can manage its foreign relations, for example by negotiating trade agreements, participating in regional security efforts, and helping to solve international problems. In the absence of some type of external political support, it will be much more difficult for civilian leaders to establish objective civilian control over the military, particularly as the armed forces have a vested interest in positive international relations.

Nevertheless, this study highlights the role governing elites have in determining whether or not to attempt to establish objective civilian control over their militaries. As discussed earlier, the presence of an external threat is a weak predictor of a regime's attitude toward its military. While one might assume national security is the dominant concern for any government, the decision to adopt a strategy of deliberate politicization, acquiescence, or establish objective civilian control is largely driven by domestic political circumstances.

There are many incentives for leaders to deliberately politicize their militaries, or at least adopt a policy of acquiescence that keeps the military happy. Even popular leaders who do not want to yield to the competitive nature of democratic politics will eventually need to rely on the use of force to restrict the opposition. When the military is not loyal to a particular party, and not willing to act on a particular leader's behalf against the opposition -- as in South Korea in 1960 and 1987, Turkey in 1960, Egypt in 2011 and 2013 -- the ruling party is particularly vulnerable to public demand for regime change. In addition, authoritarian leaders may be threatened by respected, experienced, and popular senior officers who have the potential to siphon political support from the incumbent
regime; these leaders may prefer to award senior posts based on loyalty rather than merit, to minimize the risk of competition.

Leaders who deliberately politicize the military do so by granting special privileges, or reserved domains, in exchange for loyalty. Observers must be mindful of the role of reserved domains and institutional prerogatives in obstructing the efforts of elected leaders to establish objective civilian control. Because these privileges are often taken, or granted, quietly, they do not attract the same degree of international attention as a direct intervention. However, these formal and informal arrangements can be terribly damaging to efforts to transition to democracy, because they give officers interests to protect and thus incentives to derail a transition. In addition, they undermine the military’s cohesiveness, as they are rarely distributed equitably within the military institution. Those officers who benefit the most from these arrangements are more likely to obstruct attempts to establish objective civilian control, in some cases prompting elected leaders to instead opt for a policy of acquiescence.

Adopting a policy of deliberate politicization or acquiescence may be more common in developing states because it is so difficult for those who have the greatest incentive to establish objective civilian control – democratically elected civilians – to compete with the armed forces, particularly when the military has received U.S. aid. A military organization that receives American military aid gains expertise and experience that enhances its prestige over time. The military is often a symbol of the nation rather than a political party, particularly because it is usually comprised of people from all over the country. The military can be highly organized, coherent, and disciplined. In contrast, democratically - elected leaders often represent a far smaller constituency, particularly in a country with many political parties. These leaders scarcely have time to accumulate enough political capital to win support for sweeping reforms. Even within a party or coalition, other politicians challenge, criticize, and undermine elected leaders to promote their own policy preferences.

In those rare cases when a democratically elected leader did manage to reverse the institutional prerogatives of the military and move toward the liberal-democratic model, the stars aligned, so to speak – the leaders enjoyed both external and domestic political support, had a mandate for reform, and support within both the parliament and
the military. In addition, the elected leaders were able to take advantage of the military’s political weakness during a scandal, real or alleged, arresting active and retired officers and publically holding them accountable.

U.S. Military Aid and Military Professionalism in Foreign Armies

Every year, thousands of foreign officers receive American military training that contributes to their expertise in the management of force. Training and education acquired through IMET and the FMF program improve the competency of the military, enhancing the capacity of foreign armies to protect their country from threats to their national security. Because professionalization of the armed forces is a precondition for establishing objective civilian control over the military, U.S. military aid that increases the professionalism of foreign militaries should facilitate a transition to the liberal model of civil-military relations.

However, competency is just one aspect of professionalization, which this study defines as a process in which the armed forces work toward achieving the highest levels of competency, cohesiveness, mission exclusivity, and respect for civilian political authority. The influence military aid has on competence far outweighs the impact it has on these other critical aspects of professionalism. For example, while training may quickly contribute to the acquisition of administrative and technical skills, it is far more difficult to overcome ethnic, regional, sectarian, or kinship ties that undermine cohesiveness. Factions within the military are potentially dangerous, undermine unit cohesiveness, and risk tearing the military apart; in addition, the presence of factions increases the likelihood one might act against the military hierarchy to intervene in politics.

In some cases, increasing the competence of military personnel may lead to internal dynamics that “push” the military into civil politics. For example, military education and training may create tensions within the officer corps that undermine cohesiveness, as some officers may be more receptive to new ideas than others who prefer the status quo. Exposure to ways in which military personnel can contribute to internal development may invite greater participation in the civil sphere that undermines
mission exclusivity, often at the expense of the private sector. As a military becomes more skilled, and more knowledgeable in matters of foreign policy and national defense, officers may be tempted to expand their institutional prerogatives when given the opportunity. These reserved domains, particularly when institutionalized, create obstacles to establishing objective civilian control over the military. Increasing the expertise of foreign officers may also highlight the incompetence of civilian political authorities, engendering resentment or frustration toward the political leadership.

The impact of military-to-military relations on democratic consolidation may be limited in the absence of concomitant political, cultural, social and economic ties. While a comprehensive analysis of the bilateral ties between the United States and South Korea was beyond the scope of this study, they are known to be broad and deep, whereas Egyptian and Turkish relations rarely go beyond the security realm. Yet even in the case of South Korea, it is important to remember the government received military aid for more than 40 years before an elected leader even attempted to establish objective civilian control. Professionalization is a long-term process, one that may have been hastened in post-Cold War Eastern Europe because of the emphasis on economic, political, and social integration through the European Union as well as defense reforms through NATO.

Final Thoughts and Proposals for Future Study

Military aid from the United States enhances foreign armies' ability to protect their populations and their countries' territorial integrity, and can be a positive influence on civil-military relations by diffusing democratic norms of behavior. Nevertheless, it is imperative that academics and policy-makers attain a clear-eyed understanding of how military aid might discourage foreign governments from establishing objective civilian control over their armed forces. Militaries whose prestige and experience are improved by military aid are attractive strategic partners for dominant regimes that want to preserve the option of using force to stay in power. In addition, officers who have gained technical and administrative skills through military aid may be tempted to respond to the weakness of civilian leaders by expanding their role in civil politics. Once the military is politicized,
democratically-elected leaders will find it difficult to reverse the military's institutional prerogatives and establish objective civilian control.

The relationship between U.S. military aid and the role of foreign armies in civil politics is far from straightforward, yet its complexity should not deter academics and practitioners from seeking a better understanding of the unintended consequences of security cooperation. This study is not only concerned with states undergoing transitions to democracies, but also those states with relatively static domestic political configurations, such as during the Mubarak and Park regimes. In fiscal year 2013, thirty-five states that received military aid through the Foreign Military Financing Program (FMF) were rated “Partly Free” by Freedom House, while fourteen were rated “Not Free.”¹ This paper does not argue these states should not receive aid; the political decision to provide military aid is made based on multiple, sometimes competing, strategic interests. Rather, this study suggests a more in-depth understanding of how military aid alters patterns of civil-military relations would benefit both donors and recipients.

Barany, in his study of the military’s role in democratic transitions in seven non-Soviet eastern European postcommunist states, observes that transitions were more successful in those states in which patterns of civil-military relations were “professionalized” rather than “ politicized.”² For example, in Hungary after the late 1950s, officers benefited from professional military education in the Soviet Union, but were excluded from seats in the Politburo. In Romania, however, the authoritarian leadership frequently rotated top civilian and military officials to preclude their accumulation of personal political power, and underfunded the military. Barany found a positive correlation between the “professionalized” pattern of civil-military relations during authoritarian regimes and the absence of military interference in post-authoritarian democratic transitions.

This highlights the fact that even authoritarian or dominant regimes can establish professionalized patterns of civil-military relations. Recent events in Egypt have highlighted how quickly an ally’s political system can shift from one form to another.

¹ "Foreign Military Financing Account Summary"; "Freedom in the World Country Ratings and Status."
Liberalization often takes place in "spurts," when incentive and opportunity intersect, and in that case new governments will require a military willing to accept democratic control. Future comparative work could focus on why U.S. military aid promotes professionalized patterns of civil military relations in some states but not others.

Aurel Croissant constructs a theoretical model of civil-military relations to inform strategies for democratically - elected leaders to establish civilian control over the military in transitioning democracies. The study of South Korea, Turkey and Egypt demonstrate just how difficult establishing civilian control will be for elected leaders when the military has a tradition of political interference and already has institutionalized prerogatives. Croissant’s formalized measures of civilian control across five major decision-making areas – leadership recruitment, public policy, internal security, external defense, and military organization - provide a means to account for positive or negative changes in civil-military relations over time, alert academics and practitioners to elites’ efforts to expand the military’s role in politics, and avoid simplistic assessments of civil-military relations based on the prevalence or absence of coups.3

To what extent can the U.S. leverage its role as military aid provider to encourage professional patterns of civil-military relations in autocratic, or dominant, regimes? While this study has highlighted the limitations of Washington’s influence on recipients’ internal political affairs, this does not necessarily mean autocrats dependent on U.S. military aid would be unwilling to implement modest institutional changes in an effort to improve the efficacy of their armed forces. This effort would depend upon the development of civilian experts in defense matters, something that is absolutely crucial for transitioning democracies. To that end, U.S. officials might encourage more civilian participation in American institutions, including universities and military schools.

The character of military organizations is shaped over time by internal and external forces – history, culture, alliances, shared experiences, factionalism, regionalism, ideology - that predispose the military to adopt particular attitudes toward the state and society. Egypt’s military is marked by its internal struggles with religious extremism, Korea’s by regionalism and factionalism, Turkey’s by Kemalism. This study has

---

demonstrated how difficult it is for professional military education and training to
overcome these forces; but that should not preclude an effort to reconcile these internal
characteristics with the principle of civilian oversight, even in undemocratic countries. In
his study of civil-military relations in seven Asian countries, Croissant observes that non-
coercive attempts to encourage the military to accept the supremacy of civilian political
leadership is "only possible when military officials [are] inclined toward the view that
such a set up is morally right and legitimate."\footnote{Ibid., 29.} Any effort to convince the political
leadership to make institutional changes that will professionalize civil-military relations
must be accompanied by the military's internalization of the principle of civilian control.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Address by President Gerald R. Ford Before a Joint Session of the Congress Reporting on United States Foreign Policy, April 10, 1975.


Airgram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, November 26, 1958. FRUS 18, no. 249.

Airgram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, December 2, 1958. FRUS 18, no. 251.


"DOD's Ongoing Reforms Address Some Challenges, but Additional Information Is Needed to Further Enhance Program Management." *GAO Reports.*


Intelligence Note Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research: The Turkish Political Situation, January 16, 1975. *FRUS* 30, no. 215.


Letter from President Eisenhower to President Rhee, January 31, 1955. FRUS 23, no. 8.

Letter from President Eisenhower to President Rhee, July 19, 1957. FRUS 23, no. 231.

Letter from President Rhee to President Eisenhower, August 2, 1957. FRUS 23, no. 238.

Letter from President Rhee to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), August 1, 1955. FRUS 23, no. 68.


Letter from the Charge in Turkey (Cowles) to the Deputy Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council (Thurston), January 10, 1961. FRUS 16, no. 358.

Letter from the President to the Supreme Commander Allied Powers Europe (Norstad), July 15, 1956. FRUS 24, no. 360.


Meeting between President Nixon and Prime Minister Nihat Erim of Turkey, March 21, 1972. *FRUS* 29, no. 454.

Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of War (Patterson) and the Secretary of the Navy (Forrestal): United States Economic and Military Aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine, March 13, 1947. In *FRUS*. U.S. Department of State: University of Wisconsin Digital Collections.

Memorandum from Robert H. Johnson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow), May 23, 1961. *FRUS* 22, no. 221.


Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to Secretary of State Rogers and Secretary of Defense Schlesinger: U.S. Policy Toward the Korean Peninsula, July 18, 1973. *FRUS* 12, no. 241.

Memorandum from the Secretary of State to the President, March 28, 1956. *FRUS* 15, no. 223.


Memorandum of Conversation between Korean Foreign Minister Cho Chong-hwan, Assistant Secretary Walter S. Robertson, and Director of Northeast Asian Affairs Mr. David M. Bane in Washington, D.C., June 3, 1959. *FRUS* 18, no. 276.

Memorandum of Conversation between President Ford, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, President Park Chung Hee, and Lt General Brent Scowcroft in Seoul, November, 1974. *FRUS* 12, no. 259.

Memorandum of Conversation Between President Nixon and ROK Prime Minister Kim Chong-pil, ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Yong-sik, January 5, 1973. *FRUS* 12, no. 230.

Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and President Park Chung Hee: Secretary Kissinger's Discussion with President Park, November 16, 1973. *FRUS* 12, no. 246.

Memorandum of Conversation by the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) Aboard the Turkish President's Train, May 6-8, 1952. *FRUS* 8, no. 464.

Memorandum of Conversation by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, August 8, 1952. *FRUS* 9, no. 82.

Memorandum of Discussion at the 197th Meeting of the National Security Council, September 20, 1956. *FRUS* 23, no. 169.
Memorandum of Discussion at the 238th Meeting of the National Security Council, February 24, 1955. FRUS 24, no. 319.

Memorandum of Discussion at the 304th Meeting of the National Security Council, November 15, 1956. FRUS 23, no. 183.

Memorandum of Discussion at the 411th Meeting of the National Security Council: U.S. Policy Toward Korea, June 25, 1959. FRUS 18, no. 277.


Message from Prime Minister Eden to President Eisenhower, March 15, 1956. FRUS 15, no. 197.


Political Situation in Turkey, December 23, 1971. FRUS 29, no. 439.


Telegram from Embassy in the Republic of Korea to the Department of State: Kim Case and its Aftermath in Korea, December 3, 1976. FRUS 12, no. 290.

Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Korea, May 15, 1953. FRUS 15, no. 524.

Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State, September 23, 1952. FRUS 9, no. 492.

Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Parker T. Hart), June 23, 1953. FRUS 9, no. 629.

Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Jefferson Caffery) to the Department of State, February 11, 1953. FRUS 9, no. 565.

Telegram from the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command (Brigadier General Carter B. Magruder) to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (General Lyman L. Lemnitzer), May 17, 1961. FRUS 22, no. 218.

Telegram from the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command (General George Decker) to the Department of the Army, November 6, 1957. FRUS 23, no. 253.

Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Korea, June 13, 1955. FRUS 23, no. 58.
Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Korea, May 17, 1961. *FRUS* 22, no. 219.

Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey, January 8, 1963. *FRUS* 16, no. 387.

Telegram from the Economic Coordinator in Korea (Wood) to the Department of State: Meeting with ROK Officials, October 8, 1955. *FRUS* 23, no. 91.

Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, May 30, 1955. *FRUS* 23, no. 54.

Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, March 18, 1956. *FRUS* 23, no. 127.

Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, June 21, 1957. *FRUS* 23, no. 224.

Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, December 24, 1958. *FRUS* 18, no. 257.

Telegram from the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State, September 15, 1959. *FRUS* 18, no. 281.

Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State, August 7, 1961. *FRUS* 16, no. 368.

Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State, November 13, 1962. *FRUS*.

Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State Ankara, May 7, 1969. *FRUS* 29, no. 422.

Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State: For President and Secretary from Komer May 7, 1969. *FRUS* 29, no. 422.


VITA

Jennifer J. Cunningham
Graduate Program in International Studies (GPIS)
Old Dominion University
7045 Batten Arts & Letters
Norfolk, VA 23529
jcunn008@odu.edu

Jennifer Cunningham was born and raised in Houston, Texas. After graduating from Bellaire High School, Jennifer attended the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. She earned her bachelor of science degree in May, 1994, and went on to serve as a surface warfare officer in the United States Navy, deploying to the Persian Gulf, Japan, and the Mediterranean. As a student at Old Dominion University’s Graduate Program in International Studies (GPIS), she focused on NATO’s cooperative security programs and energy security, and contributed to curriculum development at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia. After completing her master’s degree in conflict and cooperation in December, 2011, she transitioned into the doctoral program, where she concentrated on U.S. foreign policy and international political economy. She was awarded the Elizabeth Thornton Graduate Fellowship for the 2012-2013 academic year, during which she wrote about balancing values and interests in American foreign policy in the post-Arab Spring Middle East. As a doctoral candidate her research analyzed the relationship between U.S. military aid, civil-military relations, and democratization. Jennifer has lived and travelled throughout Asia, the United States, and Europe, and currently lives in Stuttgart, Germany.