Most bargaining models of war suggest that the absence of *ex-ante* uncertainty about the outcome of fighting should lead to negotiated outcomes rather than military conflict. Nevertheless, relatively weak states still refuse demands from dominant powers in many cases. This paper tests several explanations for this phenomenon. James Fearon's account of rationalist explanations for war suggests two reasons states might resist militarized demands even if there is little or no chance of military victory. First, the weaker state might not concede if the stronger state's threat is not credible. Second, guerrilla resistance to enemy occupation might create a commitment problem for the stronger state if it could impose costs that exceed the value of the stronger state's objectives. Alternative explanations that do not assume the state behaves as a unitary rational actor focus on special features of state preferences, such as the importance attached to political sovereignty and territorial integrity, or on the difficulties state institutions might pose for making the policy changes necessary to concede the more powerful state's demands. Empirical analyses of MID and ICB data point to the importance of both rationalist claims about threat credibility and alternative arguments about state preferences.

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Melians: But it is our understanding that warfare sometimes admits of more impartial fortune than accords with the numerical disparity of two sides. For us, to yield is immediately hopelessness, but in action there is still some hope of bearing up.

Athenians: Since you are weak and depend on the a single turn of the scale, do not choose to undergo this fate nor emulate the common run of men who, when human means of saving themselves are still available, in times when tangible hopes desert them in their afflictions turn to intangible ones, to prophecy, oracles, and whatever else of this sort combines with hope to bring ruin.

--Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* (Lattimore 1998)

The Melian Dialogue is justly regarded as a classic statement of realist thinking about the role of power in international politics, but it also points to an important anomaly for this same theoretical tradition. In Thucydides' account, the powerful city-state of Athens demanded that the substantially weaker Melos abandon its neutrality and align itself with Athens. The Melians realized they had little chance of defeating the Athenians, but nevertheless refused this demand, simultaneously appealing to the Athenian sense of justice and calling on the help of the gods and the Spartans. The Athenians then carried out their threat, destroying the city, killing all the men and enslaving the women and children. In relationships of such power disparity, the Melian decision to refuse Athenian demands is puzzling. The Athenian generals set out the realist case for Melian acquiescence with stark clarity. The Melians should have acceded to their demands yet they did not. This outcome rests uneasily with the realist assumption that states seek first to survive (Waltz 1979) and with more recent rationalist arguments that wars arise from *ex-ante* uncertainty about the outcome of military conflict.
Asymmetric conflicts of this nature are interesting because our standard theories imply that they should not happen. For the Melians, any bargain short of total destruction should have been preferable to what its leaders actually chose. Similarly, in the lead up to the 2003 U.S. invasion, Iraq should have given every possible indication that it was meeting (or was willing to meet) the demands of the United States. Surely acquiescence was preferable to invasion and the destruction of the existing state. These are not isolated cases. The most recent version of the Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) dataset (version 3.1) contains records of 2,332 disputes. In 856 of these cases—roughly 37 percent—the total capability score of the more powerful side was at least ten times greater than that of the weaker side. Bargaining models of war suggest that uncertainty about the balance of capabilities may increase the likelihood of war between rational states. This consideration does not explain the many asymmetric conflicts in the empirical record in which there was no uncertainty about the balance of capabilities.

In this paper, we test two types of explanations for these asymmetric conflicts, focusing on minor power responses to major power demands. The first draws on Fearon's (1995) rationalist account of the causes of war, which treats states as unitary rational actors. The second relaxes the unitary actor assumption and focuses instead on domestic politics and special features of state preferences. Our empirical analysis points to the importance of both rationalist claims about threat credibility and alternative arguments about the special significance state leaders attach to defending their political sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The remainder of the paper is divided into four sections. The first section considers previous research on asymmetric conflicts and outlines several possible explanations for resistance to the demands of more powerful states drawn from this work. The second section sets
out the research design for testing and comparing theoretical arguments. The third section provides empirical results and analysis. The fourth section concludes the paper.

**The Sources of Resistance by the Weak**

There is relatively little research on asymmetric conflict between states, and even less systematically testing explanations for it. The handful of works that posit a causal explanation for weak powers resisting the strong either primarily focus on non-state actors (in the intra- and extra-state war literatures) or attempt to redefine the measurement of power such that the perceived asymmetry does not actually exist. Consequently, we will draw from literature that does not directly address the question we are seeking to answer, but that tangentially speaks to a particular component of the asymmetric conflict riddle.

Although the reasons for resistance to militarized demands from more powerful states have received relatively little direct scholarly attention, existing scholarship on coercive diplomacy and bargaining still suggests several possible explanations. These can be divided into two categories: reasons a unitary rational actor might decide to resist, and reasons a state might not behave like a unitary, rational actor in these situations. We will label these two categories of explanations "rationalist" and "non-rationalist." Though the second type of explanation does not reject the rationality assumption for relevant actors, it focuses on special features of actor preferences and domestic politics. These arguments are thus not "rationalist" in the sense Fearon (1995) used the term. These two types of arguments suggest different hypotheses about when weaker states will resist, and when they will capitulate. Table 1 summarizes the hypotheses we will test.

[Table 1 about here]
The hypotheses in Table 1 omit the most obvious sources of explanation: considerations that mitigate the asymmetry of material power. For example, the materially weaker state might have powerful allies, strategically significant natural barriers protecting it from the stronger challenger, or access to secret military technology that could alter the outcome of a conflict (Paul 1994). Considerations like these are important, and must be included in any empirical analysis of decisions to resist or capitulate. However, they do not get at the heart of the puzzle because they suggest that the balance of material capabilities is not really asymmetric. The more difficult and interesting cases are those in which the asymmetry of power is real.

**Rationalist Explanations for Resistance**

We begin with James Fearon's (1995) influential discussion of rationalist explanations for war. Fearon suggests two principal reasons that unitary rational actors might end up fighting rather than reaching a bargain that would leave both better off. The first arises from "private information about relative capabilities or resolve an incentives to misrepresent such information." The second class of explanations contains "commitment problems, situations in which mutually preferable bargains are unattainable because one or more states would have an incentive to renege on the terms" (Fearon 1995, 381, emphasis in original text). Both explanations apply to the special case of asymmetric conflict, though in limited ways.

Relative capabilities are not private information in asymmetric conflict. By definition, the disparity is so large that neither side is uncertain about it. Nevertheless, the relative resolve of the two sides—the extent to which they are willing to suffer the costs of war in order to achieve their desired outcome—might well be in doubt. Fearon (1995: 393-5) points out that war is possible because of uncertainty about each state’s resolve even if there is agreement about the probability
of victory in war. Even successful military operations are costly, especially if they must be mounted across long distances. If the leaders of the threatened state do not believe a more powerful state's threat will actually be carried out, they might rationally choose to resist that state's demands. World powers like the United States have frequently made threats that imply the possible use of military force. These threats are often couched in diplomatic language that leaves room for doubt about the actual consequences of non-compliance. A much weaker state might decide to resist a demand from a much more powerful adversary not because they think they will prevail in a military conflict but because they do not believe the more powerful state will actually carry out its threat.

Just as it is difficult for state leaders to know whether foreign threats should be believed, it is difficult for scholars to specify what makes a threat credible. Nevertheless, some threats are more believable than others. Fearon (1997) posits that the two mechanisms for making signals credible: "sinking costs," that is, committing resources that would be wasted if the threat were not carried out, and "tying hands," by which he means moves that make it difficult or impossible not to carry out the threat. Sinking costs, in Fearon’s model, should not be a credible method of signaling for a rational actor because the sunk costs are unrecoverable and should not affect assessment of the marginal utility of future actions. One historically important way of tying hands is to couple the threat with actual military moves that would be difficult to reverse (H1). At the extreme, a demand accompanied by the threat of military invasion is almost perfectly credible when the invasion and the demand occur simultaneously.

"Tying hands" may not be the only way to make a threat credible. Other things equal, threats that are less costly to implement should be more credible and less likely to be resisted. Actions that are less costly for the threatening state will be rational to implement under a wider
range of target-state assumptions about the value the threatening state places on the stakes. For this reason, we hypothesize that militarized threats from contiguous states should be more credible. The need to project power over long distances makes it more expensive to carry out a military threat, and may create doubt in the minds of the leaders of the targeted state (H2).

Previous research suggests that the domestic institutions of the more powerful state are another source of threat credibility. Schultz (2001) suggests that democracies are better able to credibly signal their intentions. The existence of opposition parties that are free to object to foreign policy threats that they do not support helps convey information about whether these threats will really be carried out. Similarly, Reiter and Stam (1997, 2002) found that democracies were more selective about their opponents, suggesting that democracies are more likely to make military threats when they can successfully carry them out. Finally, Sullivan and Gartner (2006) empirically disaggregate the dyadic peace finding and argue that democratic war initiators generally have more credibility in threats than their autocratic peers – so much so that the democracies do not even have to use force. If democratic threats are more credible then the targeted states should be less likely to resist (H3).

Fearon's second major rationalist explanation for war concerns commitment problems. Even if there were no uncertainty about capabilities or resolve, and states could reach a bargain that they preferred to war, it is possible that one or both of them might have an incentive to revise this bargain in the future. Because there is no way to enforce a contract in international anarchy, rational states might prefer fighting to a negotiated solution that one or both of them might have an incentive to revise in the future.

Fearon (1995: 402-9) outlines three scenarios in which such a commitment problem could arise: (1) preemptive war due to offensive military advantages; (2) preventive war arising
from expected changes in resolve or capabilities; and (3) preventive war arising from the effect of the objects of bargaining on future capabilities. Two of these scenarios are not plausibly relevant to asymmetric conflict because they concern mainly the balance of military capabilities. Offensive advantages would have to be very great indeed for the first scenario to apply in cases of asymmetric conflict. The weaker side would have to possess the capability to destroy the stronger side by stealth. Although nuclear terrorism might appear to present such a possibility, it is highly unlikely that the source of such a massive nuclear terrorist attack could be sufficiently concealed to prevent retaliation.

The third scenario is not applicable for a similar reason: the objects of bargaining would have to have enormous effects on military capabilities in order to overcome the initial disparity. In principle, a weaker state could demand most of a stronger state's territory, or perhaps insist that it turn over its nuclear arsenal or other important military assets. In such a case, a rather obvious commitment problem would arise, preventing the stronger state from agreeing to such a bargain. Although there have undoubtedly been many instances in which weaker states have coveted the military capabilities of a much stronger adversary, the issuance of obviously unacceptable demands is not likely to be useful for relatively weak international actors. The demands of terrorist groups like al-Qaeda that their adversaries convert to their religion offer some examples, but even these groups arguably issue such demands more for propaganda than as part of a genuine bargaining process.

The second scenario—preventive war arising from expected changes in resolve or capabilities—does apply to asymmetric conflict in a narrow but potentially important way. Except in unlikely cases like those discussed above, expected changes in capabilities are not likely to play a major role because the initial balance of power is highly skewed by definition.
Changes in resolve are a different matter. The resolve of the more powerful state is the principal issue. The leaders of a weaker state might indeed have an incentive to renege when it comes to implementing extreme demands from their more powerful adversary but this should only prompt the more powerful state to expand its demands to include effective control of the weaker state's government. By contrast, the resolve of the stronger state might well change in the face of rising costs, especially when it must occupy its weaker enemy.

The role of the stronger state's resolve in the face of future costs points to the importance of the weaker state's ability to inflict continuing costs even after its stronger opponent has defeated its conventional military forces. Guerrilla resistance is one of the most important ways a small state might continue to impose costs. If its leaders think they can mount such resistance—or that their people might do so—they might have an incentive to resist the stronger state's demands. Such plans appear to have played a role in Saddam Hussein's decision to resist the American invasion in 2003. The Iraq Survey Group found that the Iraqi leader's war plan involved guerrilla resistance to an American occupation if he was incorrect in believing that the United States’ threat of invasion was not credible:

In Saddam's last ministers' meeting, convened in late March 2003 just before the war began, he told the attendees at least three times, "resist one week and after that I will take over." They took this to mean he had some kind of secret weapon. There are indications that what Saddam actually had in mind was some form of insurgency against the coalition… Saddam believed that the Iraqi people would not stand to be occupied or conquered by the United States and would resist—leading to an insurgency. Saddam said he expected the war to evolve from traditional warfare to insurgency (Duelfer 2004: 65-6).

It is worth emphasizing that the possible insurgency need not be controlled by the leaders of the targeted state in order to influence the bargaining process. It matters only that it impose costs on a prospective occupier and thus undermine their commitment to carry out the occupation.
Previous research on asymmetric conflict present parallel arguments about the role of expectations about the future resolve of the stronger state in shaping the weaker state's decision to resist. In his pioneering discussion of asymmetric wars, Andrew Mack (1975: 181) pointed out that asymmetry of capabilities is usually associated with an asymmetry of interests, especially when considering guerrilla resistance to foreign occupation.

The insurgents can pose no direct threat to the survival of the external power because, as already noted, they lack an invasion capability. On the other hand, the external power poses not simply the threat of invasion, but the reality of occupation. This fact is so obvious that its implications have been ignored. It means, crudely speaking, that for the insurgents the war is "total," while for the external power it is necessarily "limited."

In Mack's account, the reason guerrilla armies are sometimes able to win wars against more powerful foreign adversaries is that the stakes are higher for the guerrillas. They are thus more willing than their powerful opponent to suffer the costs of war in order to achieve their goals. They may sometimes be able to inflict more harm on this opponent than it is willing to tolerate in order to achieve its objectives.

In view of the asymmetry of interests, it may make sense for a less materially powerful state to adopt a strategy of inflicting damage on its more powerful opponent until that state's costs exceed the value of its objectives. Bennett and Stam (1996: 252) aptly label this the "punishment strategy." Guerrilla resistance to occupation is not the only type of punishment strategy, but it is of special interest in the case of asymmetric conflict. The Vietnam War is perhaps the most extensively studied example of successful guerrilla resistance to more powerful opponents, but there are others. If circumstances are conducive to guerrilla resistance, the weaker state might be able to prevail. Rejection of the more powerful state's militarized demands could be rational under these conditions. To the extent that the more powerful state recognizes these circumstances, it might respond to this resistance by offering a better settlement. Even if the
more powerful challenger has already considered these circumstances when formulating its
demands, leaders of weaker states should still be more likely to resist when conditions for
guerrilla resistance are favorable than when they are not. In their game theoretic account of war
initiation, Smith and Stam (2005) argue that states could initiate wars that they will lose if it
improves their position at the bargaining table. While we avoid wars initiated by the weak here,
the authors also argue that such a strategy could be relevant to both weaker states and guerrilla
campaigns resisting stronger opponents.

Many asymmetric conflicts do not involve the immediate prospect of an occupation, let
alone guerrilla resistance to it. Nevertheless, the prospect of a costly occupation and its attendant
effects on the resolve of the more powerful state can have an important effect on asymmetric
bargaining. The knowledge that the more powerful state is unwilling to pay these costs in order
to achieve its objectives places an important limit on what this state can threaten and on the
bargains it can enforce. Without at least the threat of occupation, the more powerful state cannot
control the weaker state's decision making apparatus and must limit its demands to things that the
weaker state's leaders have some incentive to implement after the fact. Occupation and resistance
is certainly a rare outcome but this is due in part to the fact that powerful states have strong
incentives to avoid it.

The practical demands of guerrilla resistance to an occupying power are similar to those
of unconventional resistance to state authority during a civil war. In both cases, guerrillas seek
support and cover from the civilian population in a confrontation with conventional military
forces. Many of the conditions associated with civil war should thus also be associated with
weak state resistance to more powerful states' demands. Fearon and Laitin (2003) point to several
such conditions. For obvious reasons, states with large populations (H4) and mountainous terrain
(H5) should be harder to control. At a minimum, the occupying power will have to deploy more troops to occupy such states, raising its costs in treasure, if not in blood. Similarly, states whose populations are ethnically or linguistically unified (H6) should find it easier to overcome the collective action problems associated with resistance to foreign control. Moreover, the foreign power will find it more difficult to employ classic "divide and control" approach to occupation under these circumstances, exploiting inter-group conflicts to find local collaborators.

Sullivan (2007) suggests another condition for rational weak state rejection based on internal resistance. Building on Mack's insight about asymmetric interests, she points out that a militarily more powerful state can achieve some objectives through force alone. The seizure of territory is a prime example, though securing the cooperation of the territory's population is not. Other objectives, such as the adoption of a more favorable foreign policy or respecting the rights of minority groups at home, require some level of cooperation on the part of the weaker state. Since these changes rest on the compliance of the target, this forces the more powerful state to estimate the extent to which the target will resist. Because the target's "breaking point" cannot be known with certainty, these estimates are prone to error. From the standpoint of our research question, Sullivan's argument implies that the nature of the more powerful state's demand is important in shaping the probability of target compliance. Demands for internal political change should be more likely to encounter resistance than demands for limited territorial concessions (H7). This is true both because the more powerful state is more likely to have underestimated the weaker state's willingness to resist in these cases and because the weaker state may seek to exploit the stronger state's uncertainty about its "breaking point" in hopes of forcing a more favorable settlement once the strong state encounters this resistance.
Rationalist arguments about credibility and commitment problems are not mutually exclusive, but they do imply contradictory hypotheses about democracy. Democracies may make more credible threats but research on war duration and war outcomes suggests that democracies are more vulnerable to the punishment strategy. Bennett and Stam (1996: 252) found that wars in which at least one belligerent adopts a punishment strategy last longer than other wars. Democracies are less likely to win such protracted conflicts (Bennett and Stam 1998). The vulnerability implies that weak states should be more likely to refuse demands from democracies (H8). Because this hypothesis contradicts the claim that democratic credibility should make the acceptance of their demands more likely, it complicates our empirical expectations. The two effects might both make a difference, yet cancel out. On the other hand, the contradictory implications might shed light on the relative importance of the two rationalist explanations we have set out here. A finding that democratic challengers were less likely to encounter resistance to their demands points to the importance of credibility. A finding that democratic challengers were more likely to encounter resistance would underscore the role of the commitment problem.

**Non-Rationalist Explanations for Resistance**

While recent research employing bargaining models of war suggests that weak states, considered as unitary rational actors, may resist militarized demands from stronger states under some circumstances, other research on coercive diplomacy points to different sources of explanation. We label these explanations "non-rationalist" because they do not treat the state as a unitary rational actor and are thus not "rationalist" explanations in Fearon's sense of the term. They do not necessarily assert that individual decision makers behave irrationally. Instead, they point either to domestic political institutions and processes that may rule out capitulation to
certain kinds of militarized demands, or to durable patterns in the preferences of state decision makers that have the same effect.

Domestic institutions may inhibit concessions or make certain kinds of bargains difficult to implement. Acceding to demands from another state usually represents a substantial alteration in a state's existing policies. At the extreme, consenting to foreign occupation may completely overturn the existing political order, but even granting lesser demands for territorial concessions or policy changes represents a major change in the status quo. This is why case study research on coercive diplomacy suggests that deterrence, which demands only a continuation of the status quo, is more likely to succeed than compellance, which requires a departure from it (Lauren, Craig, and George 2007:200; Art 2003: 362).

Policy change is more difficult under some domestic institutional arrangements. Previous research suggests that states with many "veto players" whose consent is required for policy change may have more difficulty either accepting a bargain or implementing the changes to the status quo (Tsebelis 2002). These difficulties should extend to capitulating to a more powerful state's demands. Doing so nearly always entails substantial, unpopular concessions under humiliating circumstances, with little time for decision. Some political leaders may prefer to accept substantial risks or even the near-certainty of military defeat rather than submit. Moreover, a state's military forces may reflexively resist the attacks that sometimes accompany demands in asymmetric conflict rather than consulting central state decision makers. For example, although the Danish government capitulated within hours to German demands that its troops occupy Denmark in April 1940, Danish troops resisted the invasion that accompanied this demand until ordered to surrender. The chances that a weak state will resist demands from a
stronger one should thus increase with the number of institutional veto players in the conceding state (H9).

The fact that the number of veto players is highly correlated with the level of democracy suggests a potential problem with this hypothesis. Because they are accountable to the public, democratic leaders may attach a higher value to the suffering that would be inflicted on their population if they decide to resist. State leaders are almost always better protected than the public in general. They also usually draw greater benefits from continuing independence than does the average citizen. Gambling on a small probability of victory may make sense to an authoritarian leader who will not have to be reelected by a population that has suffered the military damage associated with an attack by a more powerful adversary. If democratic leaders place a higher value on the costs of war to their population, then democracies should be less likely to resist demands from more powerful adversaries (H10). This effect may matter more than the number of veto players, even though this is nearly always larger in a democracy.

Other explanations focus on the nature of state leaders' preferences with respect to certain kinds of demands. Vasquez (1993: 123-52) argues that disputes over territory are especially likely to lead to war when they are handled through the threat of force and violence that he associates with power politics. Vasquez finds examples of serious concern about territory in many different historical settings, and concludes that its special significance may be linked to an inherited tendency to value territory as a source of food and other basic interests. Subsequent research has found evidence that territorial disputes are indeed more likely to escalate to war (for example, Sample 2002; Senese 2005; Vasquez and Henehan 2001).

If Vasquez's position on the importance of territory is correct, then states should be more likely to resist territorial demands from more powerful states than demands for policy change
(H11). This hypothesis is particularly interesting because it directly contradicts the hypothesis we drew from Sullivan's (2007) rationalist argument. Additionally, Slantchev (2005) has argued that credible commitments made during mobilization may not be an effective deterrent for war if the participants value the territory highly and both properly mobilize for it. While framed differently, the implications of Slantchev's model are consistent with hypothesis 11 and the claims of the authors we cite above. The contradiction between this hypothesis and the implications of Sullivan's argument allows us to assess the relative importance of some rationalist bargaining considerations and those rooted in the underlying preferences of the actors.

The hypotheses about territory apply in principle to all leaders. Some leaders may be more prone to resisting militarized demands from more powerful states than others, however. Military officers are one example. Scholars have argued that, because of both self-selection and professional socialization, military leaders should have more confidence in the efficacy of force than should civilians (for example, Lasswell 1941; Choi and James 2003; Vagts 1937). When military officers control the state, they have further incentives to avoid capitulating to demands from other states. Their professional prestige, and perhaps their claim to state power, rests in part on their ability to resist foreign threats forcibly. Yielding to the demands of a foreign power strikes at their professional competence in a way that is not as salient for civilian leaders. Military dictatorships should thus be less more likely to reject militarized demands from more powerful states than civilian regimes (H12).

Data

Table 2 provides the sources of data we used to represent or proxy the hypothesized relationships. As the table indicates, we drew most of our data from widely used sources. Given
the temporal limitation of some data, we split each study into two parts – one covering the range of the data available and a second that only looks at cases from 1950 to 2000.

[Table 2 about here]

Our most important data-gathering challenge concerned our dependent variable: responses to demands from much stronger states. We operationalized our dependent variable using both the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) data (Ghosn and Bennett 2003; Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer 2004) and the Interstate Crisis Behavior (ICB) data (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000). Neither dataset is perfectly suited to our purposes but the two have complementary strengths and weaknesses. Thus, we use both datasets to engage our hypotheses in attempt to provide cross-validation in a variety of estimation techniques.

We begin our project by engaging the MID data for two reasons. First, the MID data have become a benchmark within the discipline for testing models of conflict. The data are widely used to such an extent that any theory (or collection of theories) will often be tested upon this dataset to see how it performs (for example Bennett and Stam 2004). By continuing this practice, our project allows for cross-analyses to be conducted as our study effectively employs the same sample space that others studies on conflict have done. If we generated our own sample or used the ICB data alone, it would become more difficult to conduct meta-analysis or cross-comparisons between this study and other projects.

The second reason to use the MID data in addition to the ICB data is to facilitate a selection model (Heckman 1979). A strong state's decision to make a militarized demand of a weaker opponent is not independent of the considerations that shape the weaker state's response. The leaders of strong state should arguably be more likely to make such a demand when they expect the weaker state to capitulate, thus sparing them the cost of carrying out their military
threat. Because of the process generating our sample of strong state demands, it is possible that a simple estimation of whether or not a demand is rejected could be biased. A selection model, a censored probit model in this case, allows us to model the effects of our key independent variables on both the strong state's decision to make a demand and the weaker state's decision to resist or concede, producing better estimates of the latter, which is our primary concern here.

With the MID data, we began by creating a dataset of all major power-minor power dyads using EUGene (Bennett and Stam 2000). Major-minor dyads are very likely to feature the asymmetry of capabilities in which we are interested here. Moreover, because major power status is a matter of reputation as well as actual military capabilities, the other state in the dyad is likely to be well aware of the asymmetry. We coded instances in which the major power in the dyad demanded something from the minor power as follows. In order for a dispute to qualify as a demand for our purposes, the major power had to be an originator rather than a joiner of the dispute, and it had to have a revisionist aim. We consider only the first year of each dispute. We treated any militarized action by the minor power as a rejection of the major power's demand. Although the MID data include information on whether each dispute was reciprocated, this coding refers to the dispute as a whole rather than to the two states in each dyad. The dispute could be reciprocated through the actions of a third state even if the minor power in a particular dyad takes no action.

Using this coding scheme, we identified 547 demands by major power against minor powers between 1816 and 2001, 235 of which elicited a militarized response from the minor power target. As one might expect after reading the Melian dialogue, resistance does not appear to improve the outcome of the dispute for the minor power. Using the COW coding rules for dispute outcomes, incidents in which the minor power took some militarized action resulted in a
"victory" for the major power 29 percent of the time, compared to only 6 percent of the disputes in which there was no such response to the revisionist major power. While the chance of a minor power victory rose from 0 to 6 percent when it offered resistance, the chances of a stalemate or compromise fell from 56 percent to 44 percent. Consequently, resistance does not offer hope to the weak that the stronger party will abandon its demands.

While this coding of the MID data offers an approximation of the process we wish to model, it is far from perfect. The MID data were not designed with our research question in mind, and there are limits to their usefulness for answering it. The hostility levels coded in the MID data reflect actions by military forces rather than the choices of central state decision makers. These are not always identical in this context. For example, a militarized demand accompanied by an actual invasion might be resisted by the minor power's military forces before its central decision makers have had a chance to make their surrender effective. We noted earlier the example of Danish resistance to the 1940 German invasion in the hours before a surrender decision could be taken. Our analysis of the MID data treats this case as an instance of minor power resistance, but this coding arguably does not reflect the choices of Danish state decision makers as opposed to Danish soldiers. If territorial demands are more likely to be accompanied by a surprise attack, then the findings that these demands are more likely to prompt resistance may not be valid.

Similarly, there may be instances in which a major power makes a militarized threat, the minor power takes no action, but the major power then fails to carry out its threat. Historically, major powers have issued many ominous demands without taking any real military action. Minor power silence does not always imply compliance. In the MID data, incident 4186 involves a NATO threat to Serbia after it moved military forces to its border with Kosovo in response to
infiltration of guerrillas from NATO-occupied province. The MID narratives provide no information on whether Serbia complied with the NATO demand. We treat such incidents as non-resistance to a major power demand, but it is possible that the minor power would have resisted if the major power had done something beyond mere words.

The MID data allows us to handle the selection problem in our empirical analysis and also facilitate comparison with the large body of other research that employs these same data. However, potential problems like the ones mentioned above point to a need for more information on the actual content of major power demands and on the choices of minor power policy makers in responding to it. The International Crisis Behavior (ICB) data enabled us to address these issues (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000).

The ICB data, while not as widely used as the MID data, offer some important advantages in this context. Version 9.0 of the data covers 452 crises for 994 state actors from the end of World War I until 2006. As with the MID data, we began with crises involving major and major powers. After selecting all cases in which a major power initiated a foreign policy crisis for a weak state, we turned to the narratives ICB provides to determine if the major power made a demand. When the ICB narratives did not provide sufficient information, we turned to the sources listed in the ICB dataset. In cases where the major power made an explicit or implicit demand, we coded whether the minor power accepted or rejected the demand. Since we are interested in estimating the conditions that makes rejection likely, we coded the dependent variable as a 1 when the demand was rejected and a 0 when the minor power acquiesced.

This approach also allowed us to discern the types of demand with greater precision than the MID data permit. We identified (1) extreme demands, which would have destroyed the target's independence or taken all of its territory; (2) limited territorial demands involving only a
portion of the area the target controlled; (3) economic demands; and (4) general foreign policy demands. In some cases, states issued multiple demands that fell into more than one category.

Unfortunately, the greater precision in coding our dependent variable comes at a price. Our use of the ICB data does not lend itself to the use of a selection model like that we will estimate using the MID data. The appropriate unit of analysis for modeling the onset of international crises is less obvious. Although dyad-years are commonly adopted in this situation, the onset of international crises is not essentially dyadic. In fact, many crises begin with three or more states. If dyad-years were used as a unit of analysis, these crises would be observed more than once, and in a way that mischaracterizes the actual stakes. Equally important, some crises in the ICB data have only one actor, even though more than one state is necessarily involved. In these cases, only one state experiences a threat sufficient to produce a "foreign policy crisis" during an "international crisis." Other states play a role, but do not experience a foreign policy crisis. Under a dyadic coding scheme, these crises would be omitted. For an example, one needs not to look further than ICB crisis number 1, the Russian civil war of 1918-20. Although Britain, France, Japan, and the United States intervened in the civil war, only Russia experienced a foreign policy crisis and was thus considered a crisis actor. ICB 1 is not unusual: 32 percent of ICB international crises feature only one actor with a foreign policy crisis. This fact effectively rules out the use of dyad-years as a unit of analysis. While a dataset treating all possible combinations of one or more states as the unit of analysis could conceivably be constructed, and would certainly boast a very large number of observations, such an enterprise is unlikely to inspire much confidence.
**Empirical Results**

How do our rationalist and non-rationalist explanations for decisions to resist militarized challenges from more powerful states empirically? In this section we will turn first to an analysis of the MID data, then the ICB data.

Table 3 presents the results of three censored probit selection model of the major power demands and minor power resistance. The model is identified through the inclusion of several variables in the demand stage that would not make sense in the resistance stage. These include a variable counting the number of years since the last dispute and three splines in the selection stage of the model. We have also added a variable indicating systemic concentration of power to the selection stage of estimation. If hegemonic stability theory is correct (Gilpin 1981; Kranser 1976), then higher levels of systemic concentration should see fewer militarized demands by major powers. Finally, we have included a variable indicating the major power's share of systemic capabilities to reflect that likelihood that especially powerful states, including the hegemon, may continue to make demands even when systemic capabilities are highly concentrated. Perhaps surprisingly in view of the theoretical importance of the process through which major powers decide to make demands, the selection model did not strongly influence our results. The results from the selection models reported in Table 3 are very similar to those obtained from simple probit models of minor power resistance.

[Table 3 about here]

The first model in Table 3 includes the index of veto players in the target state in order to test our hypothesis that it should be positively associated with the decision to resist major power demands. This variable is highly correlated with the overall Polity score ($\rho=0.79$), but contains more missing observations, causing the loss of roughly one fifth of the major power demands
from the estimation sample. The second and third models address this issue by substituting the Polity score, then removing the regime-type variables from the model entirely. The results support some rationalist claims, especially those concerning credibility, and some non-rationalist claims, especially those concerning the character of the demand. They also contain many surprises.

We discussed two rationalist bases for minor power resistance in the opening section. One stems from the commitment problem confronting the stronger state. If continued guerrilla resistance to foreign occupation after the defeat of the minor power's conventional military forces is feasible, it might make sense to reject the more powerful state's demands. If the minor power can raise the major power's costs of war sufficiently high through such a strategy, the major power might abandon the effort. To the extent that minor power decision makers believe this is a possibility, resistance should be more likely. The models included several features of the minor power that might facilitate or inhibit such a strategy. States with large populations and terrain conducive to guerrilla resistance should find it easier to wage a guerrilla campaign, and should thus be more likely to resist. Ethnic differences that could be exploited by an occupying power should have the opposite effect, making resistance less likely. The fourth model includes all of these considerations, though it is limited to the post-World War II period.

Although the major power commitment problem is theoretically important, our tests using the MID data did not turn up any evidence that the prospects for guerrilla resistance influence either the major power's decision to make a militarized demand, or the minor power's choice to resist it. Indeed, many of these variables had the reverse of the expected relationship to the dependent variable. Major powers were more likely to target states with large populations in all four of the models we estimated. In model 4, which used the largest possible sample, a one
standard deviation increase in population was associated with an increase in the probability of a
major power challenge from 0.07 to 0.08. The results of the third model suggest that relatively
ethnically homogenous states and those with more mountainous terrain were also more likely to
be targeted. Those with homogenous populations were also more likely to capitulate. A one
standard deviation increase in ethnic fractionalization would increase the chance of weaker state
resistance from 0.87 to 0.91. None of these relationships are substantively large, but they are all
inconsistent with the implications of the commitment problem.

A second rationalist basis for resistance to major power militarized demands stems from
the credibility of the major power's military threat. When a minor power does not believe the
major power will carry out its militarized threats, resistance should be more likely. The empirical
results from the MID data offer substantial support for this line of argument. In two of the four
models, we found that minor powers were less likely to resist demands from contiguous states,
which can more easily carry out militarized threats than more distant states. Model 1 indicates
that contiguity reduced the chance of minor power resistance from 0.87 to 0.71. Our results
concerning the major power's regime type are more interesting because they bear on the relative
weight of the two rationalist considerations, threat credibility and the commitment problem.
Democratic major powers should be more vulnerable to protracted guerrilla warfare and thus
face a more serious commitment problem. Minor powers should be more likely to resist their
demands. On the other hand, military threats from democratic major powers are more credible.
The results support the importance of credibility. Demands from democratic major powers were
less likely to encounter resistance, though this result did not hold up in every specification.
Holding other variables at their mean values, model 2 indicates that the probability of resistance
to a fully democratic major power was 0.68, while the probability of resistance to a fully autocratic major power was 0.78.

The results offer strong support for some of our non-rationalist hypotheses about minor power resistance, but flatly contradict others. First, the nature of the demand had a substantial effect on the probability of militarized resistance. Major power demands for territory or a change in the regime of the minor power were much more likely to encounter militarized resistance than demands for a change in policy, the omitted category. Territorial demands were slightly more provocative but both territory and regime change prompted greater resistance than did demands for policy change. Model 4, which uses the largest available sample for estimation, indicates that the probability of resistance to a territorial demand was 0.90 and regime change was 0.85. By comparison, the probability of resistance to a demand policy change was 0.66. As we explained in the opening section, because territory can be seized through military power alone without the cooperation of the target state, the higher probability of military resistance to these demands is somewhat surprising from a rationalist perspective emphasizing the commitment problem and the related potential for guerrilla resistance. It makes more sense if one accepts the non-rationalist claim that territory has a special status in the preferences of state leaders.

Other non-rationalist claims do not fare as well. We hypothesized that military dictatorships should be more likely to resist because their institutional prestige was linked to their martial effectiveness. In fact, military regimes turn out to have been less likely to resist. This variable would have been statistically significant in the first three of our four models if we had hypothesized the opposite relationship. In model 4, the estimated probability of resistance for a military regime was 0.49, while the probability of resistance for a civilian regime was 0.66. The index of veto players, whether represented by the Heinsz (2000, 2002) data or by the state's
Polity score, presents another surprise. We hypothesized that the decision to capitulate to major power demands should be more difficult in states with more veto players. The results suggest that the opposite may be true. In two of the three models that included some indicator of the minor power's regime type, there was a substantial negative relationship between democracy and the probability of resistance. Model 2 estimates that the probability of resistance by a fully democratic minor power target is 0.64, compared to a 0.78 probability for a fully autocratic minor power target. This result bolsters the argument that democratic leaders are more sensitive to the potential wartime suffering of their population in the course of futile resistance to superior foreign military forces.

Overall, our analysis of the MID data points to the importance of the character of the demand and its credibility in shaping minor power resistance. For reasons that are well understood in rationalist models of war, minor powers confronted with more credible threats—from contiguous states or democracies—were more likely to concede. For reasons that are beyond the purview of these models because they involve the origins of preferences, some demands are simply more likely to be resisted than others. Democracy appears to moderate this effect, making a decision to embark on a futile military struggle less likely.

Table 4 presents the results of three models of minor power responses to major power demands using our re-coding of the ICB data. As in the MID analysis, the first model uses data on the number of veto players in the minor power. The second substitutes the minor power's Polity score to take advantage of the additional data available when this variable is used. The third adds post-1945 data on mountainous terrain and ethnic fractionalization.

[Table 4 about here]
Our analysis of the ICB data supports most of the conclusions we drew from our consideration of the MID data. Once again, the data support some non-rationalist hypotheses but contradict others. The nature of the demand is very important. In all three specifications, demands that implied the loss of independence were far more likely to be resisted. (We will have more to say about this shortly.) On the other hand, minor powers with either more veto players or a more democratic polity score are once again less likely to resist major power militarized demands than other states. This result is identical to what we found in analyzing the MID data, and again contradicts the hypothesis that more veto players make it more difficult to concede.

Turning to the rationalist arguments for resistance, the ICB data offer little support for claims about the prospects of guerrilla resistance forming the basis for resistance to major power demands. The results here are essentially identical to those our analysis of the MID data produced. Population, ethnic fractionalization, and mountainous terrain were not statistically significant in our models. Demands from democratic major powers, which are more vulnerable to guerrilla resistance were actually less likely to be resisted. Model 2, which used the largest available sample, indicates that the probability of resistance to a fully democratic major power was 0.51, while the probability of resistance to a fully autocratic major power was 0.89. This is yet another result that contradicts the logic of the commitment problem and is identical to what we found in our analysis of the MID data.

Our results concerning the rationalist argument about threat credibility are more complicated. Consistent with the greater credibility of threats from contiguous major powers, we found that minor powers were much less likely to resist these demands in two of our three models. The probability of resistance fell from roughly 0.44 to 0.14 when it came from a contiguous major power in model 2, which uses the greatest share of the available data. On the
other hand, threats that were actually accompanied by military action, which should also have been more credible, were more likely to provoke resistance. Taking the same baseline probability of resistance (0.44) as a point of comparison, major power demands accompanied by a substantial use of force had a 0.69 probability of being resisted.

The apparently contradictory results concerning threat credibility may stem from the relationship between the use of force accompanying a demand and the nature of the demand itself. If the use of force is more likely to accompany an extreme demand or to be employed by a relatively weak major power then the evidence that these more credible demands are more likely to be resisted might not really contradict arguments about the importance of credibility. There is evidence that this is indeed the case. Table 5 presents an ordered logit model of the level of force accompanying each demand. Both extreme and territorial demands were more likely to be accompanied by a use of force. Moreover, the use of force was more likely when the bilateral balance of power was relatively favorable to the minor power. The picture that emerges from these results is quite plausible: major powers with designs on the territory or political independence of a minor power were more likely use force at the same time they presented their demand. This was especially true when the major power was relatively weak and the military advantages of surprise attack were especially important. Major powers were less likely to adopt this approach when the minor power had strong allies, however, perhaps because unprovoked surprise attacks tend to draw allied intervention.

[Table 5 about here]

While a careful consideration of the evidence suggests that credibility still matters, it also suggests that the nature of the demand is probably more important. The models in Table 4 control for relative power and the nature of the demand, yet there is still evidence that the use of
force accompanying a demand draws minor power resistance. Moreover, the marginal effect of an extreme demand on the probability of resistance is larger than that of any other independent variable. Holding other variables at their mean value, an extreme demand by a non-contiguous major power increases the probability of resistance from 0.43 to 0.75 in the second model in Table 4, and by margins at least as large in the other two. States are simply very unlikely to relinquish their independence without a fight, even if the military struggle is hopeless. Realizing this, major powers contemplating such a demand often just attack without warning.

**Conclusion**

The empirical record suggests that minor power military resistance to major power demands, as conventional wisdom would argue, is a bad gamble. Nevertheless, we have found that there are conditions that lead minor powers to enter this unfavorable lottery. A consistent feature across all models involves the credibility of the major power threat. If a demand comes from a distant, non-democratic power, the minor power is more likely to gamble with the prospects that the threat accompanying the major power demand is not serious. The demands of contiguous democrats get more respect from minor powers. This may support traditional democratic peace arguments as conflict initiation does not lead to reciprocation against democrats – suggesting that there to be at least a monadic effect by democratic major powers displaying more credible signals. This also mirrors the disaggregated effect that Sullivan and Gartner (2006) find suggesting that signals by democratic initiators tend to be more credible.

Extreme demands that threaten the sovereignty and perhaps the territorial integrity of the weaker state also make resistance likely. This result may seem obvious at first glance, but it points to something important about the character of the "national interest" that state leaders
defend. From the perspective of the state, resistance to extreme threats may be an easy choice. Given the alternative of certain defeat if they capitulate or near certain defeat if they resist, gambling on state survival—no matter how long the odds—is preferable to certain extinction. From the perspective of the population the threatened state rules, however, the choice is not so simple. The loss of sovereignty does not necessarily imply extinction for them. Since the state is almost certain to be destroyed either way, they might prefer to avoid the suffering and death that goes along with resistance to the armed forces of a major power. Our results suggest that democratic leaders, who are presumably more sensitive to the suffering of their population, are less likely to resist demands from more powerful states.

While the sensitivity of democratic leaders to the suffering of their population provides a reason for expecting a negative relationship between the number of veto players and the probability of minor power capitulation, it is still surprising to find such a result being upheld consistently across most specifications. Standard arguments about the role of veto players suggest that making policy change should be difficult when more political actors are in a position to block it. Capitulation to the demands of a foreign power certainly involves policy change. Although our hypothesis concerning veto players found no empirical support, we continue to suspect that there are other domestic institutional characteristics that may make capitulation more difficult.

There are other arguments that may predict minor power resistance that we were unable to test here. Geographic size may be an important determinant of the prospects for guerrilla resistance. Historical rivalry may create nationalist imperatives for resistance in some cases. Other potentially important considerations that we are unable to measure at this stage include perceptions of resolve by both parties, expectations for marginal victories by the weak, as well as
historical, ethnic, and religious grudges that play on the international scene. We hope the preliminary results we have presented here will lay the foundation to further inquiry on this topic. The renewed conflict between Georgia and Russia, which previously appeared twice in our sample of post-Cold War ICB crises, illustrates that we have not seen the end of resistance by the weak – no matter what the odds appear to be.
References


TABLE 1. Hypotheses about the Rejection of Militarized Demands from More Powerful States

**Rationalist Hypotheses: Credibility of the Demand**

**Hypothesis 1:** Demands accompanied by actual military action are more likely to be accepted.

**Hypothesis 2:** Demands from contiguous states are more likely to be accepted.

**Hypothesis 3:** Demands from democracies are more likely to be accepted.

**Rationalist Hypotheses: The Commitment Problem and Guerrilla Resistance**

**Hypothesis 4:** States with larger populations are more likely to reject demands.

**Hypothesis 5:** States with more mountainous terrain are more likely to reject demands.

**Hypothesis 6:** States with ethnically and linguistically homogenous populations are more likely to reject demands.

**Hypothesis 7:** Demands for territorial concessions are more likely to be accepted than other types of demands.

**Hypothesis 8:** Demands from democracies are more likely to be rejected.

**Non-Rationalist Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 9:** States with more veto players are more likely to reject demands.

**Hypothesis 10:** Democratic states are more likely to accept demands.

**Hypothesis 11:** Demands for territorial concessions are more likely to be rejected than other types of demands.

**Hypothesis 12:** Military regimes should be more likely to reject demands.
### Table 2. Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coding</th>
<th>Expected Sign</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ICB Capitulation</strong></td>
<td>Binary; 1 if demand resisted</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>Coded from Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MID Demand</strong></td>
<td>Binary; 1 if major power makes revisionist demand</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MID Reciprocation</strong></td>
<td>Binary; 1 if dispute reciprocated</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenger regime type</strong></td>
<td>-10 to 10; Autocratic to Democratic.</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>Marshall and Jaggers 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mountainous terrain in target</strong></td>
<td>Percentage of mountainous terrain</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Fearon and Laitin 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Logged total population (thousands)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Singer 1987; Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target homogeneity</strong></td>
<td>Ethnolinguistic Fractionalization.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Fearon and Laitin 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demand concerns target's regime</strong></td>
<td>Binary</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demand concerns target's territory</strong></td>
<td>Binary</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer 2004 for MID analysis; coded from Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000 for ICB analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demand entails loss of target independence</strong></td>
<td>Binary</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Coded from Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veto players in target state</strong></td>
<td>Polcon III score</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Heinsz 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Military dictatorship in target state</strong></td>
<td>Binary, 1 indicates presence of a military regime.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Geddes 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target state regime type</strong></td>
<td>-10 to 10; Autocratic to Democratic.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Marshall and Jaggers 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenger action accompanying demand</strong></td>
<td>Binary, 1 indicates military mobilization or actual use of force.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Coded from Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contiguity</strong></td>
<td>Binary; 1 if the states share a border or are within 400 water miles of each other.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Stinnett, et. al. 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ally Balance</strong></td>
<td>Minor power side's share of total ally capabilities on both sides.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Sarkees et. al 2003; Singer 1987; Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Power Balance</strong></td>
<td>Ratio, minor CINC score divided by the sum of CINC scores.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Singer 1987; Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>System Concentration</strong></td>
<td>CINC score, distribution of capabilities.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Singer 1987; Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ally</strong></td>
<td>Binary; 1 if the states have a defense pact.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Sarkees et. al 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 3. Censored Probit Models of Minor Power Militarized Response to Major Power Demands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resistance to demand</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major power's Polity score</td>
<td>-0.01 (0.01)</td>
<td>-0.02† (0.01)</td>
<td>-0.04† (0.02)</td>
<td>0.04 (0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log of minor power population (thousands)</td>
<td>-0.06 (0.06)</td>
<td>0.05 (0.07)</td>
<td>-0.05 (0.13)</td>
<td>0.04 (0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor power ethnic fractionalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.76† (0.35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logged of percentage of minor power mountainous terrain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.08 (0.09)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand concerns minor power's regime</td>
<td>0.53* (0.22)</td>
<td>0.52* (0.23)</td>
<td>0.63* (0.37)</td>
<td>0.62* (0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand concerns minor power's territory</td>
<td>0.73* (0.15)</td>
<td>0.70* (0.14)</td>
<td>0.68* (0.26)</td>
<td>0.84* (0.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor power veto players</td>
<td>-0.44 (0.31)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor power Polity score</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.02* (0.01)</td>
<td>-0.04* (0.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor power is military regime</td>
<td>-0.48† (0.15)</td>
<td>-0.46† (0.14)</td>
<td>0.19 (0.33)</td>
<td>-0.45* (0.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor power side's share of total allied capabilities</td>
<td>-0.16 (0.29)</td>
<td>-0.13 (0.28)</td>
<td>-0.03 (0.44)</td>
<td>-0.20 (0.27)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minor power share of dyadic capabilities</td>
<td>0.66 (0.55)</td>
<td>0.06* (0.53)</td>
<td>-0.15 (1.64)</td>
<td>0.26 (0.52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contiguous dyad</td>
<td>-0.49* (0.16)</td>
<td>-0.33* (0.17)</td>
<td>-0.44 (0.29)</td>
<td>-0.22 (0.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.64 (0.84)</td>
<td>0.20 (0.92)</td>
<td>1.60 (1.61)</td>
<td>0.13 (0.96)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demand

| Major power's Polity score                                                          | -0.005 (0.003)           | -0.006* (0.003)          | 0.004 (0.005)            |                          |
| Log of minor power population (thousands)                                           | 0.10† (0.02)             | 0.09† (0.02)             | 0.16† (0.04)             | 0.12† (0.02)             |
| Minor power ethnic fractionalization                                                |                          |                          | -0.27* (0.12)            |                          |
| Log of percentage of mountainous terrain in minor power                             |                          |                          | 0.05* (0.04)             |                          |
| Minor power veto players                                                            | -0.35† (0.10)            |                          |                          |                          |
| Minor power Polity score                                                            |                          | -0.001 (0.003)           | -0.005 (0.004)           |                          |
| Minor power is military regime                                                      | -0.11† (0.05)            | -0.001 (0.04)            | -0.40* (0.09)            | -0.02 (0.04)             |
| Minor power side's share of total allied capabilities                               | 0.12 (0.10)              | 0.07 (0.09)              | 0.26 (0.15)              | 0.05 (0.09)              |
| Minor power share of dyadic capabilities                                            | 0.25 (0.21)              | 0.27 (0.20)              | -0.86* (0.49)            | 0.02 (0.19)              |
| Major power capability score                                                        | 2.23* (0.31)             | 1.92* (0.28)             | 1.61* (0.59)             | 1.61* (0.26)             |
| Systemic concentration                                                             | 0.85 (0.50)              | 0.66 (0.47)              | -1.84* (0.80)            | 1.52† (0.41)             |
| Contiguous dyad                                                                     | 0.56* (0.05)             | 0.59* (0.04)             | 0.78* (0.07)             | 0.62* (0.04)             |
| Constant                                                                            | -3.42* (0.25)            | -3.32* (0.24)            | -3.23* (0.39)            | -3.89* (0.21)            |
| Rho                                                                                 | -0.50*                   | -0.35*                   | -0.53*                   | -0.28                    |
| Observations                                                                        | 51,363                   | 61,354                   | 32,922                   | 68,754                   |
| Uncensored Observations                                                             | 426                      | 511                      | 201                      | 547                      |

(Notes: * Statistical significance at p < 0.05 level. † Incorrect sign, contradictory hypothesis would be significant at p< 0.05 level.)
| Table 4: Probit Models of Minor Power Resistance to Major Power Demands in ICB Data |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Major power's Polity score         | -0.12†          | -0.10†          | -0.14†          |
|                                    | (0.04)          | (0.04)          | (0.05)          |
| Log of minor power population (thousands) | 0.07           | 0.12           | -0.47          |
|                                    | (0.18)          | (0.17)          | (0.31)          |
| Minor power ethnic fractionalization | 0.39           | 0.43           | 0.30           |
| Log of percentage of mountainous terrain in minor power |                |                |
| Demand entails loss of independence | 1.39*          | 1.36*          | 3.02*          |
|                                    | (0.71)          | (0.67)          | (1.55)          |
| Demand entails loss of territory    | 0.37            | 0.46            | 0.25            |
|                                    | (0.41)          | (0.39)          | (0.59)          |
| Minor power has military regime     | 0.82            | 0.87            | 1.35            |
|                                    | (0.91)          | (0.85)          | (1.11)          |
| Minor power veto players            | -3.80*          |                |                |
|                                    | (1.23)          |                |                |
| Minor power Polity score            | -0.08*          |                | -0.03          |
|                                    | (0.03)          |                | (0.04)         |
| Minor power share of dyadic capabilities | 4.35*          | 3.10           | 7.79           |
|                                    | (2.42)          | (2.07)          | (4.93)         |
| Minor power side's share of total allied capabilities | -0.65          | -1.04          | -3.42†         |
|                                    | (1.15)          | (1.12)          | (1.82)         |
| Challenger Military Mobilization    | 0.56            | 0.59            | 1.06            |
|                                    | (0.55)          | (0.52)          | (0.87)         |
| Challenger Use of Force            | 0.89            | 1.03*           | 2.83*           |
|                                    | (0.56)          | (0.52)          | (1.02)         |
| Contiguous dyad                    | -1.86*          | -1.64*          | -0.36           |
|                                    | (0.73)          | (0.65)          | (0.78)         |
| Constant                            | 0.02            | -1.66           | 1.86            |
|                                    | (0.58)          | (1.63)          | (2.61)         |
| Observations                        | 137             | 142             | 87             |

(Notes: * Statistical significance at p < 0.05 level. † Incorrect sign, contradictory hypothesis would be significant at p < 0.05 level.)
TABLE 5. Ordered Logit Model of Level of Military Action Accompanying Demand in ICD Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demand</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demand entails loss of independence</td>
<td>0.88*</td>
<td>(0.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand entails loss of territory</td>
<td>0.59*</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor power share of dyadic capabilities</td>
<td>3.25*</td>
<td>(1.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor power side's share of total</td>
<td>-1.57*</td>
<td>(0.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>142</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut point 1</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut point 2</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>(0.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brant test chi-squared statistic</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fearon also discusses a third explanation, issue indivisibility, but doubts these are as important as the other two. We share his doubts, though issue indivisibility has some affinity with the non-rationalist explanations we will examine in the next section.

This, of course, is fundamentally different than a threat that is cheap to make. Generally, the bargaining literature suggests that threats that are cheap to make are not credible. However, threats that are cheap to implement provide a different category of credibility. Simply put, if all means are effective, the cheapest action is the one that a rational actor would pursue to increase their expected utility.

Osama bin Laden's October 2002 statement on his demands of the United States includes a call for the United States to accept Islam, among other things (Lawrence 2005, 166). To date, official representatives of the United States have neither accepted this demand nor made a counteroffer.

Slantchev (2003) reaches a closely related conclusion about states that are fully informed about one another's capabilities. His formal model indicates that it sometimes makes sense for these states to fight as long as an unpalatable settlement exists and they can continue to inflict damage on their opponent.

In the United States context, there is evidence that military leaders are actually less willing to use force than civilian policy makers, but that they tend to favor escalation once force has been used (Betts 1991; Feaver and Gelpi 2004).

Under the coding rules set out by Brecher and Wilkenfeld (2000, 3), a foreign policy crisis occurs when an individual state's leaders perceive "a threat to one or more basic values, along with an awareness of finite time for response to the value threat, and heightened probability of involvement in military hostilities." The "foreign policy crisis" thus refers to conditions in a particular state, while "international crisis" refers to a broader event encompassing foreign policy crises in one or more states.
This and subsequent comparisons hold all other continuous variables at their mean values and categorical variables at their modes. This means the comparisons involve a major power demand that a non-contiguous, civilian-ruled minor power make a policy change.