

**Step Aside or Face the Consequences:
Explaining the Success and Failure of Compellent Threats to Remove Foreign Leaders**

Alexander B. Downes
The George Washington University
downes@gwu.edu

Abstract

Why do compellent threats demanding the removal of foreign leaders succeed sometimes but not others? Such threats would appear to be unlikely to work: demands for leadership change are harsh and may endanger the personal fate of the targeted leader. This chapter investigates cases of leadership threats in the Militarized Compellent Threat (MCT) dataset to explain why some threats are persuasive whereas others are not. Surprisingly, over 80 percent of leadership threats are successful. I argue that this counterintuitive result is the product of a selection effect: because leadership demands are so ambitious, challengers only issue them when targets are virtually defenseless, namely when the challenger possesses crushing material superiority, is geographically proximate to the target, and the target is diplomatically isolated. Additional factors that facilitate compliance include credible signals by the challenger to deploy its military forces and allowing the targeted leader to flee into exile.

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Introduction

Why do compellent threats demanding that foreign leaders give up power succeed in some instances but not others? The deck would appear to be stacked against the success of such “regime change” threats.¹ It is well known, for example, that compellence is difficult in international relations.² Complying with a compellent threat requires that a target take a visible action in response to an observable demand, which involves greater loss of face than complying with a deterrent threat, where the target can claim that it had no intention of taking any action in the first place. As Robert Art has put it, “The target has no...plausible deniability in the case of compellence because its overt submission is required.”³

In addition to the difficulty of compellence in general, a demand for regime change is one of the most ambitious concessions one state can request from another. Since all leaders—whether dictators or democrats—prefer to remain in office, they are naturally inclined to resist demands that they abdicate. Foreign demands for regime change may also require that leaders flee into exile or face prosecution, potential imprisonment, or even execution at the hands of the coercer, none of which are likely to appeal to threatened leaders. In short, foreign threats to compel regime change seem to be exactly the kinds of threats that targets are most likely to resist. As Art puts it, a demand for regime change “should be the most difficult because it requires a regime in power to commit suicide, and regimes do not willingly do that.”⁴

Indeed, the recent history of threats for regime change appears to bear out the contention that such demands rarely succeed. In the post-Cold War era, the United States has issued such

¹ Technically, “regime change” is broader than “leadership change.” Regime change always includes a change in the effective leader of the target state, but may also entail transforming the target’s political institutions, such as from

² Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966).

³ Robert J. Art, “Coercive Diplomacy: What Do We Know?” in *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy*, ed. Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2003), 362.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 389-90.

threats against Manuel Noriega of Panama (1989), Raoul Cédras of Haiti (1994), Saddam Hussein of Iraq (2003), and Moammar Qaddafi of Libya (2011). In three of these four cases, the threat failed: with the lone exception of Haiti, the United States had to use decisive military force to unseat the targeted leader, including launching major invasions with ground forces in two instances.⁵ Even in the successful case of Haiti, Cédras did not agree to leave power until the 82nd Airborne Division was en route to remove him by force. Such cases support the argument that leaders are unlikely to give up power without a fight, and thus that compellent threats demanding regime change are likely to fail.⁶

But this is not the whole story. In the past, threats of regime change—by the United States and other powers—have succeeded at a much higher rate than more recent threats. The United States successfully used militarized threats to evict leaders in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Costa Rica between 1909 and 1919.⁷ Germany compelled Austrian Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg to step down in favor of Nazi Interior Minister Arthur Seyss-Inquart in March 1938, and the Soviet Union similarly coerced the leaders of the Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia to hand over power in June 1940.⁸ These successes are not uncommon. Indeed, in the Militarized Compellent Threat (MCT) dataset, a compilation of all compellent

⁵ In the third case, Libya, the United States and its NATO partners limited their participation to airpower.

⁶ Studies supporting this conclusion include Alexander L. George and William E. Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994), 269, and 270, table 2; and Art, “Coercive Diplomacy,” 401.

⁷ On Nicaragua (1909 and 1910), see Michel Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream: Nicaragua under U.S. Imperial Rule* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005), 70; and Yann Kerevel, “Re-examining the Politics of U.S. Intervention in Early 20th Century Nicaragua: José Madriz and the Conservative Restoration,” Research Paper Series, No. 43 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Latin American Institute, November 2006), 23. On the Dominican Republic (1912, 1914, and 1916), see Bruce J. Calder, *The Impact of Intervention: The Dominican Republic during the U.S. Occupation of 1914-1924* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1984), 5-19. On Costa Rica (1919), see Marc Edelman and Joanne Kenen, eds., *The Costa Rica Reader* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 69.

⁸ On Austria, see A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961), 147-49. On the Baltics, see Alexander Shtromas, *The Soviet Method of Conquest of the Baltic States: Lessons for the West* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Values in Public Policy, 1986), 15-24.

threats from 1918 to 2001, demands for leadership change succeeded in a shocking 82 percent of the cases, compared to only 40 percent of demands involving other issues.⁹

Understanding why compellent threats for regime change succeed and fail is important for at least three reasons. First, analysts of compellence tend to treat compellent episodes over different issues as instances of the same phenomenon. But there may be important differences in the dynamics of compellent threats over different issues. In particular, whereas territory in principle is divisible, demands that a country change its political leader are not: only one person can rule at a time. This inherent indivisibility may make demands for leader change more likely to fail. Second, demands for regime change are not uncommon in international politics, and thus it is important to understand when such demands will succeed. The MCT dataset, for example, contains twenty-eight leadership threats spread over eighty-five years, or roughly one every three years. As noted above, the United States has issued four such demands since 1989, an average of one every six years. For the foreseeable future the United States will possess the military wherewithal to intervene in all corners of the globe. Washington may choose to issue threats backed by force to try to remove regimes it finds objectionable or threatening, as it has in the past.¹⁰ Finally, the analysis in this chapter helps adjudicate the debate on the role of power in explaining compellent threat success. Traditionally, scholarship on the credibility of threats and promises in international relations has argued that commitments are likely to be viewed as credible when the state has the capability to carry them out.¹¹ Recent studies, by contrast,

⁹ On the MCT dataset, see Todd S. Sechser, "Militarized Compellent Threats, 1918-2001," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 28, no. 4 (2011): 377-401. The dataset is available online at <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/>. On the success of leadership demands relative to other types of demands, see Todd S. Sechser, "Reputations and Signaling in Coercive Bargaining," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (forthcoming).

¹⁰ The Obama administration, for example, publicly called for the ouster of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in August 2011, but has not threatened to remove him by force. See Scott Wilson and Joby Warrick, "Syria's Assad Must Go, Obama Says," *Washington Post*, August 18, 2011.

¹¹ Daryl G. Press, *Calculating Credibility: How Leaders Assess Military Threats* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2005).

contend that power can be a liability in compellence: powerful states are more likely to have their threats rejected than accepted.¹²

In this chapter, I explore the determinants of success and failure of compellent threats that demand regime change by examining cases contained in the MCT dataset. I argue that the unexpectedly high success rate for leadership threats is explained by the fact that challengers possess crushing material superiority over their targets, which also tend to be located in close geographic proximity to challengers and have few if any allies to protect them. I also argue that this is no accident: challengers only issue leadership demands against weak and isolated targets. We simply do not observe challengers issuing regime change threats in peacetime against equally powerful targets, presumably because such extreme demands would be likely to be rejected and the challenger would then face an unpalatable choice between a costly, uncertain war and an embarrassing diplomatic reversal.¹³ The surprising success of regime change threats is thus due in large part to a selection effect: such threats succeed where previous literature suggests they should fail because challengers issue them only when the target is virtually defenseless. This finding is in line with Todd Sechser's bargaining theory of coercion from chapter 3: a preponderance of power leads challengers to issue ambitious demands. In the case of leadership demands, however, the power disparity between challenger and target is so great that challengers are highly confident that targets have little option but to comply.

Three other factors contribute to the success of regime change demands. First, leadership threats are more likely to obtain compliance when challengers signal that they intend to deploy

¹² Todd S. Sechser, "Goliath's Curse: Coercive Threats and Asymmetric Power," *International Organization* 64, no. 4 (Fall 2010): 627-660; Sechser, "Reputations and Signaling in Coercive Bargaining;" and Phil Haun, *Coercion, Survival, and War: Why Weak States Resist the United States* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2015).

¹³ This is distinct from wartime demands for regime change, which are sometimes issued in dyads of roughly equal power, such between belligerents in the two world wars. Wartime compellence is excluded from this analysis in this chapter, which focuses on the efficacy of threats for achieving leadership change.

their crushing superiority against targets, such as by mobilizing or deploying their military forces. Second, challengers that allow targeted leaders safe egress from power are somewhat more likely to succeed. However, the increasingly hostile international environment facing former dictators in recent times—where they can hardly escape prosecution—may help explain the failure of regime change threats since the end of the Cold War. Finally, threats against personalist dictators may be particularly likely to fail because these regimes prioritize internal threats and tend to discount the seriousness of external threats.

The remainder of the chapter is organized as follows. First, I define compellence and review the findings of the literature on the conditions under which compellent threats succeed or fail. Second, I use the MCT dataset to compile a list of all compellent threats that demanded leadership change from 1918 to 2001. In the third section, I develop a theory for when such threats are likely to succeed. In the final section, I review the chapter's findings and explore whether my explanation for compellent threat success for regime change helps illuminate why recent U.S. demands that leaders leave power in Iraq and Libya have failed—and what it may predict for possible future threats.

Compellence: Definition and Literature

Coercion is the art of manipulating costs and benefits to affect the behavior of an actor. Coercion takes two particular forms. Deterrence consists of threats of force designed to persuade a target to refrain from taking a particular action. Compellence, by contrast, utilizes force—or threats of force—to propel a target to take an action, or to stop taking an action it has already started. Both deterrence and compellence can take place in peace or war. This chapter focuses on compellence during peacetime. Specifically, I focus on *compellent threats*, which are composed of two parts:

(1) a verbal or written demand that a target undertake a material change in the status quo, coupled with (2) a threat to use military force if the target fails to comply. Although the demand must be explicit, the militarized threat may be explicit or implicit; for example, it can be articulated in speech or written form by the challenger or consist of a tacit signal of preparation or intent to use force, such as the mobilization, movement, or deployment of military assets. These two aspects—a demand for a change in the status quo and a threat (verbal or tacit) to use force—both must be present for a compellent threat to exist.¹⁴

Compellent threats are similar to what others have called “coercive diplomacy,” defined by Robert Art as “the attempt to get a target—a state, a group (or groups) within a state, or a nonstate actor—to change its objectionable behavior through either the threat to use force or the actual use of limited force.”¹⁵ Both concepts, for example, allow the coercer to use low-level violence. As Art writes, “If we conceive of coercion to have three phases—threats to use force, demonstrative use of force, and full-scale use of force (or war)—coercive diplomacy encompasses only the first two phases.”¹⁶ Similarly, compellent threats allow for states to signal their resolve by mobilizing or maneuvering forces—or using limited amounts of force—in support of a threat.¹⁷ Coercive diplomacy and compellent threats each fail if the challenger seizes the disputed item (or otherwise resolves the dispute) by force, or if the target’s compliance is clearly unrelated to the challenger’s threat. The key difference between the two concepts is that compellent threats require the issuance of an explicit demand accompanied by a militarized threat, whereas demands and threats may remain implicit in episodes of coercive diplomacy.

¹⁴ Sechser, “Militarized Compellent Threats,” 380. See also Alexander B. Downes and Todd S. Sechser, “The Illusion of Democratic Credibility,” *International Organization* 66, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 475.

¹⁵ Robert J. Art, “Introduction,” in *United States and Coercive Diplomacy*, p. 6. On the definition of coercive diplomacy, see also George and Simons, *Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 7-11; and Alexander L. George, *Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1991), 5-6.

¹⁶ Art, “Coercive Diplomacy,” 360.

¹⁷ Sechser, “Militarized Compellent Threats,” 384-85.

PREVIOUS LITERATURE ON COMPELLENCE OUTCOMES

Studies of compellence in international relations confirm Schelling's argument that success is elusive. Table 1 compares the success rate for compellence, coercive diplomacy, and compellent threats from five empirical studies. The clear message from the table is that forceful attempts short of war to compel adversaries to change their behavior are unlikely to work. Success rates range from a low of 18 percent to a high of 41 percent; averaged across all 336 cases in the five studies, compellence succeeds in 35 percent of them.¹⁸ Studies of deterrence, by contrast, find a significantly higher rate of success of between 50 and 57 percent.¹⁹

[Table 1 about here]

It is thus well established that compellence is hard. But what explains variation in the success and failure of coercive diplomacy and compellent threats? Previous scholarship has focused on four factors.²⁰

POWER. First, it has long been thought in international relations that powerful states get their way; as Thucydides put it, "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must."²¹ Yet empirical work on coercive diplomacy and compellent threats has never supported this axiom. Studies of the U.S. experience with coercive diplomacy, as is evident from Table 1, consistently find that U.S. threats fail more often than they succeed. Recent work on compellent

¹⁸ These success rates are similar to those for compellence with airpower during war (40 percent) and economic sanctions (34 percent). Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996), 52; and Gary Clyde Hufbauer, Jeffrey J. Schott, and Kimberly Ann Elliott, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered*, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2007), 159.

¹⁹ See, respectively, Vesna Danilovic, *When the Stakes Are High: Deterrence and Conflict among Major Powers* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2002); and Paul K. Huth and Bruce Russett, "What Makes Deterrence Work? Cases from 1900-1980," *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (July 1984): 505.

²⁰ For a discussion of other factors that might matter in compellence, see George and Simons, *Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 279-87; and Art, "Coercive Diplomacy," 393-401.

²¹ Robert Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 352. Other studies that argue that material power enhances the credibility of threats include Press, *Calculating Credibility*; George and Simons, *Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 285-86; and Art, "Coercive Diplomacy," 399.

threats explains why power may in fact be a significant impediment to threat success.²² Todd Sechser argues that targets facing compelling threats must consider the effect that their behavior in response to the current threat will have on the likelihood that they will be challenged again. Coercers, in turn, must consider the cost to the target's reputation it suffers from backing down. Anything that makes a repeated challenge more likely—such as a powerful or proximate coercer—causes the target to increase its assessment that it will be challenged again, and thus to place a higher value on its reputation. This gives targets incentives to resist the initial threat to convince the coercer that it is a “tough” type.²³ Coercers, however, tend to underestimate the target's concern for its reputation and thus offer too little compensation to obtain the target's acquiescence. The target's fear for its reputation and the challenger's unwillingness to lower its demands or offer side payments to compensate the target for the damage to its reputation causes the target to resist threats from powerful states. Sechser demonstrates the logic of this argument in a case study of the failed Soviet compelling threat against Finland in 1939, and shows quantitatively that threats from powerful and proximate coercers are unlikely to succeed.²⁴

INTERESTS. Second, it is widely argued that the side with the greater interests at stake will prevail in compellence.²⁵ This is another way of saying that the side that cares more about the issue in dispute will win. How much an actor cares about prevailing dictates its resolve: the costs it is willing to pay and the risks it is willing to run to achieve its objective. Actors with high levels of resolve have an advantage in compellence scenarios because they are willing to suffer more pain to achieve their objectives.

²² Sechser, “Goliath's Curse.”

²³ Moreover, Sechser's model in chapter 3 shows that challengers increase their demands as they grow more powerful, thereby generating a higher chance of war should the target turn out to be highly resolved.

²⁴ Sechser, “Goliath's Curse”; and Sechser, “Reputations and Signaling in Coercive Bargaining.” For a similar argument applied specifically to the United States, see Haun, *Coercion, Survival, and War*.

²⁵ George and Simons, *Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 281.

Relying on concepts like “interests” and “resolve” to explain compellence outcomes is problematic because, as Art points out, they are inherently difficult to measure: “Before the fact,” writes Art, “the coercer can never know for certain whose resolve is stronger—its own or the target’s.”²⁶ Even if one could determine an adversary’s level of resolve before a crisis, it can change as the crisis unfolds (as can the state’s own level of resolve). A different difficulty with interest-based arguments is that—according to another widely-believed axiom in international relations—defenders of the status quo are always more strongly motivated than challengers. This is especially true in compellence episodes because targets cannot conceal giving in to a compellent threat, and thus cannot avoid the costs to reputation or political survival entailed by capitulating. Finally, it is unclear why challengers cannot simply adjust their demands downward to account for the target’s stronger interests in the dispute.²⁷

REGIME TYPE. A third factor commonly believed to influence compellent threat success is challenger regime type. In particular, threats issued by democracies are thought to be more likely to elicit compliance than threats from nondemocracies because of the audience costs that would be suffered by a democratic leader who issues a threat but subsequently backs down.²⁸ Studies have found that democracies are less likely to have militarized interstate disputes reciprocated and are more likely to prevail in international crises, and that publics disapprove of leaders who make threats and then back down.²⁹ Recent scholarship has questioned these findings, however, showing that some types of autocracies are also capable of generating

²⁶ Art, “Coercive Diplomacy,” 365.

²⁷ Sechser, “Goliath’s Curse,” 630.

²⁸ James D. Fearon, “Domestic Audience Costs and the Escalation of International Disputes,” *American Political Science Review* 88, no. 3 (September 1994): 577-92.

²⁹ Kenneth A. Schultz, *Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Christopher F. Gelpi and Michael Griesdorf, “Winners or Losers? Democracies in International Crises, 1918-1994,” *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 3 (September 2001): 633-47; and Michael Tomz, “Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations: An Experimental Approach,” *International Organization* 61, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 821-40.

audience costs; compelling threats from democracies are no more likely to elicit compliance than threats from nondemocracies; and that democratic leaders can avoid audience costs by providing justifications for refraining from carrying out threats.³⁰

DEMAND TYPE. Finally, the success and failure of compellence could vary with the nature of the challenger's demand. Intuitively, demands issued over minor issues—such as a change in policy—should be more likely to succeed than threats over regime change or sovereignty.³¹ The evidence on this point, however, is mixed. Art, for example, finds no support for the idea that more extreme demands—such as regime change—are less likely to elicit compliance than demands over issues of lesser salience.³² His sample contains only two demands for leadership change, however, one of which (Haiti 1994) succeeded, whereas the other (Somalia, 1992-93) failed. Similarly, economic sanctions fared only slightly worse than average (31 versus 34 percent) when the goal sought by the coercer was regime change.³³ In the MCT dataset, by contrast, leadership demands succeed twice as often as demands over territory, policy, reparations, or other issues.³⁴

Most of these studies, of course, examine compellence in general rather than threats directed solely at leaders. I now turn to the MCT dataset to compile and analyze a list of threats demanding regime change.

³⁰ Jessica L. Weeks, "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve," *International Organization* 62, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 35-64; Downes and Sechser, "Illusion of Democratic Credibility;" Jack Snyder and Erica Borghard, "The Cost of Empty Threats: A Penny, Not a Pound," *American Political Science Review* 195, no. 3 (August 2011): 437-56; and Matthew S. Levendusky and Michael C. Horowitz, "When Backing Down is the Right Decision: Partisanship, New Information, and Audience Costs," *Journal of Politics* 74, no. 2 (April 2012): 323-38.

³¹ Sechser's model in chapter 3 implies that coercers facing resolved targets will make smaller demands, and that these demands are more likely to be accepted.

³² Art, "Coercive Diplomacy," 401.

³³ Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered*, 159.

³⁴ Sechser, " Militarized Compellent Threats."

Compellent Threats for Regime Change in the Militarized Compellent Threats Dataset

Logic and recent evidence indicate that trying to intimidate foreign leaders into leaving office is hard. All political leaders seek to remain in power and generally resist stepping aside unless they lose an election (in a democracy) or are forced out at the point of a gun (in a nondemocracy). Agreeing to forfeit leadership at the behest of a foreign power is risky, especially when removal is likely to be accompanied by exile, prosecution, or worse. Indeed, the *Archigos* dataset on leaders, which compiles information on the manner in which leaders leave office and their fate after removal (no punishment, exile, imprisonment, or death) shows that only 21 percent of leaders avoid some type of additional punishment after being ousted by foreign powers. Fifty-five percent of leaders removed in this way are forced to leave the country, while 22 percent are sent to jail.³⁵ Faced with fates like these, leaders should surely resist demands by foreign powers that they leave office. Compellent threats for regime change, therefore, should be likely to fail.

This section examines the empirical record of compellent threats demanding regime change. To do so, it uses the most comprehensive dataset of compellent threats compiled to date: Sechser's Militarized Compellent Threat dataset, which covers the period from the end of World War I through 2001. Below, I first describe the dataset and its coding rules. I then examine a list of twenty-eight compellent threats that demanded a change in political leadership. This list reveals a far higher success rate than expected: over 80 percent of such threats obtained compliance by the target.

³⁵ H.E. Goemans, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Giacomo Chiozza, "Introducing *Archigos*: A Data Set of Political Leaders, 1875-2003," *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 2 (March 2009): 276. These proportions are broadly similar to those of leaders removed in domestic coups or revolutions, except that 20 percent of these leaders are killed, as opposed to only one percent killed after removal by foreign forces.

THE MCT DATASET

A militarized compellent threat is defined as “an explicit demand by one state (the challenger) that another state (the target) alter the status quo in some material way, backed by a threat of military force if the target does not comply.”³⁶ Several points about this definition deserve elaboration. First, the dataset adopts the current material status quo as a reference point in order to distinguish compellence from deterrence. As Sechser points out, whether a threat is deterrent or compellent is often “in the eye of the beholder” because the two states disagree about what constitutes the legitimate status quo. The dataset’s rules thus maintain that “compellent threats aim to alter the material status quo, whereas deterrent threats aim to preserve it.”³⁷ For this reason, the dataset excludes *faits accomplis*, where a state seizes a disputed item and then demands that another state renounce its claim. In such cases the material status quo has already been altered, and the threat simply demands that the target recognize the new status quo.

Second, the MCT dataset includes only demands backed by threats and limited demonstrations or uses of force; instances where challengers seize an item without making a demand are excluded, as are intra-war instances of compellence. The dataset thus focuses clearly on the efficacy of threats for obtaining target compliance rather than the efficacy of force for achieving objectives. Third, demands in compellent threat episodes must be made explicit in order to “ensure that the dataset contains only cases in which both sides agreed about the nature and extent of the challenger’s threat.”³⁸ Explicit demands also establish a clear reference point by which to code whether or not the target complied with the challenger’s demand. Finally, although demands must be made explicit, the accompanying threat of military force can be

³⁶ Sechser, “Militarized Compellent Threats,” 380.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 382.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 382.

explicit or implicit, “transmitted through explicit verbal communication or through public military maneuvers or demonstrations that coincide with the demand.”³⁹

The dataset—which begins immediately after the conclusion of World War I and continues until the end of 2001—contains 210 compelling threat episodes; because some cases include multiple challengers, there are a total of 242 challenger-target dyads in the dataset.

LEADERSHIP THREATS IN THE MCT DATASET

The MCT dataset codes compelling threats as falling into five non-exclusive issue areas: territory, leadership, policy, reparations, and other. Sechser defines leadership demands as including “all demands to remove or replace particular individuals within the target’s government.”⁴⁰ Leadership demands as defined by MCT, however, are not always synonymous with demands for regime change. Importantly, leadership demands need not be directed at heads of state, but rather may seek the ouster of lower level officials as well.⁴¹ For example, in February and March 1938, Adolf Hitler issued two compelling threats for leadership change against Austria. The second of these was a classic regime change threat, as Hitler demanded that Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg give way to Austrian Nazi Party leader Arthur Seyss-Inquart or face invasion. Schuschnigg quickly acquiesced, Seyss-Inquart was appointed chancellor, and promptly invited the Germans to occupy and annex Austria. The prior threat, however, demanded only that Schuschnigg appoint Seyss-Inquart as Minister of the Interior and other Nazis to various cabinet posts or face immediate invasion.⁴² This threat also succeeded.

³⁹ Ibid., 380.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 384.

⁴¹ Ibid., 384, n. 14. Below I remove these threats to see if they inflate the success rate of leadership threats. For the moment, however, I include them in the analysis.

⁴² Alfred D. Low, *The Anschluss Movement, 1918-1931, and the Great Powers*, Vol. 185 (Boulder, Colo.: East European Monographs, 1985), 365.

Table 2 lists all twenty-eight challenger-target dyads—representing twenty-three separate episodes—in which a compelling threat over leadership was issued in the MCT dataset. Strikingly, as shown in Figure 1, compellence succeeded in over 82 percent of these dyads. This figure remains almost identical when threat episodes are the unit of analysis rather than challenger-target dyads: challengers obtained target compliance in nineteen of the twenty-three episodes (83 percent). This is more than double the rate at which compelling threats succeed over other issues, a difference that is highly statistically significant.⁴³ What explains this unexpectedly high rate of success?

[Table 2 and Figure 1 about here]

A glance at Table 2 suggests that the success rate of leadership threats may be inflated by the inclusion of two types of cases that do not constitute regime change. The first type of case, as discussed briefly above, involves demands for the resignation of government officials below the level of head of state. This type of case occurs several times in the MCT dataset. Japan, for example, issued two threats against China in the 1930s demanding that the Chinese government remove local officials. In May 1935, Japanese authorities in the city of Tientsin sent an ultimatum to the commander of Chinese forces in North China demanding (among other things) that the mayor of Tientsin and the governor of Hebei province be removed following the assassination of two pro-Japanese newspaper editors (MCT-1935-2). At the direction of Chiang Kai-shek, the commander, He Yingqin, acquiesced and removed the two officials. Similarly, in MCT-1936-1 in January 1936, Japanese officials again demanded the removal of the mayor of Tientsin, but this time the demand was refused.⁴⁴

⁴³ This significance persists in multivariate analyses. Sechser, “Reputations and Signaling in Coercive Bargaining.”

⁴⁴ Two other Japanese threats (MCT-1935-6, Wuhan, in September 1935, and MCT-1937-2, Marco Polo Bridge, in July 1937) appear to involve demands for the removal of leaders, but the officials in question were military officers. Sechser excludes demands for the dismissal of officers from his coding of leadership threats.

There are two other cases of this type that appear in the MCT dataset. In response to an attack in which Greek Cypriot forces overran two Turkish Cypriot villages on November 15, 1967, the Turkish government demanded that Greece dismiss the commander of Greek Cypriot forces, Gen. Georgios Grivas, and send him home to Greece (MCT-1967-3). On November 19, the Greek government agreed to Grivas's removal. The other case occurred in Chad in June 1979, when Libya tried to coerce Chadian leader Goukouni Oueddei to dismiss Defense Minister Hissène Habré, a demand that was rejected (MCT-1979-4).

The second type of case that does not involve regime change occurred in the two post-World War I crises in which Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania targeted Hungary. In both of these cases, the three allies sought to prevent Karl I, the former Habsburg ruler of Austria-Hungary, from taking power in Hungary. Karl had gone into exile in Switzerland shortly after the war ended but had not actually abdicated his throne. On March 27, 1921, he returned to Hungary and stated his claim as the rightful ruler of the country. In response, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania (known as the Little Entente) announced that they would declare war if Karl were allowed to take power. Hungarian Regent Miklos Horthy refused to step down and a majority of the Hungarian Diet also opposed Karl's ascension to office. Karl relented and returned to Switzerland on April 5. The crisis recurred in October, however, when Karl reentered Hungary and rallied some of his supporters to march on Budapest. The Little Entente reiterated its ultimatum that Karl be prevented from taking power and threatened to invade. Hungarian authorities immediately arrested Karl and handed him over to the Entente. These two cases, although they were clearly disputes over who would lead Hungary, involved threats aimed not at changing the Hungarian regime, but rather at preventing Karl—who was not at the time the Hungarian head of state—from attaining power.

For the purposes of studying the efficacy of compellent threats for achieving regime change, these two sets of cases are not relevant since they demand that targets remove officials who are not heads of state. States may also be less resistant to removing lower-level officials than top leaders, which could bias the success rate of leadership threats upward. Deleting these eleven challenger-target dyads (seven separate episodes) leaves seventeen dyads and sixteen compellent threats that actually demanded regime change. Dropping these cases, however, barely affects the success rate for such threats, which succeeded in 82 percent of dyads and 81 percent of threat episodes. The way that the MCT dataset codes leadership demands does not falsely inflate the success rate of demands for regime change, which remains virtually unchanged when demands against lower level officials (or non-government officials, like Karl I) are excluded.

Explaining the Success and Failure of Leadership Demands in the MCT Dataset

Even after excluding leadership demands that are not aimed at regime change, compellent threats against foreign leaders still succeed at a much higher rate than compellent threats over other types of issues. What explains the difference? In this section, I argue that regime change threats succeed so often because of a selection effect: such threats are issued only when the challenger possesses such an overwhelming advantage in material power that the target has almost no chance of resisting an invasion. Therefore, target leaders are better off capitulating to the threat than resisting, since they would still lose office but also suffer the additional costs of fighting. Moreover, leaders who acquiesce to regime change threats might be able to obtain a better personal outcome, such as the ability to flee into exile rather than facing imprisonment or execution at the hands of the challenger. Geographic proximity, diplomatic isolation, and demonstrations of force further enhance the credibility of leadership threats.

POWER AND SELECTION

One facet of the relationship between challengers and targets that becomes apparent on close inspection is the overwhelming advantage in material power possessed by challengers. Table 3 summarizes the percentage of total capabilities in the challenger-target dyad accounted for by the challenger in the year a threat of regime change was made on five common indicators of power in international relations: military expenditures, military personnel, iron and steel production, primary energy consumption, and the CINC score, which measures the percentage of total world capabilities held by each state in a given year. As is evident from the table, the results are extremely lopsided: the challenger in each dyad controls more than 97 percent of the capabilities in each category of power. Indeed, the lowest percentage held by any challenger in any category is 89 percent, the proportion of primary energy consumption accounted for by Germany in the Germany-Czechoslovakia dyad in 1939. In the key categories of actual military power—military expenditures and military personnel—the lowest percentage controlled by a challenger is Italy in its dyad with Greece in 1939 (91 percent), yet Italy’s threat in this case was issued jointly with Germany. Combined the two Axis powers accounted for 99.7 percent of military expenditures in their confrontation with Greece, which is just shy of the median value (99.8 percent) for this variable, a figure that corresponds roughly to the advantage the Soviet Union held over Lithuania in 1940. The smallest advantage in military personnel is the 93 percent (782,000 versus 58,000) German preponderance over Austria in 1938, but the median value of this variable (99.1 percent) is similar to the U.S. advantage over the Dominican Republic in 1961.

[Table 3 about here]

This extreme imbalance of power between challengers and targets appears to be uniquely the case for leadership threats. Threats over other issues in the MCT dataset are not characterized

by such a skewed balance of power. The highest percentage of capabilities controlled by the challenger in the two key categories of actual military power—military expenditure and military personnel—for threats over issues other than regime change is 73 percent (military expenditure in threats over policy and “other”). In fact, t-tests show that the challenger’s mean proportion of capabilities for regime change threats is significantly greater than the challenger’s share of capabilities for the four other issue areas at the 99 percent level of confidence in all five categories of power.⁴⁵

Two conclusions can be drawn from these figures. The first is that a major reason why compelling threats for regime change succeed is that the challengers in these cases possess crushing material superiority over their targets. The second is that challengers only make regime change threats when they possess crushing material superiority over targets, and targets understand that challengers could easily remove them by force if necessary. Precisely because demands for regime change are so extreme and thus so likely to be rejected by targets, challengers are likely to issue them only when targets have virtually no ability to defend themselves and thus little choice but to acquiesce.

It is striking, for example, that of the seventeen compelling threats demanding regime change in the MCT dataset, all but two—Hungary vs. Carpatho-Ukraine in 1939 and South Africa vs. Lesotho in 1994—were issued by a great power against a minor power.⁴⁶ Major powers simply do not demand regime change of each other, most likely because such threats lack credibility. The United States, for instance, enacted a policy to contain the expansion of Soviet power in the early years of the Cold War, but the long-term goal of containment was not defensive. Rather, as elaborated in NSC-68, it was “to foster a fundamental change in the nature

⁴⁵ This is also true (at the 95 percent level of confidence) for the broader category of leadership threats in every category of power except iron and steel production.

⁴⁶ Even in these two minor power dyads, the power disparity between challenger and target is vast.

of the Soviet system;” that is, to promote regime change in the Soviet Union.⁴⁷ This policy, however, was expounded behind closed doors in Washington, not in public demands directed at Soviet leaders, who would rightly have wondered how the United States intended to enforce their demand if Moscow defied it.

The exception to this rule occurs only when great powers are already at war, and the actions of the adversary convince its opponent that the war cannot be safely terminated without a change of leadership.⁴⁸ This is precisely what happened in both world wars. In the First World War, Germany’s attack convinced British leaders that a Prussian military clique controlled the German government and that any negotiated peace would not last without a change of regime.⁴⁹ In World War II, the nature of German and Japanese aggression similarly persuaded Britain and the United States that agreeing to peace terms with Berlin and Tokyo would be pointless since these regimes were inherently aggressive.⁵⁰ Decisions regarding which objectives to fight for once war has begun, however, are fundamentally different than decisions about which objectives can be attained by threats of force in peacetime. Demands like regime change—which any leader with a choice will surely reject—thus tend to be issued only when target leaders don’t have a choice: when challengers can quickly and easily remove them by brute force.

POWER PROJECTION

A second factor that facilitates the success of regime change demands—as well as the selection of which states to make such demands of—is geographic proximity. In every episode in the MCT

⁴⁷ “A Report to the National Security Council—NSC 68,” April 12, 1950, 9.

⁴⁸ Alex Weisiger, *Logics of War: Explanations for Limited and Unlimited Conflicts* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2013).

⁴⁹ Lorna S. Jaffe, *The Decision to Disarm Germany: British Policy Towards Postwar German Disarmament, 1914-1919* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1985), 7-20.

⁵⁰ Anne Armstrong, *Unconditional Surrender: The Impact of the Casablanca Policy upon World War II* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1961).

dataset in which a leadership threat was issued, not only was the challenger much more powerful than the target, but it was able to bring its tremendous advantage in capabilities directly to bear because it was contiguous to the target on land or across a short stretch of water. The ability to project power against the target's homeland no doubt increased the credibility of the challenger's threat because it could immediately invade with ground forces. Even leaders beset by internal threats and rebellions cannot afford to ignore a militarized threat from a proximate great power. Soviet threats against small states in the Caucasus, Baltics, and Eastern Europe were no doubt highly credible because there was nothing to block the overpowering might of the Red Army from swiftly occupying these countries.⁵¹ Similarly, the overwhelming power of the United States military combined with its ability to project that power across the short distances of the Caribbean with its unmatched navy made U.S. threats more difficult to resist.

DIPLOMATIC ISOLATION

Working in tandem with geographic proximity is a third factor, diplomatic isolation. Challengers typically choose targets for regime change threats that have little hope that a third party will intervene on their behalf to prevent regime change from occurring. On the one hand, this is because—as remarked above—challengers make leadership threats against countries in the immediate vicinity and within their sphere of influence. Targets of U.S. regime change threats in the Americas, for example, such as Costa Rica, Panama, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, had no hope that they would be saved by an external power. In addition, many targets lack a long history of independence or were until recently part of the challenger state. This was the case for Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1920 and the Baltic states in 1940, all former territories of the Russian Empire. Similarly, there was little possibility of U.S. interference when the Soviets

⁵¹ Indeed, in some cases the Red Army was already present inside these states.

made regime change demands against Romania in 1945 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, given that the Soviets occupied both countries.

MOVEMENT OF FORCES

Given that challengers who make regime change demands generally only make such demands when they are likely to succeed, are there additional factors that increase the likelihood that threats of regime change will obtain compliance? Consistent with the emphasis on “costly signals” in the previous literature on interstate coercion, analyses of the MCT dataset have found that threats accompanied by demonstrations of force—“whether the challenger mobilized troops or conducted conspicuous military maneuvers after issuing a compellent threat”—are significantly more likely to succeed than threats where such actions are absent.⁵² Analysis of the subset of leadership threats that actually demanded regime change strongly supports this view. Ninety-three percent of regime change threats accompanied by a demonstration of force elicited full compliance from the target, as opposed to only one-third of those where the challenger did not undertake a movement of forces.⁵³ The evidence thus supports the supposition that compellent threats for regime change are more likely to obtain compliance when the challenger supports its threat with demonstrations of force.

⁵² Costly signals consist of statements or actions by a state that make it costly for that state to abandon a commitment. James D. Fearon, “Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands Versus Sinking Costs,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 1 (February 1997): 68-90. On the importance of demonstrations of force in the MCT dataset, see Sechser, “ Militarized Compellent Threats,” 391; and Sechser, “Reputations and Signaling in Coercive Bargaining.”

⁵³ Even with only seventeen cases, this difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

LEADER FATE

As documented above, only one-fifth of all leaders who leave office in response to a compelling threat escape punishment of some kind, such as exile, imprisonment, or death. This is also true of leaders who are forced from office by external powers explicitly in threats that demand regime change, only 24 percent of whom avoided additional punishment. One might suspect, however, that regime change threats would be more likely to succeed if the challenger promised to refrain from punishing the targeted leader after he left office. Furthermore, fleeing into exile—although hardly an attractive prospect—is surely more palatable for deposed leaders than going to jail or facing execution. This logic implies that threats should be more successful if targeted leaders have the ability to escape to a neighboring country.

Examining the data on compliance with regime change threats and the fate of leaders reveals some limited support for the relationship between personal survival and threat success. Although only two leaders—Emile Hacha of Czechoslovakia and King Letsie III of Lesotho—avoided some form of post-regime change punishment, in both cases the threat succeeded. Similarly, in all seven cases in which leaders fled into exile, compelling threats for regime change achieved compliance. Threats where former leaders wound up in jail, however, still succeeded in four out of five cases. Further research is needed to discover whether challengers promised these leaders that they would be allowed to go into exile but later reneged, or whether these leaders thought they could evade capture but were unsuccessful. Finally, the one threat where a former leader was killed—the Soviet threat against Azerbaijan in 1920—succeeded, but the leader—Nasib bey Yusifbeyli—was killed not by the invading Red Army but by bandits a month after he had fled Baku. This case thus does not provide evidence against the view that personal survival for leaders facilitates the success of regime change threats.

Conclusion: Compellent Threats for Regime Change beyond the MCT Dataset

This exploration of compellent threats for regime change in the MCT dataset has revealed that even after excluding leadership threats that do not demand the removal of the target's sitting head of state, these threats still succeeded about 80 percent of the time. I argued that this surprising result was largely a function of the crushing imbalance in material power between the challenger and the target, which itself is produced by the fact that challengers make regime change threats only when they are vastly more powerful than the target, the two are in close geographic proximity, and the target is diplomatically isolated. Challengers can increase their prospects for success further by showing that they mean business by deploying military assets or using limited amounts of force, and perhaps also by allowing the targeted leader to flee abroad rather than incarcerating or killing him. The argument that demonstrations of force enhance threat credibility is consistent with previous studies that have used the MCT data, but the others are seemingly in conflict with Sechser's argument that power and proximity hinder compellent threat success. I explain the contradiction by arguing that the relationship between power and threat success—at least for leadership threats—is curvilinear: up to a point, increasing the challenger's power decreases the likelihood of target compliance because powerful challengers cannot commit not to issue another challenge in the future, giving targets incentives to stand firm today. Beyond a certain threshold, however, targets simply become unable to resist. Moreover, if the challenger seeks to replace the current leadership or annex the target, this erases the probability of a future challenge and thus the shadow of the future disappears, rendering resistance to the current threat less likely.

This argument matches up well with the pattern of successes and failures of U.S. compellent threats historically. The United States is the most prolific practitioner of regime

change in modern history, toppling a total of thirty-one individual leaders in twenty-eight separate episodes.⁵⁴ It is also one of the most frequent issuers of compelling threats, its twenty-one demands trailing only Japan, Russia, and Great Britain.⁵⁵ Of the four U.S. regime change threats that appear in the MCT data, all four targets—Costa Rica (1919), Dominican Republic (1961), Panama (1989), and Haiti (1994)—were dwarfed by U.S. power and located in the United States’ backyard. Three of these four threats succeeded in dislodging the targeted leader, the only failure coming when U.S. forces had to invade Panama to capture and remove Manuel Noriega. Similarly, in the decade before the MCT dataset begins, the United States issued seven regime change threats against leaders in Nicaragua, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico, all of which were successful.⁵⁶ In each case, the target was literally defenseless in the face of threatened U.S. intervention: each country was dwarfed by U.S. capabilities, located close to the United States, and had no third party willing to help. Several were also further weakened by civil strife and U.S. control over their finances.

Since 2001, however, U.S. threats demanding regime change failed to persuade Saddam Hussein or Moammar Qaddafi to leave power. What explains these recent compelling failures? The argument made in this chapter implies that the reason is that the United States is no longer selecting the types of targets that are likely to be overawed by U.S. threats. For example, both Iraq and Libya were substantially less powerful than the United States, but not nearly to the same degree as the earlier cases.⁵⁷ This provides some support to the idea that there is a curvilinear

⁵⁴ Alexander B. Downes and Jonathan Monten, “Forced to Be Free: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization,” *International Security* 37, no. 4 (Spring 2013): 90-131.

⁵⁵ Sechser, “Militarized Compelling Threats,” 387.

⁵⁶ In addition to the sources listed in note 8, see (on Honduras) Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America’s Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (New York: Times Books, 2006), 75-76; and (on Mexico) Lester D. Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 82-109.

⁵⁷ The U.S. military was slightly more than three times larger than the Iraqi military in 2001 and almost twenty times larger than Libya’s in 2007. Both countries were dwarfed, however, in the category of military spending.

relationship between power and threat success mentioned above. Perhaps more importantly, neither country was located close to the United States where U.S. intervention would be unopposed. Although neither Iraq nor Libya had many allies, Saddam Hussein reportedly believed that other great powers would oppose any U.S. attack in the UN Security Council.⁵⁸ The United States did deploy military forces in support of both threats, however, which should have increased their credibility.

Two other factors may also help explain these recent leadership threat failures. First, the likelihood that Hussein or Qaddafi could have escaped eventual punishment by fleeing into exile was low. Although there were rumors of exile deals in the works for both dictators, nothing concrete materialized.⁵⁹ But even if one of them had managed to broker an escape plan to a country that was not at the time a signatory of the International Criminal Court (ICC), that would not have guaranteed safety from prosecution. Contemporary international criminal law rests on the twin pillars of individual responsibility and universal jurisdiction, meaning that mass killers are responsible for their actions as individuals and may be apprehended and prosecuted anywhere. Any state—not just the ICC—could have indicted Hussein or Qaddafi and attempted to persuade the country harboring them to give them up. Witness the fates of former Liberian and Chadian dictators Charles Taylor and Hissène Habré, each of whom—promised immunity from prosecution by Nigeria and Senegal, respectively—went into exile, only to go on trial years later after outside pressure convinced those countries to bring the former leaders to justice. Recent research has found that leaders who commit atrocities are less likely to choose exile since the apprehension of former Chilean strongman Augusto Pinochet in London in 1998 at the behest of

⁵⁸ Kevin M. Woods, *The Iraqi Perspectives Report: Saddam's Senior Leadership on Operation Iraqi Freedom from the Official U.S. Joint Forces Command Report* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2006), 28.

⁵⁹ On Hussein, see Karen DeYoung and Michael Abramowitz, "Report Says Hussein Was Open to Exile before 2003 Invasion," *Washington Post*, September 27, 2007. On Qaddafi, see David Smith, "Where Could Colonel Muammar Gaddafi Go if He Were Exiled?" *The Guardian*, February 21, 2011.

a Spanish judge, and that as a result civil wars involving such leaders are longer and bloodier than other civil wars.⁶⁰

A second factor that bears additional examination is target regime type. Little work has been devoted to this variable, but the threat failures against Panama, Iraq, and Libya suggest that threats against personalist dictatorships may be particularly likely to fail. The evidence is clearest for Iraq, where Saddam Hussein simply did not believe that the United States would seek regime change in 2003. Instead, he remained focused on the internal threats to his regime from domestic uprisings and coups. As one study puts it, “Even with U.S. tanks crossing the Iraqi border, an internal revolt remained Saddam’s biggest fear.”⁶¹ The reason is that in regimes like Saddam’s, the greatest danger to the leader’s survival typically comes from domestic sources, especially the military. Moreover, having populated the upper ranks with family and tribe members, political loyalists, and sycophants, and instituted draconian punishments for bearers of unwelcome information, there was nobody to correct Saddam’s chronic misperception of U.S. objectives or Iraq’s ability to resist a U.S. attack.⁶² In cases like this, domestic threats may trump external threats and cause leaders to underestimate the seriousness of the external threat and overestimate his ability to resist militarily, both of which might cause compellence to fail.

All told, these factors do not bode well for the likelihood that the United States would be able to compel regime changes in countries like Syria, Iran, or North Korea in the future.

⁶⁰ Daniel Krmaric, “The Justice Dilemma: International Law, Mass Atrocities, and the Dynamics of Civil War” (PhD Diss., Duke University, 2014).

⁶¹ Kevin Woods, James Lacey, and Williamson Murray, “Saddam’s Delusions: The View from the Inside,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 3 (May-June, 2006), pp. 3-4.

⁶² On Saddam’s underestimation of the U.S. threat in 2003, see Julia M. Macdonald, “Credibility in Crises: The Role of Leadership Beliefs in State Threat Assessments” (PhD Diss., George Washington University, 2016).

Table 1. Success Rates for Compellence, Coercive Diplomacy, and Compellent Threats

Type	Source	Successes/Total	Success Rate
Compellence	Blechman and Kaplan	5/28	18%
Compellence	Petersen	16/67	24%
Coercive Diplomacy	George and Simons	2/7	29%
Coercive Diplomacy	Art (summary judgments)	2/8	25%
Coercive Diplomacy	Art (expanded dataset)	5/16	31%
Compellent Threats	Sechser	87/210	41%
Total		117/336	35%

Sources: Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *Force without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1978), 92; Walter S. Petersen, "Deterrence and Compellence: A Critical Assessment of the Conventional Wisdom," *International Studies Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (September 1986): 283; Alexander L. George and William E. Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994), 270; Robert J. Art, "Coercive Diplomacy: What Do We Know?" in *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy*, ed. Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2003), 376-78 and 385-87; and Todd S. Sechser, "Militarized Compellent Threats, 1918-2001," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 28, no. 4 (2011): 377-401.

Table 2. Compellent Threats over Leadership in the MCT Dataset

MCT Code	Challenger	Target	Year	Targeted Leader	Outcome	Leader Fate
1919-7	United States	Costa Rica	1919	Federico Tinoco	Success	Exile
1920-4	Russia	Azerbaijan	1920	Nasib bey Yusifbeyli	Success	Killed
1920-6	Russia	Armenia	1920	Simon Vratsyan	Success	Exile
<i>1921-2</i>	<i>Yugoslavia</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>King Karl I</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
<i>1921-2</i>	<i>Czechoslovakia</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>King Karl I</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
<i>1921-2</i>	<i>Romania</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>King Karl I</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
<i>1921-5</i>	<i>Romania</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>King Karl I</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
<i>1921-5</i>	<i>Czechoslovakia</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>King Karl I</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
<i>1921-5</i>	<i>Yugoslavia</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>King Karl I</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
<i>1935-2</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>China</i>	<i>1935</i>	<i>Mayor of Tientsin Governor of Hebei</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
<i>1936-1</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>China</i>	<i>1936</i>	<i>Mayor of Tientsin</i>	<i>Failure</i>	<i>NA</i>
<i>1938-1</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Austria</i>	<i>1938</i>	<i>Interior Minister</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
1938-2	Germany	Austria	1938	Kurt Schuschnigg	Success	Prison
1939-1	Germany	Czechoslovakia	1939	Emil Hacha	Success	OK*
1939-3	Hungary	Carpatho-Ukraine	1939	Augustyn Voloshyn	Success	Exile
1940-3	Russia	Lithuania	1940	Antanas Smetona	Success	Exile
1940-4	Russia	Estonia	1940	Konstantin Pats	Success	Prison
1940-5	Russia	Latvia	1940	Karlis Ulmanis	Success	Prison
1940-11	Germany	Greece	1940	Ioannis Metaxas	Failure	Natural Death
1940-11	Italy	Greece	1940	Ioannis Metaxas	Failure	Natural Death
1945-1	Russia	Romania	1945	King Michael I	Success	Exile
1961-3	United States	Dominican Republic	1961	Ramfis Trujillo	Success	Exile
<i>1967-3</i>	<i>Turkey</i>	<i>Greece</i>	<i>1967</i>	<i>Gen. Georgios Grivas</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>NA</i>
1968-2	Russia	Czechoslovakia	1968	Alexander Dubcek	Success	Prison
<i>1979-4</i>	<i>Libya</i>	<i>Chad</i>	<i>1979</i>	<i>Defense Minister</i>	<i>Failure</i>	<i>NA</i>
1989-1	United States	Panama	1989	Manuel Noriega	Failure	Prison
1994-4	South Africa	Lesotho	1994	King Letsie III	Success	OK
1994-5	United States	Haiti	1994	Raoul Cedras	Success	Exile

Note: The numbering system for the MCT cases reflects the year-incident system used in version 1.0 of the dataset (not yet released), rather than the old system in version 0.9. Italics indicate threats directed against individuals who were not heads of state.

* Hacha remained in office as a figurehead president after Germany annexed the remainder of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, so his fate is coded as OK. At the end of World War II he was arrested and imprisoned by the Soviets.

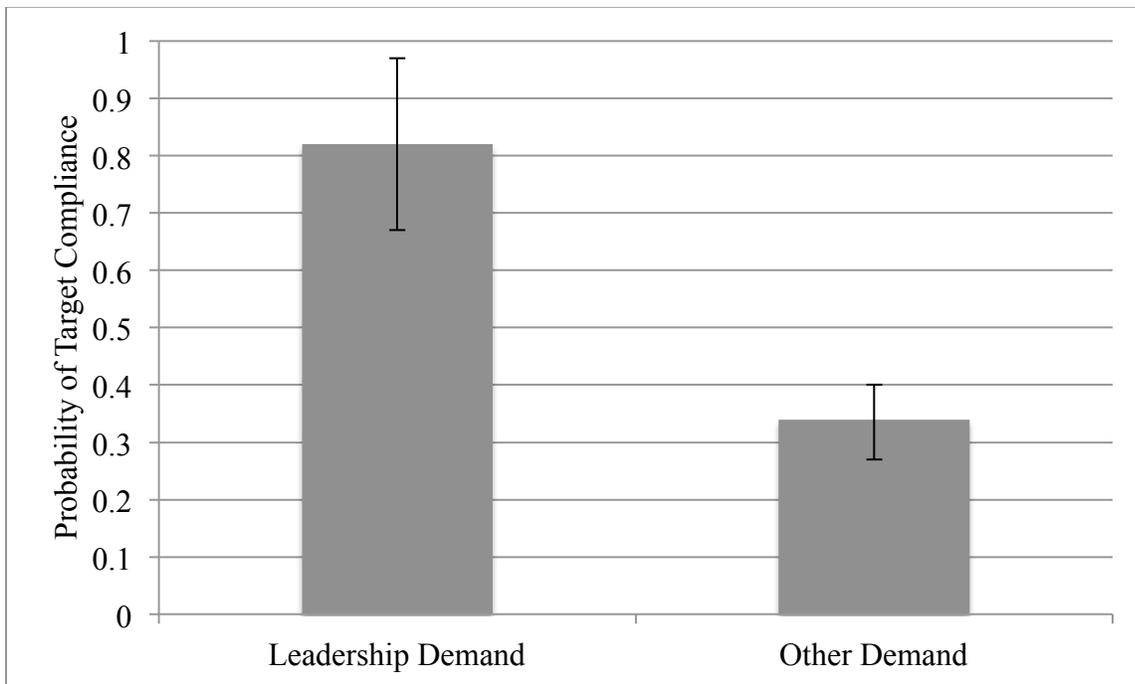
Table 3. Challenger-Target Power Relations in Regime Change Threats

Indicator	Challenger's Average Percentage of Capabilities
Military Expenditures	0.988
Military Personnel	0.975
Iron and Steel Production	0.983
Primary Energy Consumption	0.978
CINC Score	0.977

Source: Correlates of War National Material Capabilities dataset, v4.0, available at <http://correlatesofwar.org/>.

Note: The table includes only regime change threats rather than all leadership threats.

Figure 1. Compliance with Compellent Threats Demanding Leadership Change in the MCT Dataset



Note: Solid bars indicate probability of target compliance; capped lines inside each bar indicate 95 percent confidence intervals. The probability that compliance rates with leadership demands and other types of demands are the same is vanishingly small ($p < 0.0001$).