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INTEREST GROUPS, EXECUTIVE-LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS AND THE U.S. POLITICS OF NATO ENLARGEMENT

BY

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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2013
ABSTRACT

The activism of ethnic interest groups reflects the development of a pluralist American foreign-policy process in the post-Cold War era. Since U.S. political power is divided and shared between the Presidency and Congress, there are two separate and interdependent decision-making arenas for interest groups to seek political access. A topic left relatively under examined is the impact of partisanship in executive-legislative relations on the strategies groups use to influence foreign-policy decisions. This thesis contributes to the study of the domestic politics of foreign policymaking by examining the role of ethnic interest groups in the Clinton administration’s decision to enlarge the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Party control of American political institutions, public opinion, and mass electoral pressure are posited as variables to guide the theory development of group strategies in foreign-policy lobbying.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. A PhD thesis begins with that important first idea. I ventured thousands of miles away from home to pursue doctoral studies in Australia. The decision was not an easy one. Studying in Australia would mean being away from my hometown of San Francisco for nine months of the year, missing the celebrations after my beloved San Francisco Giants won the World Series in 2010 and 2012, and the sights and sounds of baseball, as well as the smell of garlic fries, at AT&T Park. But coming to Australia provided me the opportunity to learn about a new culture, how to drive on the wrong side of the road, and arguably a new language—I must say I am now acquainted with Aussie slang.

The PhD experience was challenging as well as rewarding. Shaping that initial idea into a thesis topic took years, and there are two people who helped me tremendously during my five years here in the land down under. I would like to thank my office mate during my brief tenure at the Australian National University, Dr. Hugh Craft, who provided me with words of wisdom and advice. Here at the University of Sydney, I would like to express sincere thanks to Professor Benjamin Goldsmith, my supervisor, mentor, and above all, my friend. He played an important role in the development of this thesis from the inception of
the idea sometime in 2010 to the finished product presented here. He provided criticisms and praises—but that is what I would expect from any supervisor. But more importantly, we agree to disagree. The comments and suggestions he provided over the years were critical in the development of this thesis. Although writing a PhD thesis is a challenge, Professor Goldsmith made it a rewarding experience as well.

Heartfelt thanks to my mother and father who provided me with financial and moral support for all these years studying overseas. For all my life, they have always supported my endeavors. Although I was not successful in everything I set out to do, at least I know I gave it my best, and they never discourage me from trying. In life, when you fall, you learn to get back up. My parents were there when I took my first steps as a toddler and they are here as I conclude my academic studies. As they enjoy the autumnal years of their lives, the support mom and dad provided me over the years is the best gift I could ever receive from them.

Johnson Y. K. Louie
Sydney, Australia
26 August 2013
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INTRODUCTION

On 30 April 1998, the United States Senate ratified the Protocols of Accession to the NATO Treaty by the vote of 80 to 19. This signified the successful outcome of a major U.S. foreign-policy decision of the post-Cold War era: the expansion of NATO into Central and Eastern Europe. Policy entrepreneurs in the Clinton administration and in Congress were instrumental in guiding NATO enlargement along the policy process (Goldgeier, 1998; 1999; Carter & Scott, 2009, pp. 160-1). A non-governmental organization that played an important part in the NATO enlargement debate was the coalition of ethnic groups representing Americans of Central and Eastern European ancestry. Back in December 1993 when the Clinton administration put the brakes on enlargement by prioritizing the Partnership for Peace over bringing Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia into NATO, leaders of 18 ethnic organizations met at the Washington D.C. office of the Polish American Congress to establish the Central and East Europe Coalition (CEEC). The primary mission of the CEEC then and now is the integration of Central and Eastern Europe into U.S.-led security institutions. NATO is the key institution that anchors America’s security interests in the region.
Even before the first round of NATO enlargement of the post-Cold War era was completed, the CEEC lobbied the Clinton White House to maintain an “open door policy.” The admission of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary in 1999 marked the beginning of the CEEC’s campaign to bring all democratic Central and Eastern European states under the NATO security umbrella. The CEEC continued to support the further expansion of NATO, including the admission of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia in 2004, and Albania and Croatia in 2009. The CEEC issued a statement in April 2009 reiterating “its support for the Alliance’s continued open door policy to include countries which are ready, able and willing to join the Alliance and which are democratic and respect the rule of law, including human and minority rights” (CEEC, 2009). Recently in April 2012, the CEEC lobbied the Obama administration before the NATO Summit in Chicago to offer Macedonia an invitation to join the Alliance (Hungarian American Coalition).

The CEEC’s continued advocacy for enlarging NATO relates to the past and present regarding the influence of ethnic interest groups in U.S. foreign policy. As McCormick (2012, p. 319) observed, “Ethnic groups . . . are not only the oldest foreign policy lobby but, in many ways, often turn out to be the most influential.” The CEEC resembles the Assembly of Captive European Nations, a coalition of ethnic groups founded in 1954 to oppose Soviet domination of their ancestral homelands (Garrett, 1978, p. 305). International events have triggered the establishment of ethnic lobbies. For example, the Polish American Congress was established in Buffalo, New York in 1944 after the failure by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration to restore Poland’s borders backed to its pre-World War II configurations. The demise of the Soviet Union inspired calls by the Polish American Congress and other
ethnic groups that comprise the CEEC for NATO memberships for their ancestral homelands. The decision to lobby together for a common cause was motivated in part by the ethnic leaders’ outrage over the perceived acquiescence by the Clinton administration to Russian opposition by promoting the Partnership for Peace in lieu of “fast track” enlargement at the 1994 NATO Summit in Brussels. The ethnic leaders regarded the administration’s decision as tantamount to a “second Yalta,” a reference to the post-World War II division of Europe. As Tony Smith, author of *Foreign Attachments*, observed, “demands related to security are the most critical ones made by ethnic lobbies, for they involve the possibility of armed confrontation for the sake of survival of a foreign state” (2000, p. 119).

What is significant about the role of ethnic groups in U.S. foreign policymaking is their involvement on international security issues. While all ethnic groups champion a “special relationship” between the U.S. and their ancestral homelands, the CEEC is probably the only group that actively lobbies for the U.S. government to enter into a treaty-bounded security commitment with their ancestral states. These policies may fall below the level of decisions of peace and war, but the U.S. decision to enlarge NATO may entail the possibility of the U.S. engaging in armed conflict in defense of its NATO allies. NATO enlargement is not considered a crisis-type issue where decision-making is pursued in small-group settings (Haney, 1997). The policy process is not insulated from public pressure, as a matter of fact, it is completely exposed. The U.S. politics of NATO enlargement provides a picture of a pluralist policymaking environment. While the post-Cold War foreign-policy agenda has seen the rise in “intermestic” issues, it is safe to assume that NATO enlargement remains in most part a foreign-policy issue in its truest form. The role of the U.S. Senate in the ratification process implies that NATO enlargement is a policy issue that requires
interactions between the executive and legislative branches. Congressional involvement and the administration’s need for public support to secure ratification also implied that societal interests would be activated as well.

The policymaking system has become more pluralist since the end of the Cold War, and in turn, it has become more partisan. The inclusion of NATO enlargement in the Republicans’ Contract with America and the GOP takeover of Congress after the 1994 election intensified partisanship in the NATO enlargement debate. It may be true that congressional assertiveness has come at the expense of executive dominance in foreign policymaking (Scott, 2002; Peterson, 1994). The common occurrence of divided government has undercut executive-legislative cooperation in foreign policymaking. As Tierney (1994, p. 102) observed, “In an era dominated by persistently divided government . . . partisanship has become the driving force in congressional differences with the executive over foreign and defense policy.” The lack of bipartisan consensus over the role of the U.S. in world affairs is contributing to an executive-legislative “tug-of-war” over foreign policymaking (Rosner, 1995). Interest groups have to consider the political dynamics of the policymaking environment when planning their lobbying strategies.

The post-Cold War foreign-policy system has been subjected to increased pluralism and partisanship. The rise in the number of societal actors—most of which are ethnic interest groups—speaks to the development of a pluralist policymaking process. Contention between the executive and legislative branches has increased the potential for gridlock in foreign policymaking (Peake, 2002). A topic that remains relatively under examined is the impact of partisanship in executive-legislative relations on the strategic choices of interest groups. If ethnic groups continue to have influence over policies concerning U.S. relations with their
ancestral homelands, and considering the diversity and number of ethnic groups active today, their influence over U.S. foreign policy could be substantial and wide-ranging. In order to better understand the sources of influence for ethnic groups and how they operate in a partisan era, it is important to ask the right questions. This begins by asking how the executive-legislative context shapes the lobbying strategies of interest groups.

**Research Question**

This thesis examines the impact of the executive-legislative context on interest-group strategies in foreign-policy lobbying. Party control of the executive and legislative branches is a factor determining the level of concurrence or contention in the policymaking environment (Conley, 2002). Of particular interest in this study is the role of divided government, which has been institutionalized in the contemporary American political landscape (Fiorina, 1992). In a political system where power is divided and shared between the branches, interest groups have two separate yet interdependent decision-making arenas to consider. If party control is significant in shaping the dynamics of executive-legislative relations, it is likely that a change from unified to divided government or vice versa would influence the strategies interest groups use to access the political process. Thus, the relationship between the shift in party control of government and group lobbying strategies is the focus of this thesis. It seeks to contribute to the understanding of how the policymaking context impacts the lobbying behavior of interest groups. This study attempts to offer insights into how interest groups adjust their lobbying strategies in response to partisanship in relations between Congress and the Presidency.
The composition of ethnic groups suggests that they are part of a larger constellation of citizen groups active in the Washington lobbying scene (Berry, 1999). The focus on ethnic groups in this thesis allows for the examination of the strategies citizen groups use to influence foreign policymaking. The engagement of these groups suggests the potential for increased democratic participation in the foreign-policy process. Thus, if pluralism in U.S. foreign policy is shaped by the activism of groups reliant on “citizen lobbyists” as a source of power, there needs to be expanded knowledge in how groups with grassroots mobilization potential exert influence over the political process.

The focus on grassroots groups must consider the strategies used to mobilize mass political action. Instances where group leaders mobilize their members to pressure policymakers are known as outside lobbying (Gais & Walker, 1991; Kollman, 1998). This strategy may be effective in demonstrating mass political pressure, but coordinating grassroots action could be quite labor intensive. First, the challenge for groups reliant on grassroots mobilization is overcoming the dilemma of collective action (Olson, 1965). Outside lobbying is effective only if large numbers of members are willing to pursue political action. Second, policymakers have to be convinced that outside pressure directed at them is credible. There is the possibility that grassroots pressure may appear contrived, or what is known as “astroturf” building (Smith H., 1988, pp. 245-51). Outside lobbying is not only aimed at lawmakers, but it is also directed internally—more specifically—mobilizing its members to pursue grassroots actions. Ethnic groups are effective in demonstrating mass political pressure because of the connection members have regarding issues concerning their ancestral homelands. Shaping public awareness of an issue not only facilitates the mobilization of its members to undertake political action, it also signals to policymakers the
intensity of group preference on that issue. The variable that mediates between the use of outside lobbying to mobilize grassroots action and its effectiveness in pressuring policymakers is issue salience. In order to develop a better understanding of how grassroots action could be converted into political influence, it is important to recognize the message group leaders convey to their members and policymakers. Thus, issue salience is posited as a variable that examines the assumptions of the role interest groups play in shaping public opinion in foreign policymaking.

Outside lobbying is proven to be a multipurpose strategy for grassroots groups. Another element to outside lobbying is the ability for grassroots activities to simulate electoral mobilization (Wright, 2003, p. 90). The logic here is that if group members are willing to engage in grassroots activities on behalf of a cause, it is most likely that they would take their preferences on that issue into the voting booth come election day. Especially for groups dependent on their membership bases for political influence, demonstrating the electoral clout of their members is an effective strategy to achieve political access since legislators desire to be re-elected (Mayhew, 1974). There are ethnic groups with populations concentrated in key swing states that would make elected officials responsive to their concerns. While mobilizing mass electoral pressure may be more effective toward Congress, there are opportunities where electoral politics could influence presidential decision-making. The importance of the “battleground states” in recent presidential races could explain why presidents may become responsive to constituent pressure, even on foreign-policy matters. Examining the strategies grassroots groups use to access the political process must consider group decisions to mobilize mass electoral pressure. Thus, electoral
pressure is posited as a variable that examines the strategies group leaders use to “activate” foreign-policy issues of concern in an election campaign.

**Plan of Organization**

Chapter Two reviews the literature animating the topic of this thesis. This chapter is divided into five sections, each focusing on a particular body of literature. The first section reviews the studies concerning the role of interest groups, with particular attention to ethnic groups, in U.S. foreign policymaking and the strategies use to achieve political access. This is followed by a review of the literature concerning the impact of party control on policymaking between the executive and legislative branches. The third and fourth sections examine studies on interest-group relations with the Presidency and Congress, respectively. The fifth section focuses on studies related to the electoral connection in U.S. foreign policy.

Chapter Three develops the theoretical framework for this thesis. This chapter proposes a theory on the impact of the executive-legislative context on group selection of lobbying strategies, and in particular, the decisions by groups to target the executive and/or legislative decision-making arenas. The aim is to develop a better understanding of how the policymaking context shapes the lobbying strategies of interest groups. Three variables are posited in constructing this theoretical framework: party control of government; issue salience; electoral pressure. At least one testable hypothesis is offered for each variable to guide the theory testing in the empirical case-study chapters.

Chapter Four proposes the research design for this study. The goal of this chapter is to connect the theoretical framework with empirical research. The case-study method is used to achieve this goal. The discussion is divided into three parts. Part One discusses the
opportunities and challenges in the use of case-study methods in social science research. Part Two focuses on case selection; and Part Three discusses the use of primary and secondary sources that comprise the data collection.

Chapters Five, Six, and Seven constitute the empirical portion of the thesis, based on the case study entitled, “Clinton, Interest Groups, and the U.S. Politics of NATO Enlargement.” The focus is on the role of the coalition of ethnic groups representing Americans of Central and Eastern European origins in the U.S. decision to enlarge NATO. Due to the duration of the NATO enlargement case (1993 to 1998), it is divided into three chapters, each focusing on a particular stage of development. Chapter Five focuses on the events from September 1993 to November 1994, beginning with the Clinton administration’s internal deliberations over the pros and cons of enlarging NATO and ending with the 1994 midterm election that resulted in the Republicans winning control of both houses of Congress. Chapter Six begins with the start of the 105th Congress in January 1995 and the House Republicans’ plans to legislate on the Contract with America, including NATO enlargement, and ends with the 1996 presidential election where significant attention was devoted to the NATO enlargement issue in the battleground states of the Midwestern and Northeastern U.S. Chapter Seven focuses on the administration’s campaign to secure the “advice and consent” of the U.S. Senate. It begins in March 1997 with the establishment of the administration’s NATO Enlargement Ratification Office and ends with the final Senate vote on 30 April 1998.

Chapter Eight provides the conclusion for this study. It is divided into three parts. Part One presents the findings of this study. Part Two draws upon the implications of this study and discusses how this study might contribute to our understanding of societal
influences in U.S. foreign policymaking. Part Three offers suggestions for further research related to the role of societal groups in the politics of NATO enlargement in U.S. and non-U.S. political settings.
CHAPTER TWO

INTEREST GROUPS AND THE DOMESTIC POLITICS OF FOREIGN POLICY:
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature animating the topic of this thesis. It is divided into five sections, each examining a particular body of literature. The first section focuses on the role of interest groups in U.S. foreign policymaking, with attention to ethnic groups and the strategies interest groups use to achieve political influence. The second section focuses on the literature related to the impact of party control of the executive and legislative branches on the policymaking process. The third and fourth sections focus on the literature related to interest-group relations with the White House and Congress. The fifth section assesses the literature on the electoral impact of foreign policy. Thus, it is important to discuss the contributions made by these five sets of literature and how they could be further developed to address the topic of this thesis.

**Interest Groups and U.S. Foreign Policymaking**

While interest groups may not be as prolific in foreign policy compared to their counterparts in domestic policy, interest-group activism in foreign policymaking is substantial nonetheless. The constellation of groups is quite diverse. Tierney (1993; 1994, pp. 116-23)
identified various types of groups involved in foreign policymaking, ranging from economic interests, ethnic groups, advocacy and cause groups, and foreign governments. Groups listed here are involved on a wide range of issues, but just how influential are they? Jacobs and Page (2005), in their study on the influence of domestic actors in U.S. foreign policy, found that business groups, followed by labor unions, “exercise strong, consistent, and perhaps lopsided influence on the makers of U.S. foreign policy” (p. 120). The number of interest groups in the U.S. foreign-policy system speaks not only to their diversity but the varying degrees of influence they exert over policymakers.

Of particular interest in this study is the role of grassroots groups. Ethnic and advocacy and cause groups constitute organizations with grassroots bases. International security issues have inspired calls for group activism. Knopf (1998) examines the impact of protest movements on U.S. arms control policy of the Cold War era. However, significant attention is paid to the role of ethnic groups in U.S. foreign policy. The edited volumes by Said (1981) and Ahrari (1987) and the study by Watanabe (1984) represent major works on the topic of the Cold War era. The post-Cold War era has witnessed a resurgence in the literature on ethnic-group activism in U.S. foreign policy. Ambrosio (2002, p. 8) wrote: “the end of the Cold War created unprecedented opportunities for interest groups in general, and ethnic identity groups, in particular, to influence the formulation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy.” The significant works that have emerged after the Cold War and within the past decade include: Haney and Vanderbush (1999); Tony Smith (2000); Ambrosio (2002); Mearsheimer and Walt (2007); Paul and Paul (2009). The central focus of these studies concerns ethnic-group activism on behalf of U.S. relations with their ancestral homelands. While some studies discuss the role of ethnic groups more generally, others focus indepth on
the activism of particular groups, for example, the role of the Greek-American lobby on the Turkish arms embargo (Watanabe, 1984), the Cuban-American lobby on U.S. Cuba policy (Haney & Vanderbush, 1999), and the Israel lobby on U.S. Middle East policy (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). The literature in this area underscores the rising influence of ethnic groups in U.S. foreign policy, especially after the Cold War.

There is consensus in the literature that the rise in ethnic-group activism has less to do with America as a nation of immigrants and more on the nature of the American political system. Tony Smith (2000, p. 101) wrote: “to understand the impact ethnic groups can have on American foreign policy is to understand the character of the democratic system in which they operate.” The source of ethnic-group influence does not rest only on the group’s identity, but more importantly, on how the group operates in a political system where power is divided and shared between the executive and legislative branches. Group access was aided in part by changes in the structure of Congress in the 1970s (Tierney, 1994). The increase in the number of congressional committees and assertiveness in foreign policy created more access points for groups to exert influence over the policy process. The literature has largely identified this development as the reason for the rise in ethnic-group influence in foreign policymaking. Haney (2010, pp. 1678-9) wrote: “A more open governmental system, especially a more powerful and yet more porous Congress, and the breakdown of the Cold War consensus about the proper course for the ship of state, gave real incentives for interest group activism in foreign policy—a large portion of which was driven by ethnic groups.”

A basis for ethnic groups establishing influence is the development of “mutually supportive relationships” with policymakers (Haney, 2010, p. 1682). Watanabe (1984, p. 53)
pointed out that “the existence of a mutually compatible relationship between important segments of the policymaking structure and organized ethnic groups . . . is the surest basis for an effective ethnic group voice.” The likelihood of group cooperation with policymakers hinges on what Rubenzer (2008) termed the “strategic convergence criterion.” He wrote: “ethnic identity groups enjoy success to the degree that their proposals conform to existing U.S. strategic priorities” (p. 171). Haney and Vanderbush (1999, p. 345) made a similar point: “The proposition is that ethnic interest groups will be more successful if they promote policies that the government already favors.” Paul and Paul (2009, p. 131) observed that “the degree to which an ethnic lobby is defending the status quo may have a profound effect on the lobby’s influence.” Developing a degree of compatibility in policy preferences with policymakers is an important step for ethnic groups to establish political influence.

Another issue to consider is the decision-making arena(s) targeted by interest groups (Bard, 1991). Since policymaking is divided and shared between the executive and legislative branches, groups have two separate yet interdependent decision-making arenas to target. Schlozman and Tierney (1986, p. 390) observed: “The existence of multiple institutional arenas implies that there are numerous points at which influence might be exerted.” Interest groups are likely to find the path of least resistance to enter the policy process. Haney and Vanderbush (1999, p. 345) pointed out that “ethnic interest groups are more likely to be successful when the policy in question requires a congressional role since it is more porous than the executive.” However, the literature on interest groups place greater emphasis on the branch of government that may not be the most important in foreign policymaking. Unlike Congress with its multiple access points, gaining access to the executive branch may be difficult since it is more insulated from public pressure. Paul and
Paul (2009, p. 205) observed: “While ethnic groups may find they are pushing on an open door on Capitol Hill, many are pushing against a closed door at the White House. Access is the key to influence in a pluralistic society, and most ethnic groups don’t have access to the White House.”

One of the shortcomings of the literature on the role of interest groups in foreign policymaking is its emphasis on group relations with Congress but not with the branch of government central to foreign-policy formulation. The study of interest groups in foreign policy could be strengthened by examining ways groups develop access to the White House, a step taken in this study. The literature has yet to examine the factors that would lead interest groups to target Congress but not the executive, executive branch but not Congress, both branches with equal emphasis, or both branches albeit with varying degrees of emphasis. Taking the research on interest groups in this direction would provide a substantive contribution to the literature. However, developing this line of inquiry begins with a review of the literature on the strategies interest groups use to develop political access.

Strategies of Interest Groups

The choice of strategies is important in determining how interest groups develop political access. As Tierney (1993, p. 99) observed, “the influence of interest groups hinges on what they do—what sorts of political activities they pursue and how they marshal and allocate their resources to advance their policy preferences.” There is consensus in the research that the strategic choices of interest groups are tied to their organizational characteristics. Schlozman and Tierney (1986, p. 161) pointed out: “Perhaps the most important factor affecting an organization’s strategic choice of lobbying techniques is its resources.” The
study by Gais and Walker (1991) found that “the choice of political strategies is ultimately connected to the group’s prospects for organizational maintenance” (p. 106).

The focus on grassroots groups in foreign policymaking must consider the use of outside strategies. For groups with large membership bases, the ability to mobilize at the grassroots level is a major source of political influence. Gais and Walker (1991) found that citizen action groups are more likely to pursue outside strategies. In their words, “groups engaged in conflict that are organized around a cause or idea and depend heavily upon small financial contributions from large numbers of members scattered across the country are most likely to adopt an outside strategy based upon various forms of mass political persuasion” (p. 120). Outside strategies are intended to bring mass pressure onto policymakers. Kollman (1998, p. 3) defined outside lobbying as “attempts by interest group leaders to mobilize citizens outside the policymaking community to contact or pressure public officials inside the policymaking community.” In essence, “outside lobbying forces policymakers to pay attention” (p. 76). Baumgartner et al. (2009, p. 125) raised a similar point that “grassroots activities communicate to policymakers the salience of an issue as well as whether there are likely to be electoral implications associated with activity on the issue.” The point that grassroots lobbying simulates electoral mobilization is important here (Wright, 2003, p. 90).

Groups dependent on grassroots mobilization as a source of political influence are sensitive to organization of their membership bases due to the challenge of coordinating collective action (Olson, 1965). Outside lobbying is effective only when group leaders are able to mobilize their members to engage in mass political action. As Furlong (2005, p. 292) observed, “a large and diverse membership has certain advantages when groups lobby the legislative branch, and these types of groups are more likely to use grassroots efforts in their
lobbying techniques because of their ability to influence legislators who are responsive to electoral pressures.” Size matters in grassroots campaigns. The ability to convert group resources into political influence also rests on the concentration or dispersion of a group’s membership base. Schlozman and Tierney (1986, p. 161) wrote: “The size and geographical distribution of an organization’s membership may also dictate its choice of lobbying strategies; if there are many members spread throughout most congressional districts, and if the organization has the means to mobilize them, a campaign of grass roots pressure may be an option.” Paul and Paul (2009, pp. 102-3) made a similar point: “the degree of geographical concentration of an ethnic group may influence the group’s ability to gain access to members of Congress,” while “a dispersed population allows an ethnic community to target many members of Congress through a grassroots campaign since . . . members of Congress desired to be reelected.”

Much of the focus so far has been on the literature examining the impact of internal organization of groups on their choice of lobbying strategies. The next set of literature examines the impact of the governmental context on the strategic choice of groups. The study by Victor (2007) found that “legislative context indeed affects groups’ decisions about the conditions under which they should choose to lobby using direct [inside] and indirect [outside] tactics” (p. 841). The detection of political opposition or gridlock in the legislative environment seems to be an indicator as to when groups resort to outside strategies. Baumgartner et al. (2009) also found that groups lobbying “uphill” are more likely to outside lobby than groups defending the status quo. Thus, “Challengers make more direct contacts with policy makers, and they engage in more conflict-expanding strategies designed to draw attention to the issues they cared about” (p. 164). These studies support a time-honored
tradition in U.S. politics that groups on the losing side of a policy battle are more likely to use conflict-expansion strategies (Schattschneider, 1960).

McQuide (2010) examines the impact of party control of American political institutions on group lobbying behavior. His study found that “interest groups do take into consideration partisanship as they consider which institutions to lobby as they seek to maximize their resources” (p. 16). Unlike studies that focus on group strategies in a legislative context (Hojnacki & Kimball, 1998; 1999), McQuide takes into account the executive-legislative context. His finding that interest groups are more likely to target the White House during divided government under a Democratic administration provides support for the observation that interest groups have become more partisan in response to the changing political landscape. Partisanship is a major factor shaping not just the dynamics of the policymaking environment but the orientation of interest groups as well. McQuide confirmed the significance of partisanship on group strategic choices. However, his study does not fully consider shift in party control of government, that is, the change from unified to divided government or vice versa. Interest groups sometimes have to shift their strategies in response to the executive-legislative context. His study opens a new line of research in this area but more work needs to be done. For example, why would groups target a Democratic White House during divided government? What is significant about divided government that would propel groups to target the executive branch? These questions provide the starting point to further our understanding on the behavior of interest groups in an executive-legislative context.

Further research is needed in this genre of study. The starting point for the inquiry is the significance of party control of government on group adaptation of lobbying strategies.
In other words, why would interest groups change lobbying strategies when there is a shift from unified to divided government or vice versa? The studies mentioned thus far have yet to pinpoint the variables that explain the cause and effect. It is important to understand the policymaking dynamics of executive-legislative relations that could influence the strategic choices of interest groups. The next set of literature takes a step in this direction.

**Parties and Policymaking**

The publication of Mayhew’s (1991) *Divided We Govern* inspired much of the debate regarding the impact of party control on policymaking. Studies have challenged Mayhew’s findings that party control of government has minimal impact on legislative productivity. These studies found that party control matters, and its effect on policymaking is quite significant. The potential for policy gridlock is higher when party control of the executive and legislative branches are split. Binder (1999, p. 527) found that “divided government are prone to higher levels of gridlock.” And as Sinclair (2000, p. 153) noted: “When control of the presidency and the Congress is divided, higher partisanship tends toward gridlock.” The study by Edwards, Barrett and Peake (1997) found that “*divided government inhibits the passage of important legislation*” (p. 562; emphasis in original). The focus of research is on the impact of party control in the passage of “significant” legislation. It is here where there is noticeable difference in the performance between unified and divided governments. Unified government provides the “heavy lifting” to get significant legislation passed (Coleman, 1999, p. 828). While the emphasis in these studies is on domestic legislation, the impact of divided government and the heightened potential for gridlock is also felt in foreign policymaking. Peake (2002, p. 80) found that “when government is divided, presidents are forced to oppose a greater number of foreign policy bills initiated by Congress.”
Deliberations over significant legislation are more likely to create executive-legislative contention, especially when party control of government is divided. The politics of agenda control is important in this respect (Steger, 1997, pp. 19-22). The potential for overlapping agendas is lower when the president’s co-partisans are not in control of the levers of power in Congress. There is greater potential for a “contested agenda” as opposed to “shared policy agenda” when there is divided party control of the Presidency and Congress (Conley, 2002, pp. 8-9). Central to the analyses on party control and policymaking is the increased likelihood of presidential opposition to congressional initiatives during divided government. Edwards, Barrett and Peake (1997) and Edwards and Barrett (2000) found that presidents are more likely to oppose legislation proposed by the opposition party controlling Congress. The competition over space on the congressional agenda is a significant factor explaining executive-legislative contention during divided government. Party control of Congress shapes the ability of presidents to assert control over the congressional agenda. This is in line with studies on the institutional presidency positing the importance of party composition of Congress in determining the legislative success rates of presidents (Edwards, 1989; Bond & Fleisher, 1990).

This set of literature does not consider the role of interest groups in the executive-legislative context. It is focused on the impact of partisanship in policymaking. But one of the factors that could explain the relationship between party control and group lobbying strategies is shift in agenda-setting dynamics. The study by Bader (1996) pointed out that divided government promotes congressional assertiveness as the need to highlight policy differences between the branches increases. This point is not lost on foreign policymaking as “opposition parties in Congress have forwarded their own foreign policy agendas” (Peake,
2002, p. 68). There is a literature on congressional assertiveness in foreign policymaking to substantiate this claim (Tierney, 1994; Scott, 2002), for example. Divided government reinforces partisanship, and it is under this condition where policy differences between the branches are most visible. A shift in agenda-setting dynamics could determine the branch of government interest groups seek to target. This idea will be further developed in the next chapter. But as of now, the emphasis is on reviewing the literature animating the topic of this thesis. The next set of literature examines relations between interest groups and the presidency. This relationship is important to interest groups involved in foreign policymaking, yet research in this area is still in its embryonic stage.

**Connecting the Presidency with Interest Groups**

Presidential interaction with interest groups is consistent with the strategy of “going public” (Kernell, 2007). However, presidents have to adjust their strategies of public leadership in response to increased partisanship in the policymaking environment. As Cohen (2010, p. 35) observed, “rather than focus their energies on the mass public writ broadly, presidents have shifted much of their leadership efforts to narrower segments of the public, in particular, their party base, interest groups, and localities.” Interest groups have to diversify their strategies in seeking access to a branch of government well insulated from public pressure. Groups could gain access to the executive branch by demonstrating their clout in Congress, or to put it in another way, providing legislative lobbying services for the administration may be an effective way for interest groups to gain White House access (Schlozman & Tierney, 1986, p. 330). Loomis (2009, p. 405) pointed out that “being in a position to be used by the president may stand as an effective lobbying technique to a group that depends on maintaining solid ties to the executive branch” (emphasis in original). Rather than resorting to the traditional
“outside-in” approach to lobbying, like-minded groups could be targets of the White House “inside-out” strategies, whereby groups become part of a continuing reciprocal relationship with executive-branch officials (Tenpas, 2005). For groups lobbying foreign-policy decisions, this is an effective way to establish political influence.

The presidency is very much at the forefront in the development of the interest-group system. Mark Peterson (1992a, p. 237) wrote: “Modern presidents have the institutional means, and have demonstrated the willingness, to influence the interest-group system.” This points to the potential for more direct interaction between the administration and outside groups. And as Cohen (2010, p. 45) observed, “presidents may also aid the establishment of new interest groups who will then become their political and policy allies.” The development of the Cuban American National Foundation to assist the Reagan administration in developing a hardline policy toward Cuba is a foreign-policy example consistent with this observation (Haney & Vanderbush, 1999).

The focus of the literature on the White House institutional links with interest groups is on the development of the Office of Public Liaison (OPL). Although not formally established until the Nixon administration, Pika (1987) examines presidential liaison with interest groups during the Franklin D. Roosevelt and Truman administrations. His other study (Pika, 2009) chronicles the development of the OPL from the Nixon to George W. Bush administrations. The informality of the organization of the Executive Office of the President means that the task of interest-group liaison often spills into other jurisdictions, for example, the Office of Legislative Affairs (Collier, 1997). The main focus of the literature concerns presidential-group interaction on domestic policy, with the exception of Wilson (1997) that examines group liaison on foreign-policy matters.
The studies by Mark Peterson added analytical rigor to the research on presidential liaison with interest groups. The objective of mobilizing interest groups, according to Peterson (1992b, p. 612), is “to fuse presidential and congressional perspectives by transforming the goals and resources of like-minded interest groups into the political assets of the White House.” Building congressional and public support for presidential initiatives are the primary objectives. Peterson proposed four patterns of presidential-group interaction. Changes in administration objectives and the congressional context are key factors shaping the presidential mobilization of groups. As Peterson (1992b, p. 623) observed, “As changes occur in the larger political context and in presidential needs and objectives, the character of liaison activities and their prosecution adjust accordingly.” It is clear that presidential liaison with groups is a strategy adapted to respond to increased partisanship not just in the legislative environment, but also within the interest-group system. An example Peterson provided was the Reagan administration’s mobilization of ideologically-compatible groups to secure passage of a conservative agenda, a strategy dubbed “Defund the Left” (Peterson, 1992b, pp. 617-9; Peterson & Walker, 1991). A more recent example discussed in Loomis (2009) is the project spearheaded by super lobbyist Grover Norquist to transform the K Street corridor into a bastion of interest groups sympathetic to conservative causes.

1 By combining breadth (inclusive or exclusive) with focus (programmatic or representational), there are four possible executive-group interaction patterns. The administration develops inclusive ties for programmatic needs to build consensus, in other words, to forge “inclusive relationships with diverse groups in order to bring them together in coalitions supporting the president’s programmatic objectives” (Peterson, 1992a, p. 234). The second pattern posits developing inclusive ties with a representational focus to “solidify the president’s image and prestige among the general public” (1992b, p. 614). The third pattern posits the administration developing exclusive ties with a programmatic focus to forge a “governing coalition,” that is, “mobilizing groups philosophically attuned to the president’s policy positions as part of a legislative coalition-building effort to support the administration’s policy initiatives” (1992a, p. 234). The fourth pattern combines exclusive ties with a representational focus to emphasize outreach, “using the presidency as a place for groups outside of the political mainstream and with little previous access to government to gain a representational voice” (p. 234).
In foreign-policy lobbying, interest groups have to target the executive branch because it is central to foreign-policy formulation and initiation. More research is needed to investigate the executive-branch’s links with organized interests in the making of foreign policy. Do the institutional links differ between domestic and foreign policies? And if so, which White House institutions or executive agencies are involved in liaising with interest groups on foreign-policy issues? Another area of research is the strategies interest groups use to penetrate the executive branch. Since the executive branch is insulated from public pressure compared to Congress, interest groups may have to consider different techniques of influence. The executive branch is not subjected to partisan politics because it is under one-party control. However, it is not immune to bureaucratic politics (Allison & Halperin, 1972). How do organized interests take advantage of division within the administration to exert influence over policymaking? The issues raised here provide further avenues of research on the interaction between the executive branch and organized interests.

The next section reviews the literature on the role of interest groups in Congress. The legislative branch is a preferred target for interest groups due to its permeability. Congress may not be central to the foreign-policy process compared to the executive branch. But on certain foreign-policy issues, Congress becomes the decision-making arena in the final stage of the policy process, for example, the role of the Senate in ratifying treaties. Congress has a role to play in foreign policymaking, and thus a review of the literature on interest groups and Congress is in order.

Interest Groups and Congress
The rise in congressional activism in foreign policymaking in the 1970s spawned a literature examining this topic (Franck & Weisband, 1979; Lindsay & Ripley, 1992; Ripley & Lindsay, 1993; Lindsay, 1994). With the exception of Tierney (1993; 1994) and Lindsay and Ripley (1992, pp. 425-6) that focus on the influence of interest groups in foreign policymaking, the study of interest groups and Congress is primarily focused on domestic policymaking. An area of attention in the literature concerns the techniques interest groups use to develop access in Congress. Studies by Tierney (1992), Richard Smith (1995), Wright (2003), and Wilcox and Kim (2005) discuss the strategies used by interest groups, including inside strategies to provide information to legislators and outside strategies aimed to mobilize the citizenry for political action. The strategies interest groups use may not differ much between domestic and foreign policymaking. However, with the rise in congressional assertiveness in foreign policy after the Cold War, there is impetus to probe deeper into the influence of societal pressure, and in particular, the role of interest groups in foreign policymaking. A focus on legislative lobbying on foreign-policy issues may reveal that the techniques of influence groups use do indeed differ from their domestic-policy counterparts. Research on interest-group involvement in Congress is well developed, but by no means exhausted. Further research on legislative lobbying of foreign policy is welcomed.

**Elections and Interest Groups**

Identifying the sources of influence for grassroots groups begins with how they use their membership bases. As Paul and Paul (2009, p. 102) observed, “the main political power of grassroots organizations is linked directly to their main resource: people, or more specifically, people who vote.” An objective of outside lobbying is to signal to policymakers “how credible is an interest group’s claim that a particular issue is salient to large number of
A point Wright (2003, p. 90) made is that grassroots action simulates electoral mobilization. The use of mass political action demonstrates to policymakers the electoral consequences associated with an issue. While it is apparent that domestic issues are more likely to be contentious and play a more prominent role in deciding electoral outcomes, a set of literature has emerged that examines the electoral impact of foreign-policy issues. How foreign-policy issues could be “activated” in election campaigns is an area of interest since electoral mobilization is a source of political influence for grassroots groups.

This set of studies challenged the view that foreign-policy issues have minimal impact on voter choices of presidential candidates. Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida (1989) found that “many presidential candidates seem to place considerable emphasis on foreign affairs,” and they are not “waltzing before a blind audience” (p. 123). The study by Nincic and Hinckley (1991) found that “across a wide range of voters and of electoral conditions, foreign policy issues provide a second substantial influence in interpreting the election result” (p. 351). Anand and Krosnick (2003) examined the electoral impact of foreign-policy issues in the 2000 presidential election and found “clear indications that a wide range of foreign policy attitudes exists in the general public and appears to shape presidential candidate evaluations of many citizens” (p. 67). There is consensus among these studies that foreign-policy issues do come into play in presidential elections.

Three conditions need to be satisfied in order for voter to evaluate presidential candidates based on their foreign-policy positions. According to Aldrich et al. (2006, p. 478), “First, the public must actually possess coherent beliefs or attitudes . . . about foreign policy. Second, voters must be able to access these attitudes in the context of an election.
Third, the major party candidates must offer sufficiently distinct foreign policy alternatives so that voters who have accessed their available attitudes have a basis on which to make a choice.” The concept here is attitude accessibility and it is dependent on the level of salience or importance voters attach to an issue. And thus, the higher the level of importance voters attach to an issue, the attitudes of the voters become more accessible. Lavine et al. (1996) examine the relationship between personal and national issue salience to attitude accessibility and found “a close correspondence between the personal importance of issues and the accessibility of attitudes on those issues across the full salience continuum” (p. 312). There is consensus that attitude accessibility is a key variable in determining whether foreign-policy issues could be activated in an election campaign. Aldrich et al. (1989, p. 135) wrote: “The greater the foreign-defense attitude accessibility and the greater the distinctiveness of the candidates, the more important foreign and defense issues will be in voter choice.” Furthermore, Anand and Krosnick (2003, p. 67) found that “the most pronounced effects of foreign policy issues on candidate preferences occurred when the candidates took distinct positions and when voters both attached great importance to the issue and possessed a great deal of knowledge.”

Research in this area could be further developed and include how interest-group leaders shape the attitude accessibility of their members by mobilizing grassroots action. A key indicator of attitude accessibility is the inclination of the public to pursue mass political action. Outside lobbying not only demonstrates the intensity of group preferences on a certain issue, but more importantly, it signals to policymakers that there are likely electoral consequences (Kollman, 1998; Wright, 2003). Anand and Krosnick (2003, p. 38) observed that “personal importance seems to be an effective indicator of cognitive, affective, and
behavioral involvement in an issue, the hallmarks of membership in an issue public.” The logic here is that if members of an interest group are willing to pursue political action on behalf of an issue, then they are likely to vote based on their preferences on that issue. For groups with large membership bases, establishing the “electoral connection” is a source of political influence. This begins by understanding how leaders shape the attitude accessibility of their members to enhance the electoral clout of their organizations. This is a step needed to connect the study of group strategies with research on the electoral impact of foreign policy.

**Conclusion**

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides the first step in developing the research agenda on the executive-legislative impact in group strategies on foreign-policy lobbying. Within the constellation of interest groups involved in foreign policymaking, the bulk of the scholarly attention has been devoted to the role of ethnic groups. The centrality of ethnic interests in the study of societal influences in U.S. foreign policy demands greater attention to the role of grassroots organizations. The use of outside strategies by these groups does raise implications regarding grassroots activism and increased pluralism in the foreign-policy process. It is thus important to focus in particular on the strategies of grassroots groups in foreign-policy lobbying.

The institutional context is a major factor determining the selection of lobbying strategies. The literature is more focused on interest groups developing access in Congress than the executive branch, which is more insulated from public pressure but central to foreign-policy formulation and initiation. An issue the existing literature has yet to consider
is the impact of party control of American political institutions on interest-group strategies. Thus, it is important to investigate how the change from unified to divided government or vice versa influence the strategic choices of interest groups. On certain foreign-policy issues, it is necessary to think in terms of the executive branch and Congress as interdependent in the policymaking process. Interest groups do need to consider this when planning their lobbying strategies.

The primary source of political influence of grassroots groups is their members. Grassroots groups demonstrate their electoral clout by outside lobbying. The potential by group leaders to convert electoral mobilization into actual political influence is supported by studies that examine the electoral implications of foreign policy. Attitude accessibility of group members is based on their propensity to pursue political action on behalf of a cause. The use of outside lobbying could raise the electoral consequences associated with an issue. A point demonstrated in the literature on interest-group strategies is that there are many ways “outside lobbying forces policymakers to pay attention” (Kollman, 1998, p. 76). Deploying mass electoral pressure through outside lobbying is one of them. Further investigation along these lines would entail how group leaders raise the electoral stakes of an issue by shaping the importance or salience of an issue to their members.

This chapter discusses the main points in the literature animating the topic of this thesis. The next chapter takes some of the ideas and suggestions offered here to develop the theoretical framework on the executive-legislative impact on group strategies in foreign-policy lobbying.
CHAPTER THREE

INTEREST GROUP STRATEGIES IN THE EXECUTIVE-LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter establishes the theoretical framework for this study. The underlying assumption of this study is the development of “mutually supportive relationships” between interest groups and policymakers (Haney, 2010, p. 1682). Since U.S. political power is divided and shared between the executive and legislative branches, there are two separate yet interdependent decision-making arenas. While most of the attention in the study of interest groups has been devoted to their relations with Congress (Smith, 1995; Wright, 2003), the role of interest groups, especially in foreign policymaking, also needs to examine how groups develop access to the executive branch, which may be the most important in foreign-policy formulation (Paul & Paul, 2009). A challenge facing interest groups in foreign-policy lobbying is seeking political access to a branch of government that is insulated from public pressure compared to the porous nature of the legislative arena (Loomis, 2009).

An interest group’s decision to enter the policy arena begins with its choice of lobbying strategies. The study by Gais and Walker (1991) examines the impact of organizational types on groups’ strategic choices. In shifting from the internal to external
dimensions, Victor (2007) examines the impact of the legislative context on interest groups’
decisions to pursue direct (inside) or indirect (outside) strategies. The decision to target
Congress and/or the executive branch is important since interest groups must utilize their
finite resources to maximize their lobbying effectiveness. This is the path of research taken
by McQuide (2010) examining how party control of the executive and legislative branches
influences group decisions to target the respective decision-making arenas. This study takes
the ideas of Victor and McQuide further by examining how change in party control of
government impacts the choice of strategies by interest groups to access the executive and
congressional decision-making arenas.

The studies mentioned above focus on interest groups in domestic policymaking. But
as groups become more involved in foreign policymaking (Tierney, 1993), it may be
necessary to consider whether studies developed to explain the behavior of interest groups in
domestic-policy lobbying are applicable to foreign policy. If not, an area of research is the
consideration of ways in which theories of group lobbying could be shaped to better explain
their growing involvement in foreign policymaking. This begins by understanding interest
group’s choices to lobby particular decision-making arenas and the strategies used to achieve
political access.

Developing strategic compatibility between interest groups and policymakers is the
basis by which groups enter the policy process. The analogy of “pushing on an open door”
(Haney, 2010, p. 1682) is appropriate here since interest groups are more likely to be
successful when they are lobbying issues supported by policy entrepreneurs from either
branch of government. It is apparent that policymakers pushing an initiative need public
support to generate legislative influence. Policy entrepreneurs in this case would most likely
open the door for interest groups and be receptive to their policy advice. This creates a fairly
cost-effective way for interest groups to enter the policy process. While attention is focused
on presidential leadership of the public arena (Kernell, 2007; Cohen, 2010) and mobilization
of interest groups (Peterson, 1992b; Pika, 2009), it is also possible for congressional leaders
to “go public” and mobilize interest-group support, especially when conditions are ripe for
them to propose initiatives that offer policy differences from those by the administration
(Tierney, 1994, pp. 110-1).

The existence of two separate yet interdependent decision-making arenas implies that
there are times when both branches would produce complementary as well as competitive
policy agendas. However, with the frequent occurrence of divided control of the executive
and legislative branches, the potential for a “contested agenda” and policy gridlock looms
large (Conley, 2002, p. 8; Peake, 2002). The impact of executive-legislative contention on
group decisions to target one or both decision-making arenas is a question that has not been
thoroughly investigated, especially in foreign policymaking. As international issues become
more politicized and partisan, the domestic political environment may become more critical
in shaping the dynamics of foreign policymaking and determining policy outcomes. Thus, a
theoretical framework is proposed in this chapter on the impact of partisanship in executive-
legislative relations on the lobbying strategies of interest groups.

**Party Control Matters**

Divided party control of the executive and legislative branches has been a fixture in the
contemporary American political landscape (Fiorina, 1992). Recent studies (Edwards,
Barrett, & Peake, 1997; Edwards & Barrett, 2000; Sinclair, 2000) have challenged Mayhew’s
(1991) findings that party control plays an insignificant role in determining legislative productivity. There is greater potential for a “contested agenda” as opposed to “shared agenda” during split-party control of the Presidency and Congress (Conley, 2002, pp. 8-9). Divided party control creates incentives for congressional leaders of the opposition party to promote initiatives that accentuate the differences in policy priorities between Congress and the administration. As Bader (1996, p. 5) observed, “Divided government highlights partisan and institutional differences.” In other words, it tends to reinforce partisanship. There is less incentive to follow the president’s lead when an assertive Congress is capable of setting the agenda—if the president is even initiating a congressional agenda at all. For example, in the 104th Congress (1995-96) when President Clinton confronted a Republican-controlled Congress, there was no presidential initiative on the congressional agenda (Edwards & Barrett, 2000, p. 122).

When the president does not offer legislative leadership, members of Congress look to their leaders for policy guidance. There is a shift in momentum when Congress is doing much of the heavy lifting in placing its initiatives on the congressional agenda, especially if the opposition party has a commanding majority over the president’s co-partisans. An assertive Congress looking for issues to differentiate itself from the president creates opportunities for interest groups to provide policy advice, and congressional leaders’ need for public support for their initiatives creates a basis for the development of strategic compatibility. Interest groups are strategic in their selection of lobbying venues and divided government provides opportunities for groups to enter the policy process. Since there is less incentive for Congress to delegate to the executive in setting the agenda under divided
government, and assuming congressional and group preferences are aligned, it is expected that interest groups are more likely to target Congress under divided government.

Unified party control of Congress and the Presidency does increase executive-legislative concurrence since there is a higher potential for a “shared agenda” (Conley, 2002). For example, in the 103rd Congress (1993-94) when Clinton faced a Democratic-controlled Congress, presidential initiatives occupied 40.5% of the total 37 bills on the congressional agenda, as opposed to zero during the Republican-controlled 104th Congress (Edwards & Barrett, 2000, p. 122). The data clearly shows the impact of party control of Congress in shaping presidential legislative leadership (Bond & Fleisher, 1990; Edwards, 1989). Unified government reduces the potential of Congress setting its own agenda as the levers of power are controlled by the president’s co-partisans. Policy differentiation decreases when Congress and the presidency are controlled by the same party. Since Congress is not looking for policies that would distinguish itself from the administration, a less assertive Congress would present fewer opportunities for outside groups to provide policy advice. There is less need for policy ingenuity when Congress takes the lead from the president in setting the legislative agenda. Without an assertive leadership in Congress willing to challenge the president, there is greater likelihood for Congress to delegate to the administration during unified government. The executive branch is more likely to retain its role as the center for policy formulation when there is a high level of executive-legislative concurrence. Since there is more incentive for Congress to delegate to the executive under unified government, and assuming executive and group preferences are aligned, it is expected that interest groups are more likely to target the presidential administration under unified government.
The impact of divided government may be more pronounced in foreign policymaking than its domestic counterpart. Since the executive branch is central to the foreign-policy process, an assertive Congress willing to challenge the president would intensify the “tug-of-war” between the branches (Rosner, 1995). Studies on congressional entrepreneurship on foreign policy (Carter, Scott, & Rowling, 2004; Carter & Scott, 2009) indicate that members of Congress choosing to lead usually come from the ranks of the opposition party. The “politics past the edge” thesis (DeLaet & Scott, 2006, p. 183) is more likely to hold under divided government when there are incentives for both Congress and the White House to preserve their institutional prerogatives by highlighting partisan differences over foreign-policy issues. The point made here is that foreign-policy issues could be partisan given the executive-legislative context. Bowling and Ferguson (2001, p. 183) wrote: “divided government may impede policymaking in certain policy areas, have no effect in others, and perhaps even increase activity in other areas as partisans try to gain electoral advantages through credit-claiming or assigning blame.” Divided government provides incentives to intensify inter-branch competition over foreign policymaking.

Another issue worth mentioning is different configurations of divided government. Since the legislative branch is divided into two chambers, it is possible for unified party control of both chambers of Congress or divided control between the House and Senate. Divided government under a split Congress provides an interesting twist to the research on the relationship between party control and policymaking. There is the potential for both unified and divided party control between the executive and legislative branches when Congress is split. There could be unified party control between the president and House, but divided control with the Senate, or vice versa. The impact is felt in policymaking depending
on which chamber becomes the decision-making arena. For example, the Senate is constitutionally tasked with ratifying treaties but not the House. A split Congress creates the potential for intra-branch conflict since both chambers are controlled by different parties. Thus, gridlock is more likely to occur within the legislative branch than between Congress and the White House. This creates a much more complex picture in executive-legislative relations, and how party control of Congress is configured would influence the lobbying behavior of interest groups. As Bowling and Ferguson (2001, p. 184) observed, “Each of these configurations might influence output in different ways. Divided government may mean the legislature is unified against the executive (inter-branch or simple divided government), or it may mean that the legislature is itself divided (intra-branch or compound divided government).”

If party control could shape the executive-legislative dynamics of the policymaking process, and which decision-making arena(s) interest groups seek to target, then it is possible to hypothesize the type(s) of lobbying strategies interest groups use in response to a particular policy environment. It is safe to assume that under divided party control the policy process would be more conducive to conflict expansion (Schattschneider, 1960). This is a time-honored strategy in American politics whereby groups seek to change the terms of the policy debate by bringing new actors into the process. Outside lobbying is a conflict-expansion strategy since groups are mobilizing grassroots support (Kollman, 1998). Demonstrating the potential for mass mobilization is aimed at influencing a large number of policymakers, thus outside lobbying is most likely to be successful in targeting Congress. Are there opportunities when groups outside lobby the executive branch? It is not well understood how the executive-legislative context shapes group decisions to outside lobby, or
which decision-making arena(s) groups target with such strategies. Since the focus of this study is on grassroots groups lobbying foreign-policy decisions, how they marshal their resources and use strategies of mass persuasion merits attention.

A proposition made here is that divided government motivates groups to outside lobby. But taking this proposition one step further requires asking which decision-making arena would be most conducive to outside lobbying. Since Congress is more likely to take the lead in setting the congressional agenda under divided government, interest groups would take the path of least resistance and target the legislative branch. Congress is the most ideal lobbying venue and the need to influence a large number of lawmakers creates the optimal situation for interest groups to target the legislative arena with outside lobbying. As much as interest groups pressure Congress to seek access to the policy process, congressional entrepreneurs also need outside support from groups to generate legislative influence for their initiatives. Interest groups pressure legislators to adopt their preferences, but policymakers also need groups to outside lobby on their behalf to demonstrate a groundswell of support for their policy initiatives.

While the “pressure” aspect of outside lobbying is well documented (Kollman, 1998), the “support” aspect of it should also be considered a strategy whereby interest groups develop access to the policy process. When policy differences between the branches are exacerbated by divided government, this increases the incentive for interest groups to develop grassroots support for congressional initiatives, which in turn, could be used to pressure the administration. Groups are able to capitalize on the executive-legislative divide to increase their lobbying clout. Building congressional support and using it to demonstrate the gap in policy preferences could be an effective strategy toward the executive branch.
Since outside lobbying is aimed at influencing a large number of legislators, a hypothesis advanced here is: *Interest groups are more likely to outside lobby Congress.*

**Issue Salience**

Outside lobbying is aimed at mobilizing grassroots support and using it to mount pressure on policymakers. It is a strategy used by interest groups to demonstrate the potential for mass political action. As Schlozman and Tierney (1986, p. 185) observed, “an organization’s ability to convince policymakers that an attentive public is concerned about an issue and ready to hold them accountable for their decisions may be critical in determining policy outcomes.” This is an asset for groups with large membership bases “since a large grassroots network can be instrumental in influencing Congress” (Paul & Paul, 2009, p. 199). A primary function of outside lobbying, according to Kollman (1998, p. 67), is signaling “how credible is an interest group’s claim that a particular issue is salient to large number of constituents.” In this context, he defines salience “as the relative importance people attach to policy issues” (p. 9). Outside lobbying is effective in conveying to policymakers the willingness of a group’s members to pursue political action on behalf of a cause (Paul & Paul, 2009, pp. 112-8). While outside lobbying “forces policymakers to pay attention” (Kollman, 1998, p. 76), policymakers also need grassroots pressure to build support for their initiatives. However, their ability to convert public support into legislative influence is contingent on salience of the issue (Canes-Wrone, 2001; Canes-Wrone & de Marchi, 2002). Thus, issue salience is posited as a variable shaping the interaction between interest groups and policymakers.²

² The term “policymaker” is used to identify officials inside government with policymaking potential. In the U.S. political system, the president is the most important policymaker. But there are other non-elected
Outside lobbying is a multipurpose strategy since it both signals the salience of an issue to policymakers and shapes public awareness toward that issue. The intensity of an interest group’s preference is usually hidden from public view unless the decision is taken by group leaders to outside lobby. The propensity to outside lobby is a measure of group members’ willingness to pursue political action on behalf of a cause, thus demonstrating to policymakers the electoral implications associated with the issue (more on this later). Group preferences become more visible and accessible to policymakers when the issue becomes more salient. The study by Edwards, Mitchell and Welch (1995) found that “the salience of issues to the public directly affects their impact on the public’s evaluation of the president” (p. 121). If interest groups could shape salience of an issue by mobilizing its members to outside lobby, then policymakers would take notice of such actions and adjust their preferences accordingly.

The discussion so far focuses on the “pressure” aspect of using outside lobbying to communicate issue salience to policymakers. But developing a better understanding of group-policymaker interaction requires the “support” side to lobbying as well. There is a long-standing tradition of studies on interest groups that focus on the information exchange aspect of group-government relations (Salisbury, 1969). Lobbying in this regard could be considered “legislative subsidy” (Hall & Deardorff, 2006) since the information exchanged could determine how lawmakers vote on an issue depending on where interest groups stand. Outside lobbying is consistent with this aspect of research. Kollman (1998, p. 70) observed:

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executive branch officials (i.e. the National Security Advisor, Secretaries of State and Defense, etc.) who are important foreign-policy actors. Members of Congress (House and Senate) have the ability to shape policy by casting votes and amending legislation. Both elected and non-elected officials constitute the constellation of policy actors in the U.S. political system. The focus of this study, however, will be on elected policymakers from both the executive and legislative branches, since they seem to be more susceptible to pressure from interest groups.
“The salience of policy issues among constituents, however is something policymakers do not tend to know about precisely, and most importantly, something about which they look to interest groups to inform them issue by issue (emphasis in original). Lawmakers are dependent on interest groups for information on issues that are less salient yet may have implications on their electoral prospects. It is on these issues groups are more likely to flex their muscles and outside lobbying would be most effective in shaping the preferences of lawmakers.3 While Kollman (1998) focused on the pressure side of outside lobbying, this study argues that this strategy could be a basis for an exchange of influence between groups and policymakers. Issue salience is the variable mediating this exchange.

If policy entrepreneurs need legislative influence to get their initiatives through Congress, then the need for interest-group support to make an issue more salient becomes greater. There is low probability that the mass public could be activated to generate support for non-salient policy issues because the general public usually does not care deeply enough to pursue political action. Studies have shown that increasing public awareness on non-salient issues have a positive effect on legislative influence (Canes-Wrone, 2001; Canes-Wrone & de Marchi, 2002). This is why interest groups through outside lobbying could provide such valuable services for policymakers. Even the appearance of grassroots mobilization, in most cases, would be sufficient in converting issue salience into legislative influence. There is greater appreciation when outside lobbying is a genuine expression of grassroots support; but as Kollman noted, it could also be a strategy of deception. He wrote:

3 Kollman (1998, p. 71) recognizes the problem of endogeneity in outside lobbying as a costly signaling strategy. Groups signal the intensity of their preferences to policymakers, but their actions increase salience of the issue. So “how do they communicate a piece of information that is endogenous to their own actions?” It is important to note that what interest groups are signaling is change in issue salience. Policymakers demand this information to know how they should respond. He wrote: “The piece of information being signaled may be changing over time, but if the group is signaling the movement of that piece of information over time, then we are on firm conceptual ground.”
“Outside lobbying can communicate salience information even when a large number of groups have the ability to manufacture astroturf, or what looks a lot like grass-roots support even when it does not exist” (1998, pp. 76-7).4

Outside lobbying could be a valuable tool for policymakers seeking to generate legislative influence for their initiatives. The role of interest groups in shaping public awareness on non-salient issues makes it likely that outside lobbying would force policymakers to pay attention. Thus, a hypothesis regarding the “supply” aspect of outside lobbying by interest groups is advanced here: *Policymakers are reliant on interest groups to mobilize grassroots support for issues lacking public awareness.*

**Electoral Politics**

A major source of influence for groups with grassroots mobilization potential is “people, or more specifically, people who vote” (Paul & Paul, 2009, p. 102). The use of electoral pressure is linked to issue salience because demonstrating the intensity of a group’s preferences to policymakers implies its members are willing to pursue political action.

Grassroots action serves to inform lawmakers what to expect on election day. Wright (2003, p. 90) observed: “The principal value of grassroots mobilization, and one of the reasons that grassroots campaigning has become increasingly common and important, is that it simulates electoral mobilization” (emphasis in original). Grassroots pressure is aimed primarily at Congress “because electoral cycles render legislators periodically accountable to their constituencies, [and] they are a natural target for the expression of citizen opinion”

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4 Hedrick Smith (Smith H., p. 251) in *The Power Game* made a similar point regarding grassroots/astroturf lobbying: “Some members of Congress, especially those from marginal districts or junior members, are afraid to risk alienating large constituencies. They dare not ignore any major pressure group, even if its pressure looks contrived. For mass mail usually shows organizational force, and that threatens to touch the politician’s lifeline of survival and reelection.”
(Schlozman & Tierney, 1986, p. 185). Two factors motivating the decision-making of legislators are sensitivity to constituency concerns and desire for re-election (Mayhew, 1974). It is at the congressional level where groups are more likely to develop “symbiotic relationships” with members of Congress to access the political process (Haney, 2010, p. 1682; Watanabe, 1984, p. 53). Exerting electoral pressure is contingent on the ability of groups to organize grassroots campaigns, and this depends on group membership presence. Groups with members concentrated in selected districts or states are limited in their ability to target a large number of lawmakers compared to groups with members dispersed across the country (Paul & Paul, 2009, pp. 102-112). But targeting limited number of lawmakers may be more effective, especially if they are congressional leaders, for example, chairs of committees. Groups with concentrated membership bases are more effective since they are better equipped to focus their lobbying on selected members of Congress, and in particular, those in “gate keeping” positions.

Using electoral pressure to influence policies may be effective on Congress, considering there are 535 elected officials (435 representatives and 100 senators), and congressional elections occur every two years. However, the most important actor in the foreign-policy process is the most immune to public pressure. As Paul and Paul (2009, p. 203) observed in their study on ethnic lobbies and U.S. foreign policymaking, “the actors identified as having the greatest effect on foreign policy are the very actors that are most immune to ethnic group influence because they are the most difficult for ethnic groups to access” (emphasis in original). The number of elected officials interest groups could target decline from 535 to 1 (the president and vice-president running on the same ticket) when groups decide to lobby the executive branch. The ability to influence presidential decision-
making by mobilizing mass electoral pressure is limited since presidential election occurs only once every four years. Since the president is the only official elected nationally, no group has the resources to influence presidential contests in all 50 states. However, groups with membership bases concentrated in selected states or districts may be able to play the “electoral card” since they are able to exert influence in the “battleground states,” which have become more significant in determining the outcomes of recent presidential elections. How candidates stand on issues of importance to “grassroots activists” would affect how they vote. Group leaders would like to establish this connection in the minds of presidential candidates when campaigning in their membership strongholds. As presidential elections become more closely contested, the need to respond to narrow interests, and in particular, preferences of interest groups in key swing states become greater. One of the issues this study seeks to address is when outside lobbying is effective in influencing presidential decision-making. There are moments when the president is sensitive to public pressure. That opportunity arrives when the president faces re-election during the fourth year of his first term.

Presidential contests are normally not decided by foreign-policy issues. However, studies have challenged the prevalent view that foreign policy has minimal impact on voter evaluation of presidential candidates (Aldrich, Sullivan, & Borgida, 1989; Nincic & Hinckley, 1991; Anand & Krosnick, 2003). Voters who regard foreign-policy issues as salient are more likely to evaluate presidential approval based on his handling of foreign affairs (Edwards, Mitchell, & Welch, 1995). Interest groups have more leeway over shaping public attitudes on issues of low salience, and group leaders amplifying the importance of an issue to their members could increase an issue’s traction in an election campaign. Members of interest groups may constitute important voting blocs. And as single-issue voters, how
they vote may depend more on the candidates’ stances on salient issues than traditional party affiliation. As Paul and Paul (2009, p. 63) observed, “elected officials may come to see ethnic groups as single-issue voters, where issues salient to the ethnic groups are more critical than partisanship in determining the voting decisions for members of the ethnic groups. In this sense, ethnicity may be a wedge, allowing an enterprising politician to pry a group away from their ‘normal’ voting patterns.”

If presidential elections are being decided in battleground states where candidates have to appeal to narrow segments of the public, and assuming that foreign-policy issues are important in these communities, it is possible for presidential candidates to devote significant attention to foreign issues while campaigning in those states or districts. Outside lobbying functioning as a form of electoral simulation is important here since demonstrating grassroots action implies groups are “activating” an issue in an election campaign. In other words, grassroots action serves as “rehearsal” for election. It is under these circumstances where the domestic imperative may outweigh the strategic objectives of a foreign-policy decision. Presidents facing the electorate “do bend foreign policy issues to their own short-term electoral interests, delinking the conduct of foreign affairs from the international conditions to which it is the apparent response” (Nincic & Hinckley, 1991, p. 352). Goldgeier (1999, p. 10) observed: “The policy entrepreneur may be pushing a policy forward both because he is thinking of strategic interests and because he is thinking about partisan politics and winning elections.”

Interest groups seek to expand their influence by mobilizing their members into action, and the lead-up to an election is the most opportune time to employ such tactics. The point made here is that outside lobbying “simulates electoral mobilization” (Wright, 2003, p.
If group members are willing to pursue political action on behalf of a cause, it is likely that their evaluation of candidates would be based on their positions on issues group leaders and members deem salient. In states where members of interest groups constitute important voting blocs, foreign-policy issues that may not be important nationally but salient in those communities, may be influential in shaping the issue positions of presidential candidates. They are more likely to pay attention to the concerns of interest groups if their members have significant presence in states that could decide the outcome of a presidential election. Groups with members concentrated in closely-contested states are in a better position to raise the electoral stakes of an issue. Therefore, a hypothesis is advanced regarding the relationship between group lobbying and elections: Electoral pressure is likely to be a source of influence for interest groups in states where members constitute key voting blocs.

Summary

This chapter develops the theoretical framework of this study by positing three variables to explain the influence of party control of government, issue salience, and electoral pressure on the lobbying strategies of interest groups. The first variable posits the importance of unified or divided party control of the executive and legislative branches on group decisions to target the respective decision-making arenas. Since there are incentives for Congress under divided government to propose initiatives that highlight institutional and partisan differences, a shift in agenda-setting dynamics would likely create opportunities for interest groups to promote their preferences on the congressional agenda. A hypothesis is advanced here: Interest groups are more likely to target Congress under divided government.
However, since the presidential administration is more likely to retain its role as the center of policymaking, and the president’s co-partisans are in control of the levers of power in Congress, there is less incentive to differentiate between congressional and presidential agendas under unified government. A hypothesis is advanced here: *Interest groups are more likely to target the executive branch during unified government.*

Another issue concerning the impact of the institutional context is the choice of lobbying strategies. Groups with grassroots connection are primed to outside lobby because it is a strategy aimed at influencing a large number of policymakers, and thus is a useful strategy toward Congress. But when is outside lobbying effective toward the executive branch, which is important to foreign-policy formulation but insulated from public pressure? The conflict-expansion potential of the policymaking process under divided government is a major factor. It is under this situation where interest groups are more likely to drum up support for congressional initiatives to highlight policy differences. A hypothesis is advanced here: *Interest groups are more likely to outside lobby Congress.*

The second variable posits the assumption of interest groups increasing issue salience through outside lobbying. Raising issue salience is needed to signal policymakers the intensity of an interest group’s preferences and the likelihood an issue would have electoral consequences. While the “pressure” aspect of outside lobbying is well-established, this study seeks to develop the “supply” side as well. Interest groups are more likely to exert leverage over non-salient issues, but it is on these issues where outside lobbying would prove crucial in assisting policymakers’ attempts in generating legislative influence. A hypothesis is advanced here: *Policymakers are reliant on interest groups to mobilize grassroots support for issues lacking public awareness.*
The third variable posits the assumption of electoral pressure as an interest-group strategy. A focus on foreign-policy lobbying must consider ways groups attempt to influence presidential decision-making through strategies of mass persuasion. A president seeking re-election may be responsive to public pressure and creates a situation where decision-making may be subjected to the influence of electoral politics. The attentive public does have informed opinions about foreign policies, and they are able to evaluate presidential candidates based on their positions. Demonstrating the intensity of their preferences is credible only if group members are willing to pursue political action. Grassroots mobilization approximates what is likely to occur on election day. Groups with members concentrated in battleground states are more likely to exert pressure in closely-contested elections. Issues salient to these groups are likely to receive attention during the course of the presidential election campaign, and these are opportunities when candidates would be sensitive to interest-group concerns. A hypothesis is advanced here: *Electoral pressure is likely to be a source of influence for interest groups in states where members constitute key voting blocs.*

The next chapter focuses on the research design of this study.
CHAPTER FOUR

DESIGNING QUALITATIVE METHODS IN THE STUDY OF INTEREST GROUPS: A RESEARCH STRATEGY

The objective of the research design is to connect the theoretical framework with the empirical research. The case method is used in this study to establish this connection. This method is known for its use in “small-n” designs in which a limited number of cases are employed. The use of case studies in social-science research, either within- or across-case analyses, implies some form of comparison. As Levy (2002, p. 433) observed, “nearly all case studies involve comparisons, whether they be explicit or implicit, across cases or within cases.” The aim of this chapter is to discuss the use of case-study methods and how they

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5 Case-study methods remain a dominant approach in international-relations research. In their review of case-study methods, Bennett and Elman (2008, p. 499) cited a study which found that 95% of U.S. IR researchers use qualitative analysis as their primary or secondary methodology.

6 There is controversy over the definition of “case” in social-science research. George and Bennett (2005, pp. 17-18) defines a case as a “class of events.” Gerring (2004, p. 341) defines it as “an in-depth study of a single unit . . . where the scholar’s aim is to elucidate features of a larger class of similar phenomena.” Eckstein (1975, p. 85; Levy, 2002, p. 434) defines a case as “a phenomenon for which we report and interpret only a single measure of any pertinent variable.” The use of case studies today is more complex and may involve multiple measurements of “pertinent” variables. But as Levy (2002, p. 434) observed, “Precisely how one defines ‘case’ depends in part on the purposes of inquiry.” The use of “case” in this study is consistent with George and Bennett’s definition, seeking a theoretically-informed explanation of a specific “class of events” within a foreign-policy event.
could help achieve the research objectives of this study. It is divided into three sections: Opportunities and Challenges in Case-Study Methods; Case Selection; and Data Collection.

**Opportunities and Challenges in Case Methods**

Case-study methods bring together the investigative techniques of historians and social scientists in an integrated approach. As George (1979, p. 61) observed: “To this end, some features of the historian’s methodology for intensive, detailed explanation of the single case are combined with aspects of the political scientist’s conception of the requirements for theory and his procedures for scientific inquiry.” Case-based methods are useful for studies investigating social relationships in which there exists limited number of observations. And in some instances, a “small-n” design may be the only approach available. Haney (1997, p. 28) observed that “many of the problems and processes that we study in world politics and foreign policy are limited in number, and therefore the application of statistical procedures and construction of large-N studies is prohibited.” The study of interest groups in foreign policymaking fits this category.

The study of foreign policy is interdisciplinary and situated between domestic politics and international relations (Milner, 1997). As Hudson (2007, p. 9) observed, foreign-policy analysis provides “a natural bridge from IR [international relations] to other fields, such as comparative politics and public policy.” The use of case-based methods in foreign-policy studies is well established and best exemplified in George and Smoke’s (1974) *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, which pioneered the method of structured, focused comparison. However, the diversity in the research agenda on foreign-policy studies has not been met with the use of diverse methods of social inquiry. In the symposium in *Comparative...*
Political Studies, Bennett and Elman (2007) noted that while there is a well-balanced use of quantitative and qualitative methods in studies on international relations and comparative politics, however, much of the research in American politics use quantitative-based methods. Recent research on U.S. politics has seen a greater tilt toward the use of quantitative methods than other fields of political science. Pierson (2007, p. 150) documented that over 80% of the articles published in the leading journals on U.S. politics use statistical methods while less than 10% of them use qualitative methods. “Qualitative work on American politics has not vanished—but it has been pushed to the periphery” (Pierson, 2007, p. 146). The lack of diversification in research methods in American political science could partly explain why the IR discipline has been more influential in shaping foreign-policy studies, largely due to the discipline’s greater appreciation for diverse use of research methods. Levy (2007, p. 198) noted: “What is different about the study of American politics as compared to comparative and international politics is that qualitative scholars in American politics have been less inclined to contribute to this dialogue and that cross-method dialogue has had much less impact on empirical research in American politics.” Research in U.S. politics could make a greater contribution if it were more receptive to the use of qualitative-based methods across the various subfields, and not just confined to public policy. The aim of this study is to integrate the understanding of interest-group behavior in U.S. politics to foreign policymaking, and the mode of inquiry used is the case method.

One of the shortcomings of “small-n” research designs is susceptibility to selection bias. As Collier and Mahoney (1996, p. 59) observe: “Selecting extreme cases on the dependent variable leads the analyst to focus on cases that, in particular ways, produced biased estimates of causal effects.” Studies that exhibit “biased” effects are limited in their
applicability to theory development and thus every researcher should take precaution to avoid it. However, there is debate over what exactly constitutes selection bias and whether its effects on qualitative research are as damaging as initially claimed. Some argue that the effects of selection bias are different between qualitative and quantitative research. George and Bennett (2005, p. 22) point out: “Selection biases are indeed a potentially severe problem in case study research, but not in the same ways as in statistical research.” Selecting cases on the dependent variable could “serve the heuristic purpose of identifying the potential causal paths and variables leading to the dependent variable of interest” (p. 23). While there is consensus among researchers that “extreme” forms of selection bias should be avoided at all costs, there does not seem to be a solution in sight to what seems to be an intractable problem in social-science research. The aim here is not to offer the “perfect design” but to underscore the approach to qualitative research used in this study that, in my opinion, avoids some of the common pitfalls associated with selection bias.

Two of the strategies used in this study to mitigate selection bias are the incorporation of variance in the variables and use of within-case analysis, such as process tracing. King, Keohane, and Verba (KKV) (1994) recommended that incorporating variance in the research design could avoid selection bias. This is in line with the task George and Bennett (2005, pp. 84-5) recommend: Describing Variance in Variables. In their words, “The researcher’s decision about how to describe variance is important for achieving research objectives

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7 The issue of selection bias is discussed in King, Keohane, and Verba’s (KKV) (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry (DSI)*. Studies that suffer from selection bias tend to underestimate the causal relationship, thus limiting their explanatory scope. Reviews and scholarly attention following the publication of *DSI* have raised issues whether KKV conflated selection bias with other issues in research design. For example, there is disagreement between KKV and Collier and Mahoney (1996) over whether the “no-variance” issue is an “extreme” form of selection bias (KKV, p. 129). While KKV issue a stern warning about research designs with no variance, Collier and Mahoney, however, regard selection bias and no variance as two separate issues. It is permissible to have no variance if the study is not designed to investigate co-variation (1996, pp. 72-75).
because the discovery of potential causal relationships may depend on how the variance in these variables are postulated” (p. 84). Variance is incorporated in this study to avoid an “extreme” form of selection bias when variables assume set values (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994, p. 129). One of the benefits of case-study methods and their contributions to theory development is the consideration of ways variables could assume different values.

For example, the “party control” variable assumes that same- or split-party control of the executive and legislative branches impacts the politics of agenda control. Whether Congress or the presidential administration takes the lead in the policymaking process depends on whether there is unified or divided government. The agenda-setting dynamics between the branches, as hypothesized, could determine which decision-making arena(s) interest groups seek to target. It has been common in contemporary U.S. politics to witness change in party control of Congress during the middle of a presidential term. The change from unified to divided government (or vice versa) accounts for the variance in the “party control” variable, and the transition from the Democratic-controlled 103rd Congress (1993-94) to the Republican-controlled 104th Congress (1995-96) is observed in this study. Although this did not come into play in this study, divided government could assume different formations. One possible formation is a split Congress, the House and Senate controlled by different parties. The House and Senate are tasked with different responsibilities, for example, the Senate is constitutionally mandated to ratify treaties—and in the ratification stage—the upper house becomes the decision-making arena. The possibility of shift in party control of the House and/or Senate and when that occurs in the policy process is important in identifying various formations of divided government.
Another research strategy implemented in this study is the use of process tracing. It is through process tracing the investigator attempts to establish a causal relationship between the dependent and independent variables. As George and Bennett (2005, p. 206) observed: “The process-tracing method attempts to identify the intervening causal process—the causal chain and causal mechanism—between the independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable.” Process tracing is made “through uncovering traces of a hypothesized causal mechanism within the context of a historical case or cases” (Bennett & Elman, 2006, p. 459). It is important to note that the causal mechanism—a key component in process tracing—is not directly observable but is inferred. Levy (2002, p. 444) wrote: “It is more useful to think of causality as an analytical construct, a component of our theories rather than something that can be inferred directly from empirical observation.” Thus, process tracing is a “powerful method of inference” compatible with various case-study methods (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 30).

The emphasis on connecting the steps in a causal process is what makes process tracing a popular analytical tool in studies on policymaking. As Haney (1997, pp. 12-13) observed: “One often-used strategy for studying the processes of policy-making has been the in-depth case study. The goal here is to examine the details of a historical case and from that attention to detail extract lessons about how the process of policy-making works.” Levy (2002, p. 443) agrees that process tracing is useful in testing causal relationships, “particularly those involving propositions about what goes on inside the ‘black box’ of

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8 There is contention whether within-case analysis, such as process tracing, could help mitigate selection bias. Collier and Mahoney (1996, p. 71) argue that “within-case analysis is a valuable tool, but not for solving the problem of selection bias.” Bennett and Elman (2006, p. 461) disagree: “the selection bias critique does not apply in the same way to inferences drawn from within-case process tracing or causal process observations.” It is possible that selection bias applies differently to qualitative research and the effects of selection bias could be moderated with the proper use of within-case analysis.
decision-making and about the perceptions of actors.” Process tracing is also useful for cases in which the identification of “inflection points” or critical junctures in the decision-making process is necessary to test hypothesized relationships. Key steps in the policy process need to be traced “through an intensive analysis of the evolution of a sequence of events within a case” (Levy, 2002, p. 443).

Process tracing is a useful analytical tool for this study because it guides the reconstruction of the decision-making process. King, Keohane, Verba (1994, p. 227) wrote: “Process tracing will then involve searching for evidence—evidence consistent with the overall causal theory—about the decisional process by which the outcome was produced.” Reconstructing the policy process is the key element in the use of case-based methods in foreign-policy analysis. Testing the proposed theory requires identifying the turning points of the case to assess whether interest groups were successful in accessing the political process, and whether they are able to influence policy outcome(s). It is next to impossible to “control” for a multitude of internal and external influences, especially in a pluralist policymaking setting such as the U.S. Bureaucratic politics, executive-legislative relations, and electoral pressure are just some of the variables that need to be accounted for when assessing the domestic politics of U.S. foreign policy. The case design takes into account the possibility of equifinality, that is, the potential for multiple explanations for the same outcome. George and Bennett (2005, p. 98) wrote: “analysts should be sensitive to the possibility that several considerations motivated the decision.” Process tracing is a powerful tool in foreign-policy analysis because the investigator must be cognizant of multiple causal paths within the same case. Thus, “Process tracing encourages the investigator to be sensitive to the possibility of equifinality” (p. 215). The case used in this study is divided
according to the key turning points of the decision-making process, identified as the major
domestic political developments within the given timeframe. The next section discusses
more in-depth the case-selection component of the research design.

**Case Selection**

As George and Bennett (2005, p. 83) observed, “case selection should be an integral part of a
good research strategy to achieve well-defined objectives of the study.” Since this study is
based on a single-case research design, case selection becomes an even more important
decision. A case should be selected based on its relevance to the research question and rigor
needed for theory development (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). An issue surrounding case
selection is the number of cases to employ in a research design. There is contention over the
utility of single-case designs, that is, when n = 1. King, Keohane and Verba (1994) offered
somewhat contradictory advice in the use of single cases. George and Bennett (2005, p. 32)
wrote: “As DSI argues, studies involving only a single observation are at a great risk of
indeterminacy in the face of more than one possible explanation, and they can lead to
incorrect inferences if there is measurement error.” However, by “maximizing leverage over
research problems,” that is, by increasing the number of observations from a single case,
problems cited above could be mitigated (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994, p. 208).

The concern here is with the number of observations, not the number of cases. Rarely
is a single case confined to the observation of a variable that does not assume other values.
Studies constructed in this manner faces problems of indeterminacy and measurement error,
but they also suffer from an “extreme” form of selection bias, the “no variance” issue.
Describing variance in variables is important because it implies there are multiple
observations within a single case. Process tracing would also facilitate the discovery of variance, even when \( n = 1 \). As Levy suggested, case method always imply some form of comparison, either within-case or across-case. Within-case analysis is implemented in single-case designs. Eckstein’s (1975) definition of “case” predicated on “a single measure of any pertinent variable” is not applicable when a single case could yield multiple observations from a set of variables. Even if the case is designed to investigate one variable, by observing its variance over time, it is possible to increase the number of observations. As KKV (1994, p. 208) observed, “what may appear to be a single-case study, or a study of only a few cases, may indeed contain many potential observations, at different levels of analysis, that are relevant to the theory being evaluated.”

The most appropriate case-selection strategy for this study is Eckstein’s (1975, pp. 113-23) “crucial case studies.” Levy (2008, p. 12) wrote: “Most/least likely designs are based on the assumption that some cases are more important than others for the purposes of testing a theory.” This study calls for the use of a “least-likely case,” which imposes a “hard test” on the proposed theory. This criterion is based on what Levy (2002, p. 442) termed the “Sinatra inference,” that is, “if the theory can make it here, it can make it anywhere” (Bennett & Elman, 2007a, p. 173). The investigator should have expectations that the case selected imposes tough conditions on the proposed theory, thus making it highly probable that the theory would be refuted. But if the empirical evidence of the case provides support for the theoretical assumptions, then the explanatory power of the theory is strengthened (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994, p. 209). As George and Bennett (2005, pp. 121-2) observed: “Theories that survive such a difficult test may prove to be generally applicable to many types of cases, as they have already proven their robustness in the presence of countervailing
mechanisms.” By imposing a single-case research design, the case selected in this study has to do a significant amount of “heavy lifting” to assess the theoretical assumptions behind the role of interest groups in foreign policymaking.

What constitutes a least-likely case? It is beyond the scope of this study to compare the behavior of interest groups in both domestic and foreign policymaking. Wildavsky’s (1966) “two presidencies” thesis suggested that the domestic politics of foreign policy may be different than its domestic counterpart, owing largely to increased presidential power and a deferential Congress in the foreign-policy arena. He wrote: “The United States has one president, but it has two presidencies; one presidency is for domestic affairs, and the other is concerned with defense and foreign policy.” Wildavsky also noted that while there is a “stable structure” of interest groups involved in domestic issues, the interest-group structure on foreign affairs is “weak, unstable, and thin rather than dense.” However, in a reappraisal of the “two presidencies,” Wildavsky and Oldfield (1989) found that the thesis was “time and culture bound.” Presidential power in the foreign-policy arena eroded relative to the rise of an assertive Congress, and there was an increase in “domestic groups with foreign policy agendas.” In a rebuttal to the original statement, both domestic- and foreign-policy arenas have merged into one—“a realm marked by serious partisan divisions in which the president cannot count on a free ride” (p. 58).

If the institutional context has changed to prevent the president from scoring easy victories in foreign-policy decisions, does this indicate that presidential power in foreign policy has declined? It may be premature to dismiss the thesis entirely. A revival in the research on the “two presidencies” (Canes-Wrone, Howell, & Lewis, 2008) does point to the fact that the president continues to hold considerable influence over foreign policy (Peterson,
The possibility of the existence of two different policymaking environments—one for domestic and the other for foreign policy—does imply that interest groups are likely to behave differently in both policy arenas. When both executive and legislative branches are considered equals in domestic policymaking, interest groups are able to exercise greater latitude. However, when the structure becomes hierarchical in foreign policymaking, this setup would inhibit interest-group activism. Studies on the role of interest groups in foreign policymaking must have evidence that they are successful in accessing the branch of government insulated from public pressure and yet central to foreign-policy formulation. The ability to penetrate Congress would not be considered a least-likely scenario since it is a branch of government most opened to public pressure, and most interest groups have access to the legislative branch. Cases that exhibit interest-group activism in foreign policy and success in gaining access to the executive branch have the qualities to impose a “tough test” for the proposed theory. Thus, specifying the conditions which allow interest groups to gain access to the executive branch would constitute a least-likely case for this study if those conditions are satisfied.

Once the decision is made to test the proposed theory with a foreign-policy case, the next step concerns the particular case to use. The foreign-policy domain may be more diverse than its domestic counterpart. What is more striking about foreign policy is the diversity of the decision-making processes. Considerable debate exists over the definition of crisis and non-crisis situations. However, distinction could be made regarding the organization of the decision-making process. During crisis, “attention and importance shift to small decision-making groups” (Haney, 1997, p. 19), while non-crisis policymaking, which normally involves structural and strategic issues, demands interaction between the
executive and legislative branches (Lindsay & Ripley, 1993, pp. 18-22). Studies on crisis
decision-making normally focus on executive-centered groups insulated from societal
pressure (Allison & Zelikow, 1999). However, this study focuses on a case in which the
decision-making is subject to executive-legislative interaction, thus providing opportunities
for interest groups to influence the policy process (Skidmore & Hudson, 1992).

Another issue is selecting the type of foreign-policy issue in which interest groups
would normally not be expected to play a major role. Interest groups are active on
“intermestic” issues such as trade agreements. Business organizations and labor unions are
normally front and center in these policy deliberations (Jacobs & Page, 2005). However, this
study is focused on grassroots groups influencing international security issues. The least-
likely criterion could be satisfied if the involvement of grassroots groups were influential in
shaping the policy outcomes concerning these issues. There is precedence in this area of
study. For example, Knopf (1998) shows the involvement of citizen movements in
influencing U.S. arms control policy during the Cold War. The edited volume by Krepon
and Caldwell (1991) takes into account the role of public opinion and interest groups in the
politics of arms-control treaty ratification. Even a case of international security needs to
consider domestic politics on the decision-making. As Putnam (1988, p. 432) observed: “A
more adequate account of the domestic determinants of foreign policy and international
relations must stress politics: parties, social classes, interest groups (both economic and non-
economic), legislators, and even public opinion and elections, not simply executive officials
and institutional arrangements.”

One of the issues in international security where domestic politics would be decisive
in affecting its outcome is the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
(NATO). Since its establishment in 1949, NATO has undergone several rounds of enlargement during the Cold War era: Greece and Turkey (1952); West Germany (1955); Spain (1982). NATO expanded eastward after the Cold War with admission of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary (1999), Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Romania (2004), and Albania and Croatia (2009). According to Article 11 of the NATO (Washington) Treaty, “The Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.” Thus, amendments to the NATO Treaty requires the unanimous consent of all NATO member states, including the “advice and consent” of the U.S. Senate. Admitting new members may not be a decision of peace or war, but the U.S. may come to their defense should they come under attack, as underscored in Article Five of the NATO Treaty. U.S. commitment to the defense of its NATO allies is one of Washington’s most important security obligations on the global stage.

Domestic politics plays an important role since congressional action, and in particular, the two-thirds vote in the Senate is needed for ratification of NATO enlargement. The importance of domestic politics provides a more objective assessment of presidential power in foreign policymaking in relation to Congress and society at large. There is expectation for executive-legislative interaction, and since Congress is involved, public opinion and interest groups would play a role to influence the decision-making in both the executive and legislative arenas. Since policymaking proceeds according to the legislative process and is divided between both chambers of Congress, interest groups are expected to utilize the permeability of the legislative branch to exert policy influence. NATO

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enlargement as a possible case study satisfies all the criteria to examine the impact of executive-legislative dynamics on the behavior of interest groups in foreign policymaking.

The case selected focuses on the Clinton administration’s decision to enlarge NATO. The first round of enlargement of the post-Cold War era signified the start of NATO expansion into the former-Soviet sphere of influence. There was debate over whether NATO should enlarge as a hedge against the possibility of a resurgent Russia or to promote alliance stability and democratization in Central and Eastern Europe. The administration’s promotion of NATO as the centerpiece of its “democratic enlargement” strategy was at odds with the views held by conservative Republicans who favored supporting enlargement as a “neo-containment” strategy. The contending visions for an expanded NATO in post-Cold War Europe entered the U.S. political debate when the Republicans assumed control of Congress after the 1994 midterm election. This was an issue that gained further political traction in the lead-up to the 1996 presidential election, especially in the pivotal “battleground states” of Midwestern and Northeastern U.S. NATO enlargement thus presents an ideal case because it offers the opportunity to examine the domestic political dynamics of the foreign-policy process. More importantly, the activism of the coalition of ethnic groups representing Americans of Central and Eastern European heritage lobbying for the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary into NATO and their perceived electoral clout in the battleground states increased the domestic political stakes involved. The use of the U.S. politics of NATO enlargement as a case study could contribute to a better understanding of the lobbying strategies interest groups use to influence foreign policy decision-making.

The case is organized according to the major domestic political developments of the time period covered (1993 to 1998), and each chapter focuses on a particular stage in the
development of the NATO enlargement case. The change from unified to divided
government in January 1995 and the start of the administration’s campaign to secure the
ratification of NATO enlargement are the two “turning points” that divide the case into three
stages of policy development.

Data Collection

Process tracing puts an emphasis on empirical research to reconstruct the decision-making
process. Data collection is thus an important component in the research design of this study.
Both primary and secondary sources are used in this case. Researchers are inclined to use
primary sources because they seem authoritative and recently declassified documents may
provide insights into the inner workings of the decision-making process. They could provide
clues to a case. However, George and Bennett (2005) advise that classified materials could
be politicized to the extent where their veracity may be questioned. It is thus necessary to
verify primary sources in the context of secondary-source materials. In their words,
“Classified accounts of the process of policymaking cannot be properly evaluated by scholars
unless the public context in which policymakers operate is taken into account” (p. 97).

The U.S. decision to enlarge NATO presents a case in which the reconstruction of the
decision-making process is complicated by the lack of primary-source documents. This was
an important foreign-policy decision of the post-Cold War era, but the administration’s
decision-making process was often informal. Studies by Goldgeier (1999) and Asmus (2002)
reached consensus on the informality and ambiguity of the decision-making process. Asmus
wrote: “This is perhaps the most important, yet also the murkiest, period in the
Administration’s internal deliberations and the one that future historians are likely to debate.
The decision to enlarge NATO was ambiguous and opaque, at times deliberately so, and it was a decision that hardly qualified as a model of executive branch decision making” (p. 59). The initial stage of the administration’s decision-making process was deliberately kept ambiguous to allow policy entrepreneurs the use of presidential speeches to promote NATO enlargement amid opposition within the administration (Goldgeier, 1999). It is impossible to follow the paper trail if official policy channels were sidelined or avoided altogether. Even if documents were produced, they most likely remain classified.10

Presidential statements and press releases are the primary-source materials used in the empirical research. Goldgeier (1999) documented many of the important presidential statements related to NATO enlargement and his book is an authoritative source on the administration’s decision-making. Complete transcripts of presidential speeches and White House press releases could be obtained through the *Public Papers of the Presidents* by the American Presidency Project (http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu), *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (accessed via ProQuest Central), and *U.S. Department of State Dispatch* (accessed via ProQuest Central).

With the lack of primary-source materials, newspapers would be used to help reconstruct the decision-making process. It is useful to use primary- and secondary-sources together to verify the authenticity of the information between both sources. Newspapers help “set the scene,” or in Larson’s (2001, p. 346) words, “reconstruct the environment in which a document was written.” Newspapers are valuable in understanding the political context behind certain decisions. Furthermore, “Newspapers are essential for establishing context.

10 Asmus’ (2002) *Opening NATO’s Door* provides glimpses of the memos of administration officials and departmental cables. The author was granted access to the Department of State’s archives by an executive order signed by the Secretary of State. The documents revealed in the book were verified and contained no classified material. Asmus served as deputy assistant secretary of state from 1997 to 2000.
News accounts can help establish the atmosphere of the times, the purpose of speeches or statements, or the public reaction to a statement” (p. 345).

Archival research of newspapers has been facilitated by the arrival of the digital age. No longer is the use of the microfilm machine at the local library required to access news articles in storage. The archives of the leading newspapers in the U.S. are now online and can be accessed via databases such as ProQuest and Factiva. Articles from local and national newspapers could be obtained through the use of a search engine or online database. They provide different contexts in the coverage of presidential activities. National papers cover the president through the lens of Washington politics and tend to be more analytical while local coverage is more descriptive and supportive of the president (Eshbaugh-Soha & Peake, 2008). National papers provide better account of the policymaking environment, but local papers provide more focus in the coverage of local communities and are a valuable source of information on presidential activities outside the Washington D.C. area. Using a variety of local and national newspapers provide a more accurate and objective account of the Clinton administration’s decision to enlarge NATO from beginning to end. The major national newspapers used are the New York Times and Washington Post. Both papers featured “beat” reporting, especially the articles by Michael Dobbs of the Washington Post. An important source in the coverage of events on Capitol Hill is the Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report.

Empirical research for this case would not be complete without going through the websites of the ethnic organizations involved in lobbying for NATO enlargement. The most important source is the Polish American Congress’ timeline on NATO enlargement (http://www.pac1944.org/history/history-nato.htm). The Hungarian American Coalition’s
press releases provided coverage of ethnic-group activities related to NATO enlargement. Another valuable publication is the weekly newsletter of the Ukrainian National Association, the *Ukrainian Weekly* (http://www.ukrweekly.com).

**Conclusion**

This chapter establishes the research design for this thesis. First, I discuss the challenges and opportunities of the case method. One of criticisms in the use of the case method is its susceptibility to selection bias. Although there is contention over what exactly constitutes selection bias, there are ways to mitigate its adverse effects, and the two strategies implemented in this study are the incorporation of variance in variables and KKV’s advice to “maximize research leverage,” that is, by increasing the number of observations within a single case. Second, case selection becomes an even more important decision since this study is dependent on a single-case design. Eckstein’s “crucial case designs” is used as the selection criterion, and the use of a foreign-policy case to assess the assumptions of the theoretical framework imposes a “least-likely case.” It is more likely that a “hard test” would be imposed if the case focuses on an international-security issue where interest groups are normally not expected to play a major role. Thus, the decision is made to use the U.S. politics of NATO enlargement as the case study. Third, the NATO enlargement case presents challenges in data collection, owing largely to the ambiguity of the administration’s decision-making process. The use of both primary- and secondary-source materials would facilitate the “reconstruction” of the policy process. Presidential statements comprise the bulk of research on primary-source materials, while the use of newspaper articles, especially those by the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, provide valuable secondary-source materials.
The next three chapters comprise the NATO enlargement case study. They will be presented in chronological order.
Introduction

On 30 April 1998 the United States Senate ratified the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) by the vote of 80 to 19. President Clinton said: “American support for NATO is firm, our leadership for security on both sides of the Atlantic is strong, and there is a solid, bipartisan foundation for an active U.S. role in the world” (Towell, 1998). The ratification of NATO enlargement signified the successful outcome of a major foreign-policy decision of the Clinton era. But as Ron Asmus (2002, p. xxiv) observed, “NATO enlargement sparked one of the most passionate and fierce national security debates of the decade in the United States.” While the Clinton administration promoted NATO enlargement as reaffirmation of U.S. security commitment to a unified, democratic Europe, George Kennan (1997), the architect of America’s Cold War containment strategy, called the decision: “the most fateful error of American foreign policy in the entire post-cold-war era.”

At the center of the NATO enlargement debate was the future of U.S.-Russia relations. Opponents argued that the end of the Cold War presented an unprecedented
opportunity for Washington to forge a new era of cooperation with Moscow (Gaddis, 1992). Expanding NATO into Central and Eastern Europe would be antagonistic toward Russia and energize domestic political forces skeptical of democratic reforms and integration with the West. It would draw new lines of division in post-Cold War Europe and confirm suspicions that the U.S. seeks to enervate Russia. Adding to the debate were the contending rationales for enlargement. While the administration pursued the expansion of NATO largely as an extension of its strategy of “democratic enlargement” (Brinkley, 1997), the Republican rationale was based on a strategy of “neo-containment,” aimed at preventing Russia from asserting its influence in Central and Eastern Europe (Asmus, 2002, p. 120). The contending visions of the Alliance placed front and center Russia’s disposition in the post-Cold War security architecture in Europe. The administration sought to gain Moscow’s compliance by pursuing enlargement in tandem with an agreement to establish a NATO-Russia consultative forum. However, there was fear that a NATO-Russia accord would provide Moscow with undue influence over Alliance decision-making.

Jeremy D. Rosner, Special Assistant to the President and Secretary of State for NATO Enlargement Ratification, said: “unlike some foreign policy initiatives, it centers very distinctly around a specific vote, and one that requires a two-thirds margin” (U.S. Information Agency, 1997, p. 11). Since NATO enlargement is a foreign-policy decision that requires congressional action, and most importantly, the “advice and consent” of the Senate, domestic politics and public opinion would play a major role in shaping its outcome. A notable factor is the partisanship between the Clinton administration and Republican-controlled Congress. Another factor was the involvement of the coalition of groups representing Americans of Central and Eastern European ethnic backgrounds lobbying for
the expansion of NATO into their ancestral homelands. The focus of this case is on the impact of executive-legislative dynamics on the ethnic coalition’s decision to target the respective decision-making arenas and its choice of strategies to achieve political access.

Three variables posited in the theoretical framework animate the case analyses. The first variable is party control. The Republicans gaining control of both houses of Congress after the 1994 election was pivotal in the politics of NATO enlargement. The policy dynamics shifted from the executive to congressional arena. The change from unified to divided government and its impact on the ethnic coalition’s lobbying strategies is an issue to be explored. The second variable is issue salience. NATO enlargement was not an issue that generated much attention from the American public with the exception of the ethnic communities. The proposition made here is that policy entrepreneurs seeking to generate legislative influence need interest groups to increase public awareness of their initiatives. Issue salience provides a link between interest groups and policymakers, and how this variable shapes the ethnic coalition’s interactions with officials in both the executive and legislative branches merits attention. The third variable is electoral pressure. One of the arguments made was that Clinton’s decision to enlarge NATO was motivated by electoral politics—to court ethnic voters residing predominately in the “battleground states” of the Midwestern and Northeastern U.S. It was also argued that the House Republican leadership supported NATO enlargement for similar reasons. Closely-contested elections provide opportunities for policymakers to prioritize domestic imperatives over strategic interests, and the need to appeal to an important voting bloc concentrated in key swing states may influence their decision-making. The ethnic coalition’s use of electoral pressure in its attempts to influence the Clinton administration’s decision-making is an issue to be explored.
Since the U.S. decision to enlarge NATO unfolded over a lengthy timespan (1993-1998), the case is divided into three chapters, each focused on a particular time period and stage of development. The two turning points are the change from unified to divided government after the 1994 midterm election and the start of the administration’s campaign to secure ratification of NATO enlargement in March 1997. The first stage covers the period from September 1993 to November 1994, focusing on the Clinton administration’s internal deliberations over NATO enlargement and the beginning of the ethnic coalition’s lobbying campaign. The second stage covers the period from the start of the 105th Republican-controlled Congress in January 1995 to the 1996 presidential election. The third stage covers the period from the establishment of the administration’s NATO Enlargement Ratification Office in March 1997 to the Senate ratification vote on 30 April 1998. The focus of this chapter is on the first stage.


President Clinton and National Security Advisor Anthony Lake supported NATO expansion to anchor the emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe in U.S.-led institutions. Lake unveiled the administration’s “democratic enlargement” strategy in a speech at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) on 21 September 1993. He said: “The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement—enlargement of the world’s free community of market democracies” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 38; Lake, 1993, p. 659). The term was coined by Jeremy Rosner, who at the time was director of legislative affairs and foreign-policy speechwriter at the National Security Council (NSC). Commenting on a draft of the SAIS speech, Lake wrote to Rosner: “emphasize enlargement more” (Brinkley, 1997, p. 115). The speech underscored three
major objectives of Clinton’s foreign-policy agenda: “updating and restructuring American military and security capabilities, elevating the role of economics in international affairs, and promoting democracy abroad” (p. 112).

NATO enlargement served as the centerpiece for the “democratic enlargement” strategy toward Central and Eastern Europe. As Asmus (2002, p. 25) observed, “NATO enlargement resonated with two of Clinton’s core convictions—a commitment to expand and consolidate democracy and his belief in the importance of modernizing America’s alliances in a globalized era.” Lake’s SAIS speech revealed to the public that the administration was considering expanding NATO. Clinton’s National Security Advisor said:

If NATO is to remain an anchor for European and Atlantic stability, as the President believes it must, its members must commit themselves to updating NATO’s role in this new era. . . . we will seek to update NATO—so that there continues, behind the enlargement of market democracies, an essential collective security (Lake, 1993, p. 660).

Opposition emerged at the Defense Department. Pentagon officials shared the view that NATO enlargement would negatively impact arms-control cooperation between Washington and Moscow. Incorporating former-Warsaw Pact members into the Alliance would be a major investment when defense spending should be reprogrammed for other regional contingencies. The Pentagon’s position was simply that the Visegrad states (Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia) were not ready for membership and “fast tracking” them at this point would dilute the effectiveness of NATO (Talbott, 2003, pp. 97-99). Secretary of Defense Les Aspin said: “enlargement would have to be raised at the end, not the beginning, of a process of achieving interoperability with NATO and meeting alliance political standards, and new members would have to be ‘contributors’ rather than
‘consumers’ of allied security” (Solomon, 1998, p. 28). Aspin’s views were reinforced by comments he made at the NATO defense ministers summit in Travermünde, Germany in October 1993. “We at this point are not offering membership to these countries. We’re taking a step that will address some of their security concerns. Ultimately, if these countries join the organization, we ought to make sure that they bring something to the organization” (Kinzer, 1993).

The position of the State Department was somewhere in between those advocating “fast track” enlargement, such as Lake, and Defense officials who preferred not to expand NATO at all. Secretary of State Warren Christopher supported a “go slow” approach. An idea surfaced at the time was the Partnership for Peace, an initiative to enhance military-to-military cooperation among NATO members, former-Warsaw Pact states, and European neutrals. The brainchild of the idea was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John “Shali” Shalikashvili (Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 26-8; Talbott, 2003, pp. 98-9). The Pentagon’s proposal for the Partnership for Peace was intended as a stand-alone program, aimed as an alternative to NATO enlargement. However, Christopher’s statements at the time indicated that the Partnership for Peace could serve as a pathway for Central and Eastern European states to join NATO. Speaking at the NATO foreign ministers meeting in Brussels in December 1993, the Secretary of State said: “The Partnership is an important step in its own right, but it can also be a key step toward NATO membership” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 46). During this period, inconsistent statements between Christopher and Aspin regarding the objectives of the Partnership for Peace, as well as Lake’s support for “fast track” enlargement, reflected contention among the administration’s foreign-policy principals (Sciolino, 1994).
A NSC Principals Meeting was scheduled for 18 October to decide on the “deliverable” for President Clinton at the NATO Summit in January 1994 (Asmus, 2002, pp. 49-51; Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 38-40). The meeting was intended to be the follow-up to Lake’s speech in which he stated the President’s goal of updating NATO for the post-Cold War era. Clinton’s appearance at the NATO Summit created what Strobe Talbott, Ambassador-at-Large for the former Soviet republics and later appointed Deputy Secretary of State, called an “action-forcing event” (2003, p. 97). The bureaucratic battlelines had already been drawn. Supporters of “fast track” included Lake and Undersecretary of State Lynn Davis, while Defense remained vehemently opposed to enlargement.

The decision was reached to promote the Partnership for Peace at the NATO Summit. The need to take a more cautious approach toward enlargement was reinforced by the political developments in Russia (Asmus, 2002, p. 49). This view was expressed in Talbott’s memo to Secretary of State Christopher dated 17 October. It stated: “My recommendation bottom line is this: Take the one new idea that seems to be universally accepted, the Partnership for Peacekeeping, which is truly inclusive, and make that, rather than expanded NATO membership (which is at least implicitly exclusive) the centerpiece of our NATO position” (Asmus, 2002, pp. 50-1). Talbott “redoubled” his efforts to slow down the momentum among senior State officials toward fast tracking enlargement (Gordon, 1994). The memo was intended to make Christopher reconsider his support to provide “associate memberships” to Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, a position Undersecretary of State Davis also advocated (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 37; Asmus, 2002, pp. 49-50).11

11 Davis’ memo to Christopher, dated 15 October, emphasized the need for the U.S. to assert leadership in Europe. “We are close to losing the ability to lead the Alliance on NATO’s future . . . Western Europeans are
The issue left unresolved at the meeting was the overall goal of the Partnership for Peace. Did the decision mean that the enlargement issue has been relegated to the backburner, or was the Partnership for Peace a potential gateway for NATO membership? The aim of the meeting was to agree on the “deliverable” for Clinton, not to decide on what the Partnership for Peace meant. The latter remained a contentious issue within the administration. As Goldgeier (1999, p. 41) observed, “The Partnership for Peace was the one idea that had the support of all the major players, which was not true of any of the specific issues associated with expansion.” The Partnership for Peace was kept ambiguous to achieve consensus among the principals at the meeting. But more importantly, the fear of destabilizing Russia was a factor in the decision to abandon fast tracking in favor of a cautious approach toward enlargement. However, this left the administration exposed to pressure from Republicans on Capitol Hill and the ethnic communities to define a clear path for Central and Eastern European states to enter NATO.

After Talbott’s promotion to Deputy Secretary of State in February 1994, he emerged as the “overseer of the effort to keep the enlargement train and Russia train running on parallel tracks” (Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 64-5). His opposition to “fast track” enlargement made him a target of criticism by the ethnic groups. They identified Talbott as the administration official who put the brakes on the aspirations of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to join NATO. Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski said that Talbott was “extremely unpopular with these groups” (Kirschten, 1995). Edith K. Lauer (2009), Chair Emeritus of the Hungarian American Coalition, remembered from a meeting with Clinton becoming increasingly critical and uncertain of our resolve to remain seriously engaged in Europe” (Asmus, 2002, p. 49).
administration officials in March 1994 an exchange between Talbott and the Polish American
Congress’ national director Jan Novak.

Talbott: The question is – what kind of Russia will we have in the 21st century? YOU feel Russia will
revert to type and foresee a dangerous scenario; we see Russia more positively . . . building a benign
democratic system.

Novak: Why did you invite us here, sir, if you think our experience with communism makes us unable
to form a credible opinion about Russia? What will happen, Mr. Talbott, if WE are right, and YOU are
wrong?

Another ethnic-group leader at the meeting, Donald Pienkos (1999) of the Polish National
Alliance took note of Talbott referring to Americans of Central and Eastern European
ancestry harboring hardline views toward Russia as “you people.”

Talbott endured criticisms from Senate Republicans during his confirmation hearing,
accusing him of advocating a “Russia-first” policy. Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) said:
“PFP epitomizes the Administration’s ad hoc approach to European security problems. It is
a band-aid offered in place of corrective surgery” (Solomon, 1998, p. 29; Goldgeier, 1999,
pp. 45-6). Talbott (2003, p. 110) wrote that Republicans were encouraged in this line of
attack by “powerful voices in the Polish American community.” Ethnic-group leaders
identified Talbott as an administration official of interest, largely due to his influence over
both Russia and NATO enlargement policies, his friendship with President Clinton (both

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12 The March 1994 meeting at the White House was a follow-up to the January meeting between administration
officials and ethnic leaders in Milwaukee, WI.
were roommates at Oxford), and his role as the “administration’s most outspoken and influential Russophile” (Koszorus, 2007).\textsuperscript{13}

Talbott made his case that he was not against enlargement, but it had to be done correctly.\textsuperscript{14} Talbott (2003, p. 99) wrote: “I saw NATO enlargement as an objective that not only made sense in theory but might work in practice—as long as we could avoid causing a train wreck . . . in our relations with Russia.” In a letter to Professor George Grayson of the College of William and Mary, author of \textit{Strange Bedfellows: NATO Marches East}, Talbott wrote: “I was opposed to the idea of ‘fast track’ admissions per se, since I believed that the stakes were too high and the complexities too great to move precipitously; enlargement should be a deliberate process, not a quick one” (Asmus, 2002, pp. 44-5). Fast tracking enlargement, in light of the political developments in Russia, would be tantamount to a policy of containment. It would be interpreted as a no-confidence vote by the U.S. on Russian reforms and provide fuel for opposition forces there to weaken Yeltsin’s hold on power. Talbott (1995) wrote: “hedging against the possibility of resurgent Russian aggression is not the only, or even the main, reason for NATO’s taking in new members.” NATO should emphasize the Alliance’s role in consolidating democracies and civilian control of military forces in a unified Europe. Bringing new members into NATO must be pursued in tandem with a cooperative agreement between Russia and NATO. However, ethnic-group leaders backed by the Republicans were adamant that Talbott got the policy backwards. Enlargement should be prioritized over cooperation with Russia.

\textsuperscript{13} The ethnic coalition met with Deputy Secretary of State Talbott four times from 1 April 1996 to 20 July 1998 (Koszorus, 2007).

\textsuperscript{14} The evolution of Talbott’s views on enlargement could be partly explained by his promotion to Deputy Secretary of State and the criticisms by Senate Republicans in his confirmation hearing. As the number two official at State, he had to consider Russia policy in conjunction with NATO enlargement (Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 36-8; 64-6; 157-8).
Search for Congressional Support

The administration’s internal deliberations provides the starting point for the analysis on the role of interest groups in the U.S. decision to enlarge NATO. After plans to offer Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia “associate memberships” were foiled by Talbott’s memo recommending a “go-slow” approach, the ethnic coalition began to pressure the administration on the “who” and “when,” in particular, the candidate states most qualified to join NATO and the date of their admission. The executive-legislative context is important since the ethnic coalition’s strategy sought to pressure the administration by lining up congressional support (Koszorus, 2007). During 1994, both chambers of Congress and the White House were under Democratic control, and thus there was unified party control of government.

Beginning in 1994, the ethnic coalition approached Republicans on Capitol Hill “seeking their support in stepping up the political pressure on the Administration on enlargement” (Asmus, 2002, p. 80). Senators Lugar (R-IN) and Hank Brown (R-CO) emerged as the two entrepreneurs in the Senate on enlargement. Lugar favored enlargement as a way to make NATO relevant for the post-Cold War era, and he ridiculed the administration’s proposal for the Partnership for Peace as “policy for postponement” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 80). Brown supported enlargement to ensure Central and Eastern Europe’s integration with the West. It could also serve as part of a “get tough” policy toward Russia (Asmus, 2002, pp. 80-2). But Senator Brown was also motivated by the potential of Congress to play an active role in shaping foreign policy. He said: “I wasn’t excited about playing a traditional role in the Senate; I wanted to change foreign policy, which was viewed as largely the preserve of the executive branch” (Grayson, 1999, p. 50). In the House, the
key supporters of enlargement included Representatives Benjamin Gilman (R-NY) and Henry Hyde (R-IL). Their motivation for supporting enlargement is the concentration of Polish Americans in their congressional districts. There are approximately 28,000 Polish Americans in Gilman’s (NY-20) district and Hyde’s district is located in Chicago—a city with the biggest population of Polish ethnicity outside Warsaw (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 81; Dobbs, 1995; Gory, 1996).

The major legislation of the 103rd Congress (1993-94) on NATO enlargement in the House are the NATO Expansion Act of 1994, sponsored by Rep. Gilman, and NATO Revitalization Act of 1994, sponsored by Rep. Hyde. The Senate version of the NATO Revitalization Act was sponsored by Senator Roth (R-DE). The NATO Expansion Act expressed a sense of Congress that “Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia should be in a position to further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area no later than January 10, 1999,” language that was later incorporated in the Republicans’ Contract with America (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 80; Asmus, 2002, pp. 82-3).

The enlargement initiatives did not receive the adequate support in Congress needed for passage. The only legislation that passed both houses and signed into law by President Clinton was the NATO Participation Act of 1994, which was amended in the International Narcotics Control Corrections Act of 1994 (Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 81-2; Solomon, 1998, p. 66). There was simply lack of support for NATO enlargement in the Democratic-controlled Congress. Rep. Gerald Solomon (R-NY) (1998, p. 65) observed that the legislation died in committee “due to the lack of enough support in the House and vigorous lobbying on the side of the administration.” Administration opposition to congressional action was also a factor.
An example of this was a letter from Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs Wendy Sherman to the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-IN) requesting “references to particular states and specific timetables be deleted” from the NATO Expansion Act (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 81). It is possible that Democratic leaders in Congress did not want to challenge the administration’s position regarding congressional involvement, and killing the bills in committee was a way to avoid confrontation with the White House. This provides support for the proposition that under unified government Congress is more likely to delegate to the executive in setting the agenda.

The ethnic coalition was successful in gaining Republican support in Congress for NATO enlargement. The language in the failed legislation would eventually make its way into the Contract with America, the Republican’s blueprint for gaining control of Congress in the upcoming midterm election. The ethnic coalition lobbying Republicans in Congress exacerbated the policy differences between the branches, which played well into its overall strategy. The Republican support contributed to the administration’s opposition—especially at a time of growing partisanship between the House Republican leadership and Clinton administration. As Goldgeier (1999, p. 79) observed, the lack of administration support “fed congressional perceptions that President Clinton’s statements of support for enlargement reflected no real commitment to the issue.” This line of thinking was reinforced by leaders of the ethnic coalition. In their perspectives, there was perception the administration was not serious about enlarging NATO, largely due to the importance of Russia in Clinton’s foreign-policy agenda.
The most significant statement of Republican support was the inclusion of NATO enlargement in the Contract with America (Chollet & Goldgeier, 2008, pp. 89-90; Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 82-4; Asmus, 2002, p. 83). Unveiled in September 1994, the Contract outlined the GOP’s legislative agenda when it assumed control of Congress after the midterm election. The Contract’s national-security platform included a pledge to admit Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia into NATO by 1999, similar to the language expressed in the NATO Expansion Act. The inclusion of NATO enlargement was not an act of bipartisanship, and as Asmus (2002, p. 85) observed, “the Republican embrace of NATO enlargement in the Contract with America was part of an effort to condemn the Administration’s foreign policy, not cooperate with it.” It was intended as an indictment of what the Republicans and their ethnic supporters considered the administration’s “Russia-centered path” toward enlargement (Kirschten, 1995). The House Republican leadership developed the Contract “to highlight differences with the Democratic party in order to take control of the House” (Bader, 1996, p. 181). The Contract was an attempt by Republicans to point out the administration’s weakness in its handling of key issues, and in the foreign-policy area, Russia and NATO enlargement were high on their “hit list” (Asmus, 2002, pp. 79, 85). The Republicans backed by the ethnic leaders wanted to portray Clinton as being “soft” on Russia, and his administration’s lack of commitment to enlargement was a case in point. They attempted to differentiate their party’s position by “underscor[ing] a harder-edged rationale for enlargement as a hedge against Russian neo-imperialism” (Asmus, 2002, p. 83). The Contract’s pledge on NATO expansion pointed out what the Republicans and ethnic coalition thought was the correct order of operations: the self-determination of Central and Eastern Europeans should be prioritized over cooperation with Russia.15

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15 The Contract’s tone regarding Russia reflected somewhat outdated assumptions of Russia having imperial
Mobilization of the Discontent

After learning about the Clinton administration’s decision to promote the Partnership for Peace at the NATO Summit in January 1994, groups representing Americans of Central and Eastern European ancestry worked together to lobby for the expansion of NATO into their ancestral homelands. In their perspective, the decision not to invite Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia to join NATO was motivated in large part by Russian opposition to NATO enlargement. The administration prioritizing the Partnership for Peace over enlargement suggested that Clinton’s acquiescence to Russian demands would further encourage Moscow’s belligerence toward its neighbors. The portrayal of Clinton’s deference toward Russia provided the stimulus in shaping elite opinion, which in turn, sparked the mobilization of the ethnic communities. Generating grassroots action was important to the ethnic coalition’s lobbying campaign as it helped raise public awareness of the issue, and most importantly, the attention of policymakers in both the administration and Congress. Two important op-eds in the Washington Post were important in this respect.

The op-ed by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak (1993) accused Clinton of providing “a sweetheart deal offering Russia virtual hegemony over most of the former Soviet Union and denying Eastern Europe entry into NATO.” They suggested that Clinton seeking to delay NATO expansion was due in large part to his sensitivity over threats by the Russian military to destabilize Yeltsin if Eastern European states were allowed to join NATO.16

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16 Yeltsin had allowed Poland to make its own decision regarding its entry into NATO. However, in light of pressure from the Russian military and ultra-nationalist parties making inroads in the December 1993 parliamentary election, there was a reversal in Yeltsin’s earlier position (Talbott, 2003, pp. 96-7).
Evans and Novak wrote that “administration sources say Yeltsin has been informed that NATO will not expand into Eastern Europe during Clinton’s presidency.” The op-ed by Jan Novak (1993), national director of the Polish American Congress, followed a similar line of attack and argued that by providing Moscow with a “veto” over NATO expansion, the administration has in effect given Moscow “a ‘green light’ for ambitions to restore the Russian empire and to regain its sphere of influence in East Central Europe.” Jan Novak was an instrumental figure of the ethnic coalition, due largely to his role as an interlocutor between the U.S. and Polish governments. He played an important role in shaping public opinion on NATO enlargement. Deputy National Security Advisor Samuel “Sandy” Berger said: “People like Jan Novak, a Polish-American leader, affect your thinking—because of his experience, his life story and the logic and power of his arguments” (Asmus, 2002, p. 56).

The two op-eds provided the blueprint for the Polish American Congress’ efforts to inform lawmakers the dangers of the Clinton administration condoning Russia’s belligerence toward its neighbors. In a letter to Senator Paul Simon (D-IL), dated 30 November 1993, Edward Moskal, President of the Polish American Congress, wrote:

The prompt acceptance by the U.S. of Moscow’s “veto” against NATO membership of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic has encouraged those around Yeltsin, who have not abandoned their ambitions, to restore the Soviet Union under the Russian banner and wish to restore the East-Central Europe to the Russian sphere of influence. . . . Proposal of “Partnership for Peace” does not offer to neighbors of Russia and countries of East-Central Europe either a deterrent against potential aggressors or a credible prospect of achieving security under a NATO umbrella in the future” (Pienkos, 1995, p. 189; Polish American Congress, 1999).

17 The head office of the Polish American Congress is located in Chicago, Illinois, the home state of Senator Simon.
Moskal warned Senator Simon about the development of a “new Yalta,” a reference to the post-World War II partition of Europe by the U.S. and Soviet Union. “We trust . . . that you will oppose vigorously any policy that could be perceived by Moscow as condoning tacitly or explicitly Russian ambition to dominate other countries either by coercion and military threat or economic blackmail” (p. 189).

It was around this time the Polish American Congress (PAC) contacted the White House requesting a meeting prior to the President’s trip to Europe in January 1994.18 This would provide an opportunity for ethnic-group leaders to convince the administration the importance of NATO enlargement in light of developments in Russia. On 30 November 1993, the Polish American Congress invited 18 ethnic organizations to its Washington D.C. office for a discussion on “Russian Neo-Imperialistic Policy” and “to extend, and share with you, our information and to discuss possibilities of coordinated action” (Polish American Congress, 1999). The meeting on 6 December resulted in the establishment of the Central and East Europe Coalition (CEEC). In an effort to step up pressure on the administration, Moskal called on the PAC’s state divisions and local chapters for a letter-writing campaign directed at the White House, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and Chairman of the Democratic National Committee David Wilhelm. With this instance of outside lobbying, “the PAC took an overtly antagonistic position toward the Administration” (Pienkos, 1995, p. 190).

The first coordinated action by the CEEC sought to increase awareness within the ethnic communities on two issues of concern. First, the letter-writing campaign was

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18 On 1 December 1993, the Polish American Congress sent a letter to the White House stating: “. . . Would you be kind enough to arrange a meeting for a delegation of the Polish American Congress with President Clinton at anytime convenient to him, between now and his departure for Brussels, Prague and Moscow . . . .” (Polish American Congress, 1999).
regarded as a protest of the administration’s acceptance of Russia’s “veto” over NATO enlargement. Second, the Partnership for Peace was inadequate to address the security situation in Central and Eastern Europe. Did the outside lobbying force policymakers to pay attention? The volume of communications generated by the letter-writing campaign was impressive. The following is Pienkos’ (1999, p. 331) account:

Thus, on one weekend alone, in December 1993, over 100,000 letters, postcards and mailgrams were addressed to the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Democratic Party National Committee. Telephone calls in the thousands were also directed to the White House, along with more than 14,000 e-mail messages over the internet.

And as part of the effort to mobilize grassroots action, “the ethnic press and radio ran editorials, articles and appeals with sample letters addressed to the White House” (Polish American Congress, 1999).

It was reported that White House operators asked Jan Novak to curb the “deluge of communications” (Grayson, 1999, p. 162). The administration responded by informing the ethnic-group leaders the President would make a foreign-policy address in Milwaukee on 6 January 1994, prior to his departure for Europe.19 There would also be a meeting between administration officials and ethnic leaders the evening before the speech. It is important here to discuss the proceedings of the “round table” meeting as it signified the first major exchange between the administration and CEEC.

The meeting on 5 January 1994 was organized by Alexis Herman, the Director of Public Liaison—the White House office tasked with relations with interest groups. Herman

19 It appears that electoral politics played a role in influencing the administration’s selection of sites to make foreign-policy addresses. As Goldgeier (1999, p. 52) pointed out, Milwaukee was the “site of one 1992 Clinton campaign speech on foreign policy and home to a large number of Americans of central and eastern European descent.”
said: “What I remember is the meeting we held in Milwaukee the day before the Vice President’s arrival when Sandy Berger spent more than three hours in a dialogue on issues ranging from NATO expansion to the war in Bosnia” (Kirschten, 1995; Goldgeier, 1999, p. 53). Representing the administration were Deputy National Security Advisor Berger and Daniel Fried, Director of Central and Eastern European Affairs at the NSC. There were 18 ethnic leaders at the meeting, nine Polish Americans, five Hungarian Americans, two Slovak Americans, and two Czech Americans (Pienkos, 1995, p. 190; 1999, p. 332). In what could be described as a “heated roundtable discussion” between administration officials and ethnic-group leaders (Asmus, 2002, p. 64), the obvious topic was the prospects of Central and Eastern European states joining NATO.

What struck Pienkos, who represented both the Polish American Congress and Polish National Alliance, was the ambivalence administration officials shown toward the views of the ethnic leaders. He (1999, p. 333) recalled: “Yet our arguments met with no response from the Administration’s representatives.” It is also important to get a sense of the administration’s perspective. The following is Berger’s account of the meeting in an interview with Asmus (2002, pp. 64, 319 [fn. 12]):

Fried and I met with a rather skeptical and extremely sophisticated coalition of leaders from the ethnic communities. I knew then that the President wanted to enlarge. But they never believed we would do it. They believed that in the final analysis the Russian card would trump the enlargement card. They believed that as a matter of power in the final analysis Central Europe would once again be sold out like it had been sold out before. We went on for hours and we still did not convince them. They were also pressing quite hard on questions, such as, ‘who would come in’ and criteria questions to which we did not yet have answers.

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20 Vice President Gore substituted for the President after Clinton learned about the passing of his mother.
The ethnic leader who made his presence known was the Polish American Congress’ Moskal, who challenged Berger and the administration’s proposal for the Partnership for Peace as tantamount to “a ‘second Yalta’, leaving Poland and its neighbors outside of the NATO security framework” (Pienkos, 1999, p. 334). Moskal’s leadership of the ethnic coalition’s campaign for NATO expansion was recognized when he “[went] beyond diplomatic niceties and [engaged] in a form of political hardball.” With congressional elections to be held in November 1994, Moskal suggested that the administration “would face some unpleasant consequences if it ignored the views of twenty million Americans of East Central European heritage on the NATO enlargement issue” (Pienkos, 1999, p. 334).

The Polish American Congress’ contribution to the NATO enlargement lobby was the size of the ethnic community the organization represents. Pienkos (1995, p. 192) recalled from the meeting, Moskal’s willingness to “take off the gloves . . . clearly demonstrated the PAC’s leadership position at the session.” What was intended to be a two-hour meeting ended up being over four hours long.21

What impact did the meeting in Milwaukee have on the administration’s policy on NATO enlargement? From the ethnic leaders’ perspectives, the points exchanged were reflected in Vice President Gore’s speech the following morning. Stanislaus Blejwas of the Polish American Congress said to Moskal and Pienkos after the meeting: “They’re [White House speechwriters] going to be busy revising the President’s speech tonight” (Pienkos, 1999, p. 334). Pienkos (1995, p. 192) observed that “the speech itself had very evidently been redrafted overnight and reflected in time and emphasis a number of points made at the

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21 As Pienkos (1999, pp. 333-4) recalled, the meeting began at 8:15 pm. Herman wanted to conclude at 10:15 pm, but Moskal interjected. He said: “It’s too early to end. Not all of us have had the chance to speak our minds on the subject.” As a result, the meeting was extended for another two hours and ended at 12:30 am.
previous evening’s discussion.” Gore (1994, p. 15) spoke at Pabst Theatre in Milwaukee on the morning of 6 January 1994 and said: “The Partnership is a new way of drawing communist states into cooperation with the rest of Europe. It advances an evolutionary process of formal NATO enlargement, a step toward adding new members of NATO.” After listening to the speech, Pienkos (1999, p. 335) sensed that “an argument has been made for NATO enlargement.” Grayson’s (1999) account is consistent with the views of the ethnic leaders present at the speech that there was a perceptible shift in administration policy as a result of the meeting. The Partnership for Peace was no longer promoted as an alternative to enlargement but as a pathway toward NATO membership (Grayson, 1999, pp. 162-3).

Although this position has been made by administration officials, most notably by Secretary of State Christopher at the NATO foreign ministers meeting (Kinzer, 1993; Goldgeier, 1999, p. 46), Gore’s speech marked the first time that the Partnership for Peace as a pathway to NATO membership was announced before a domestic audience.

What about the administration’s perspective? The outside lobbying by the ethnic coalition did force policymakers to pay attention and the result was the meeting with administration officials in Milwaukee. Domestic pressure served another purpose. It may have been used by policy entrepreneurs to overcome bureaucratic opposition to enlargement. Goldgeier (1999, p. 79) identified Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Richard Hoolbrooke as an entrepreneur who used domestic pressure to shape NATO policy in a pro-enlargement direction. The inclusion of NATO enlargement in the Contract for America and pressure from the ethnic communities were pivotal domestic factors. As Asmus (2002, p. 84) observed, Republican support for NATO enlargement “made any prospects of [the administration] backing down increasingly difficult if not impossible.” The ambiguity of
the Partnership for Peace was not the result of sloppy policymaking, but was intentionally designed to allow entrepreneurs in the administration to proceed cautiously with NATO enlargement without provoking further bureaucratic opposition.

Domestic pressure may have played a role in shifting the Partnership for Peace from its initial emphasis as a stand-alone military cooperation program to a pathway to NATO membership. From the recollections of the ethnic leaders present at Gore’s speech, including Pienkos, “the Clinton Administration had changed its policy on NATO enlargement” (1999, p. 330 [fn 2]). Addressing the concerns of the ethnic communities through a presidential speech may be important in its own right, but achieving domestic support for the partnership program was crucial in convincing Central and Eastern European governments the value of participation. Poland’s participation was key to the program’s success, but it was the country most vocal in its opposition. The Partnership for Peace was regarded by Central and Eastern European governments as “a potential dead end than a first step toward NATO membership” (Asmus, 2002, p. 54). The program would be pointless if Central and Eastern European states were not willing to join. A State Department official said: “If they don’t believe in the partnership then it serves no purpose” (Williams, 1994). The Polish government, through its representatives in the U.S., was keen to gauge domestic pressure on NATO enlargement, and it had connections with the Polish diaspora. Reinforcing the transnational link were leaders of the Polish American Congress, especially Jan Novak. If the administration could persuade ethnic leaders the value of the Partnership for Peace, then they could convince the governments of their ancestral homelands that participation in the Partnership for Peace provides a clear path toward NATO membership. The administration’s need to achieve domestic support was possibly aimed at getting the participation of Poland and other Central
and Eastern European states, and central in this respect was shifting the partnership program in a pro-enlargement direction.

The statements by President Clinton in his European trip reflected this shift in administration policy. At the NATO Summit in Brussels on 10 January 1994, Clinton (1994) said: “The Partnership for Peace . . . enables us to prepare for and to work toward enlargement of NATO when other countries are capable of fulfilling their NATO responsibilities.” Clinton clarified the aim of the partnership program at a meeting with the heads of the Visegrad states in Prague on 12 January. “While the Partnership is not NATO membership, neither is it a permanent holding room. It changes the entire NATO dialog so that now the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members but when and how” (1994a). A factor precipitating this shift in administration policy was domestic pressure. The outside lobbying by the ethnic communities and Republican embrace of NATO enlargement in the Contract with America provided evidence of domestic support for expanding NATO. The potential of Central and Eastern European governments to withhold cooperation was another factor in compelling administration officials to make the partnership program more enticing in the eyes of Visegrad leaders. Thus, a confluence of domestic and international factors help entrepreneurs in the Clinton administration to proceed with a cautious approach in expanding NATO.

The Influence of Electoral Politics

One of the forces driving the domestic politics of NATO enlargement was the issue’s appeal to an influential voting bloc. Both the administration and Congress were aware of a constituency in favor of NATO enlargement residing predominately in the “battleground
states” of the Midwestern and Northeastern U.S. Asmus (2002, p. 80) observed: “It was a constituency that usually voted Republican but one where Clinton had registered strong gains among so called ‘Reagan Democrats’ in 1992. It was a constituency that Republicans wanted to bring back to their fold.” Goldgeier (1999, p. 61) also pointed out: “Americans of central and eastern European descent are important constituencies in key Midwestern and Northeastern states, such as Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and New York.” Data obtained from Dobbs (1995) shows that 15% of Illinois’, 15% of Michigan’s, 18% of Pennsylvania’s, and 10% of New York’s populations are of ethnic Eastern European origins. Although they make up only 8.5 % of the total U.S. population, “they are concentrated in the Northeast and Midwest in sufficient numbers to be a potential swing vote” (Kirschten, 1995). The potential by ethnic leaders to mobilize this influential bloc into action was seen in the letter-writing campaign. Many of the ethnic leaders invited to the Milwaukee meeting were top-flight activists for the Clinton presidential campaign in 1992 (Pienkos, 1999, p. 332). The appeal of NATO enlargement to an influential bloc of voters and their demonstration of political activism partly explained why a foreign-policy issue found political traction and became a hotly-contested item between Democrats and Republicans in the lead-up to the 1996 presidential election.22

22 Dick Morris, who served as adviser for the 1996 Clinton campaign, disputed the assertion that Clinton supported NATO enlargement largely because of the “Polish vote.” In an interview with Asmus (2002, p. 312 [fn. 27]), Morris said: “One of the great myths about NATO enlargement is that the President cared about it for domestic reasons.” He also denied the existence of the “Polish vote.” In an interview with Goldgeier (1999, p. 166), Morris said: “Neither I nor the president ever believed there is such a thing as a Polish vote.” However, critics saw Clinton’s support for enlargement largely as an attempt to win votes in the battleground states where the ethnic communities are influential. The main proponent of this view is Michael Mandelbaum (2010, pp. 70-1) who wrote: “The Clinton administration’s principal motive for expanding NATO was to make political gains in advance of the 1996 presidential election among American voters of Polish, Hungarian, and Czech heritage by promising NATO membership to the countries from which their forebears had immigrated.”
The Republican leadership was motivated by electoral considerations to include NATO enlargement in the Contract with America, the blueprint for the GOP to retake control of Congress. It was aimed to bring voters of Central and Eastern European ancestry back into their fold. Newt Gingrich, who would become House Speaker in the 104th Congress (1995-96), said: “NATO enlargement was the right thing to do for foreign policy and ideological reasons and it was the right thing to do for political reasons” (Asmus, 2002, p. 80). In the lead-up to the 1994 midterm election, Republicans needed issues that were both partisan and enjoyed wide public support. Republican leaders were sensitive to public opinion when searching for issues to include in the Contract. Gingrich insisted that every issue had to have at least 60 to 70 percent public approval. He said: “Politics is about public opinion and gathering public support” (Bader, 1996, p. 187). Finding partisan issues would help Republicans demonstrate policy leadership and highlight differences with the administration. On the foreign-policy front was the use of NATO enlargement to attack Clinton for being “soft” on Russia, an issue which garnered attention and political activism of the ethnic communities. A definite plan to bring four Visegrad states into NATO by 1999 resonated with a commitment to “Strong National Defense,” one of the platforms in the Contract. The Republicans wanted to show they are “decisive, tough, and capable of dealing with troubles overseas” (Bader, p. 192). Gingrich said: “even if the President had spoken out more clearly in favor of enlargement we [members of the GOP] would not have believed him because he simply lacked credibility” (Asmus, 2002, p. 85).

The Republicans winning control of both houses of Congress in the 1994 midterm election was a watershed moment for the Clinton presidency. The Democrats’ loss of

23 The NATO enlargement language in the Contract with America was drafted at the conservative Heritage Foundation (Grayson, 1999, p. 169).
Congress, according to Talbott (2003, p. 138), was a “blow to the administration on every front, including foreign policy.” With the Republicans’ plan to legislate on the Contract with America when the 104th Congress convened in January 1995, the NATO enlargement issue moved to “center stage in American politics” (Asmus, 2002, p. 83). And as Goldgeier (1999, p. 62) pointed out, “the political imperatives of the administration to stay out in front on this issue heightened.” From the perspectives of the ethnic leaders, a Republican-controlled Congress provided a major push for their lobbying efforts, considering NATO enlargement is one of the commitments in the Contract. Pienkos (1995, p. 194) observed that the prospects for securing Poland’s NATO membership improved “thanks to the results of the November Congressional elections.” The change from unified to divided control of government was a significant development in the NATO enlargement case. The next chapter covers the period from the start of the 104th Congress to the 1996 presidential election.

Summary

To recap the major developments of this chapter, the event that sparked the ethnic coalition’s lobbying campaign for NATO enlargement was the administration’s decision to prioritize the Partnership for Peace over offering invitations to Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia to join NATO at the Alliance’s summit in Brussels in January 1994. The first coordinated action by the ethnic coalition was a massive letter-writing campaign directed at the White House. In response, the administration invited ethnic leaders to a meeting in Milwaukee the evening before President Clinton’s speech. Although it was expected that the ethnic coalition would lobby the executive branch when there is unified government, especially at the agenda-setting stage, however, it was unexpected that the ethnic leaders outside lobbied the White House, considering it is the executive-branch institution most
insulated from public pressure. The ethnic coalition’s lobbying for congressional initiatives to define the “who” and “when” of enlargement met with mixed results since most of the bills died in committee. This was largely attributed to lack of congressional interest and support, but administration opposition was also a factor. There was less executive-legislative contention and greater inclination by congressional leaders to defer foreign-policy matters to the White House under unified government. Since Congress has yet to be established as a base of support for the ethnic coalition, the focus of its lobbying for NATO enlargement during unified control of government was the executive branch.

The major action by the ethnic coalition to generate public awareness on the NATO enlargement issue was the letter-writing campaign. If the intent was to force policymakers to pay attention, then it did its job. It demonstrated the potential of the ethnic communities for mass political action, and thus conveying to policymakers the electoral consequences associated with the issue. The size of the Polish-American community in key battleground states was an asset the Polish American Congress brought to the ethnic coalition’s campaign for NATO enlargement. The ability to mobilize electoral pressure provided ethnic leaders with a major source of political influence. The outside lobbying made officials in both the executive and legislative branches aware of the intensity of support for NATO expansion in the ethnic communities and the electoral consequences associated with the issue. The activism of the ethnic communities raised the political stakes on the enlargement issue between the Democrats and Republicans. The GOP winning majority control of both houses of Congress in the 1994 election and its plan to legislate on the Contract with America guaranteed that NATO enlargement would receive congressional action at the start of the 105th Congress in January 1995.
CHAPTER SIX

DIVIDED GOVERNMENT AND THE REPUBLICAN CHALLENGE

The 104th Congress convened on 4 January 1995 and marked the first time in 40 years the GOP assumed control of both the House and Senate (Cooper & Dewar, 1995). True to their promise in the 1994 campaign, the House Republicans began legislating on the platforms of the Contract with America, including its commitment to expand NATO into Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia.\footnote{The Contract promised that all 10 platforms will be legislated within the first 100 days of the 104th Congress. It is stated in the advertisement of the Contract in the October 22-28 1994 edition of TV Guide: “If we break this contract, throw us out. We mean it” (Bader, 1996, pp. 174-5).} A Republican-controlled Congress sought to differentiate itself from the policy positions of the Clinton administration, and on the foreign-policy front, the issue the GOP sought to highlight was policy toward Russia. Clinton’s accommodation of Russian anxiety over NATO expansion fueled the Republican attack on the administration’s foreign policy. The articulation of a realist rationale for enlargement “as insurance against any return to Russian domination” underscored the Republicans’ hard-line approach toward Russia (Williams, 1994; Dueck, 2010). Richard Lugar (R-IN), the second-ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said that Russia “is seeking to gain an implicit or explicit veto over NATO’s future and the future of the American role in
Europe.” Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) said: “I want to make sure the administration moves away from a Russia-first policy” (Williams, 1994).

The focus of this chapter is on the developments from January 1995 to November 1996. Central to the analysis is the change from unified to divided government as Republicans assumed control of both the House and Senate at the start of the 104th Congress. It is important to note that congressional assertiveness on foreign policy, and NATO enlargement in particular, stemmed from the Republican-controlled House. The Contract with America was a pledge taken by majority of GOP House members in their 1994 campaign (Lippman, 1995). The congressional initiatives on NATO enlargement provided a platform for the ethnic coalition to pressure the administration to define the “who” and “when,” that is, the countries qualified to join NATO and year of their admission. The administration resisted congressional pressure for a number of reasons, including executive control over foreign policymaking, domestic developments in Russia, and in particular, concerns over Yeltsin’s hold on power. The electoral schedules of both the U.S. and Russia also impinged on the politics of NATO enlargement. Clinton announced the “first group of countries” would join NATO by 1999 after the Russian presidential election in July 1996 and two weeks before the U.S. presidential election in November 1996, a move perceived as an attempt to win votes from the ethnic communities in the “battleground states.” This provides the context for the analysis on the lobbying activities of the ethnic coalition during the second stage of the NATO enlargement case.

The Republican Challenge
The ethnic leaders shared the views with the House Republican leadership regarding the administration’s tolerance for Russia’s belligerent behavior and lack of development on NATO enlargement. The Polish American Congress sent a memorandum to all members of the 104th Congress “restating its support of NATO membership for Poland and questioning NATO’s resolve on the matter of expansion in the face of Russian bellicosity” (Pienkos, 1995, p. 195). The first action of the 104th Congress to define the “who” and “when” of NATO enlargement was the National Security Revitalization Act (H.R. 7), the bill designed to enact the national-security platform of the Contract with America into law. Congressional assertiveness, particularly the efforts by House Republican leaders to legislate on the Contract with America within the first 100 days, provided a platform for the ethnic coalition to increase pressure on the administration. Attention was on Title VI of the Act: Expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The Polish American Congress issued a legislative alert to all divisions and chapters regarding Title VI of H.R. 7 on 6 February 1995, and a legislative alert was later issued for the Senate version on 16 February.

Contention between the Republican-controlled House and the Clinton administration reinforced the ethnic coalition’s strategy of using congressional support to pressure the administration. The ethnic coalition injected partisanship into the NATO enlargement issue by supporting a bill that originated with the Contract with America. Evidence of the partisan nature of the Contract-related bills could be seen in the disparity between the number of Republican and Democratic co-sponsors. For example, among the 138 co-sponsors of H.R. 7, only one was a Democrat. The House floor vote was partisan as well; 241 Republicans

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25 The language on NATO enlargement in the National Security Revitalization Act was quite similar to that in the Contract with America with one exception: the exact date of January 10, 1999 was revised to “in the near future.”
voted “yea,” while 181 Democrats voted no. Administration opposition to the enlargement initiatives only encouraged further legislative action by the House Republicans, thus providing more opportunities for the ethnic coalition to use congressional support to pressure the administration.

Leading the administration’s opposition to the National Security Revitalization Act were Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Secretary of Defense William Perry. Opposition was motivated by the partisan tone of the legislation and congressional efforts to restrict presidential flexibility in foreign policymaking. In an op-ed in the *New York Times*, Christopher and Perry (1995) recommended a presidential veto. Regarding its language on NATO enlargement, “the bill unilaterally and prematurely designates certain European states for NATO membership. NATO should and will expand. . . . But new members must be ready to undertake the obligations of membership, just as we and our allies must be ready to extend our solemn commitments to them.” This was interpreted by ethnic leaders as further evidence of the administration seeking to delay, or possibly, derail the aspirations of their ancestral homelands to join NATO. House Republican leaders may have been motivated to criticize the administration’s foreign policy on partisan and electoral grounds, but their line of attack was encouraged in part by leaders of the ethnic coalition. Not only were relations between the administration and Republican-controlled Congress going from “bad to worse” (Asmus, 2002, p. 119), relations between the administration and leaders of the ethnic coalition were deteriorating as well.

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In response to administration pressure for the naming of specific countries and reporting requirements be removed from the Amendments to the NATO Participation Act of 1994, the Polish American Congress, in a letter to Congress on 5 October 1995, accused the State Department of an “all-out effort” to “kill” the legislation (Solomon, 1998, p. 87; Goldgeier, 1999, p. 100). In a letter to President Clinton on 30 October, Moskal of the Polish American Congress expressed concerns that “further delay may mean that the answers to your questions ‘When?’ and ‘Who?’ will be ‘No One’ and ‘Never’. . . . We look forward, Mr. President, to indications and actions on the part of your Administration that will dispel the growing perceptions of 19 million Americans with roots in Central and Eastern Europe, including 10 million Polish Americans, that the next Clinton Administration will continue a policy of deferring decisions on NATO enlargement, leaving the issue to your successor” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 100).

Keeping the lines of communications opened with the Clinton White House was part of the effort in stepping up pressure on the administration. The CEEC presented President Clinton a position paper on NATO expansion on 26 January 1996. It raised concerns about the lack of “forceful advocacy by the administration to obtain consensus among the NATO allies for NATO expansion beyond vague and non-committal statements that sometime in an unspecified future some unnamed countries may join the Atlantic community.” The position paper also pointed out that the legislation the CEEC supported had been “vigorously opposed” by the State Department. Another concern was the administration “defer[ring] indefinitely any decision on enlargement” in the face of “aggressive Russian nationalism.” Directing attention to the concerns within the ethnic communities regarding the Clinton administration’s indecision on NATO expansion, which may encourage further Russian
aggressive behavior, the position paper stated: “there is growing perception among the communities represented by this coalition that the countries [of] our heritage will not be permitted to join the Atlantic community of free and democratic nations during the present administration. Instead, we see the United States on the road to strategic cooperation with Russia, to the exclusion of the interests and equal participation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.”

Clinton met with leaders of the CEEC on 12 February 1996 at the White House where he reiterated his administration’s support for NATO enlargement. In the meeting, “the president assured the coalition he would not delay or abandon the timetable for NATO enlargement and agreed with coalition members that Russian rhetoric had gotten irresponsible on the question of NATO” (Iwanciw, 1996). Not satisfied with the response from the administration, the ethnic coalition continued to provide support for the Republican-backed initiatives on NATO enlargement. The major piece of legislation to this effect was the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996 (H.R. 3564), sponsored by Chairman of the House International Relations Committee Representative Benjamin Gilman (R-NY). It authorized $60 million to facilitate Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary in their transition to NATO membership (Solomon, 1998, pp. 99-100). The naming of specific candidate states eligible for U.S. assistance again became a point of contention between Congress and the administration. In a letter to Gilman dated 9 May 1996, Clinton wrote: “Your legislation specifically urges me to designate Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary as eligible for assistance under the NATO Participation Act. These countries are

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27 The CEEC position paper on NATO enlargement was published in the periodicals of the ethnic organizations, including the Ukrainian Weekly (1996).

28 The Senate version added Slovenia. Slovakia dropped out of the running to be a NATO member due to the authoritarian practices of its leader Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar (Asmus, 2002, pp. 154-5).
indeed making substantial progress and I agree they will be strong candidates for early NATO membership when the Alliance decides to move forward. At this stage, however, writing into law a narrow list of countries eligible for special assistance could reduce our ability to work with other emerging democracies that are also making significant progress” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 103).

There was a pattern of the ethnic coalition stepping up its lobbying for congressional initiatives after the administration voiced its opposition. This occurred on 20 June when Frank Koszorus of the American Hungarian Federation, representing the CEEC, testified before the House Committee on International Relations in support of the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act. He said:

The coalition endorses H.R. 3564 because it addresses the heretofore glacial pace of NATO’s expansion. The collapse of the Soviet Union has left a dangerous security vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe. That region must be rapidly reintegrated with the West to provide it with a sense of security and to [shore] up the new democracies. . . . In January 1994, the Clinton administration committed itself to the integration of the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe into the defense structure of the Atlantic community. More than 2 years later, the questions posed by the President, when the process of NATO enlargement will begin, and who will join, remain largely unanswered.” (American Hungarian Federation, 1996).

The ethnic coalition played a role in lining up a bipartisan group of co-sponsors for the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act. Of the total 34 co-sponsors, 19 of them were Republicans and 15 Democrats. The legislation passed the House on 23 July 1996 by a

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29 Of the total 34 co-sponsors, 18 of them were from states where the ethnic communities are politically influential. They are: Sam Gejdenson (D-CT); Martin Hoke (R-OH); Tim Holden (D-PA); Henry Hyde (R-IL); Marcy Kaptur (D-OH); Peter King (R-NY); William Lipinski (D-IL); Carolyn Maloney (D-NY); Jack Quinn (R-NY); Gerald Solomon (R-NY); Rosa DeLauro (D-CT); Steven LaTourette (R-OH); Eliot Engel (D-NY); Jose Serrano (D-NY); Richard Durbin (D-IL); Christopher Shays (R-CT). Source:
vote of 353 to 65 and Senate on 25 July by 81 to 16 (Solomon, 1998, p. 99; Towell, 1996). President Clinton signed it into law on 30 September 1996. Chairman Gilman acknowledged the role played by the Polish American Congress in building congressional support for the legislation. In a letter to Moskal dated 17 October 1996, Gilman wrote: “It is no exaggeration to say that we probably could not have passed the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act without the personal involvement of Myra and Casimir Lenard of your Washington office and other members of the Polish American Congress. The PAC’s assistance in mobilizing grass roots support for our bill was absolutely critical in ensuring the broad-based bipartisan support within the Congress that we needed in order to enact the legislation” (Polish American Congress, 1999).

The Clinton administration’s decision to enlarge NATO was held hostage by the political calendars in both the U.S. and Russia. Talbott (2003, p. 217) noted: “This schedule was intended to diminish both the impact of enlargement on Russian domestic politics and the perception that it was driven by American domestic politics.” The Republican-backed legislation and lobbying by the ethnic coalition increased domestic pressure on the administration to commit to a timetable on enlargement. As long as Clinton did not announce when enlargement would occur, from the perspectives of the ethnic communities, there was fear that the final response may be “never.” Clinton could not afford to alienate voters of Central and Eastern European ancestry in the highly-contested “battleground states” in the lead-up to the 1996 presidential election. But Clinton also had to be sensitive to

domestic developments in Russia and Yeltsin’s re-election would ensure continuation of bilateral cooperation on a range of issues, including NATO enlargement.

The administration was in a precarious balance before the Russian presidential election. Congressional pressure, backed by the ethnic coalition, increased the U.S. domestic political stakes regarding NATO enlargement. Clinton had to address concerns among ethnic leaders that his administration was not committed to enlargement; however, he could not push enlargement to the point of provoking a backlash in Russian domestic politics and thereby risking Yeltsin’s re-election. It is true that NATO enlargement was held hostage by domestic politics of both countries. Clinton prioritized the domestic political imperatives over strategic interests only after the Russian presidential election, especially the importance of the NATO enlargement issue to over 20 million voters whom the CEEC purportedly represented. Clinton signing the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act into law was important in this respect and indicated willingness on the part of his administration to work with Congress to expand NATO. Goldgeier (1999, p. 106) observed, “And on balance for the administration, the strategic benefits of putting NATO enlargement on a concrete path and the political benefits of taking credit for the policy with the ethnic community outweighed the concern about managing Russia.”

The Impact of Congressional Support

On an issue largely regarded by members of Congress with “favorable indifference,” (Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 78-9), there was need to raise public awareness on NATO enlargement. The legislative alerts issued by the Polish American Congress provided evidence of attempts to drum up support for the congressional initiatives within the ethnic communities.
Generating congressional support was a component of the ethnic coalition’s strategy to pressure the administration. However, this was successful only if the ethnic coalition could demonstrate to lawmakers the intensity of preferences at the grassroots level. It is this aspect where outside lobbying is effective in converting issue salience into legislative influence.

The statements by the CEEC as an organization with 18 ethnic organizations representing over 22 million Americans demonstrated its potential for grassroots mobilization. A policymaking environment conducive to the ethnic coalition’s strategy arrived when Republicans captured control of Congress. There are political and institutional incentives for Congress to highlight policy differences under divided government. A shift in executive-legislative dynamics shapes the lobbying strategies of interest groups, and in this case, an assertive Congress provided the ethnic coalition with the platform to generate the congressional support necessary to pressure the administration.

The congressional initiatives were aimed at pressuring the administration to identify the candidate states and when NATO enlargement would occur. These were key issues ethnic leaders sought answers in their meetings with administration officials. Public pressure was ineffective in changing the administration’s attitude regarding congressional action on NATO enlargement. As Gilman (1997) observed, the administration reacted to congressional initiatives “with indifference, if not downright hostility.” Differences over the prioritization of U.S.-Russia cooperation and NATO enlargement was the basis for contention between the Clinton administration and the ethnic coalition, backed by the House Republican leaders. A change in the attitude on the part of the administration was not detected until after the Russian presidential election. What aspect of the ethnic coalition’s strategy was effective in putting pressure on the administration? Outside lobbying was
effective in making the case that the administration’s position was at odds with congressional and public opinion. This imposed pressure on Clinton to take positions popular with mainstream views. House Republican leaders saw the political benefits of NATO enlargement and provided the ethnic coalition with support to pressure the administration. The ethnic communities vocal in their support for NATO enlargement increased partisan contention between the branches and electoral stakes of the issue in the lead-up to the 1996 U.S. presidential election.

One of the issues that emerged early in the debate was whether NATO enlargement was ratifiable (Asmus, 2002, p. 86). With the exception of members of Congress representing districts and states with high concentrations of voters of Central and Eastern European ancestry, “there was absolutely no reason for the vast majority of congressional representatives and senators to spend much time on an issue about which few constituents cared” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 78). Congressional support cannot be underestimated since the final stage of the policy process required the “advice and consent” of the Senate. An important objective of outside lobbying is forcing policymakers to pay attention, and by raising awareness on the NATO enlargement issue, the ethnic coalition was able to motivate a large number of lawmakers and thus generate legislative momentum for the enlargement initiatives. They helped register congressional support for NATO enlargement. The ethnic coalition encouraged congressional assertiveness on the NATO enlargement issue, and the congressional initiatives in turn reinforced its lobbying efforts. Republicans on Capitol Hill were adamant that they pushed the administration to embrace NATO enlargement. For example, Rep. Gerald Solomon (R-NY) (1998, p. 135) wrote: “Again, it was Congress itself that had led the way on the enlargement issue.” Although a major part of its strategy was to
pressure the administration, the GOP support the ethnic coalition built would become important in the ratification stage.

The Impact of Electoral Politics

There was perception that Clinton supported NATO enlargement because of the issue’s appeal to voters of Central and Eastern European ancestry residing predominately in the battleground states. This was an argument used by enlargement opponents to discredit the administration’s decision (Friedman, 1997; 1998; Mandelbaum, 2010, pp. 70-1). The impact of electoral politics on the U.S. decision-making was not lost among NATO heads of government. In a conversation between Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien and his Belgian counterpart Jean-Luc Dehaene at the 1997 NATO Summit in Madrid, Chretien said: “All this for short-term political reasons, to win elections” (Paul & Paul, 2009, p. 1). This is not to suggest that electoral politics was the primary motive for Clinton’s decision to enlarge NATO; other factors came into play, including relations with Russia, stability in Central and Eastern Europe, and need to modernize the Alliance for the post-Cold War era. However, electoral politics did drive the decision-making at certain points, most notably, Clinton’s announcement that the “first group of countries” would join NATO by 1999 before a predominately Polish-American audience in Detroit two weeks before the 1996 presidential election.

The choice of Detroit follows a pattern of administration officials selecting cities with high concentrations of Central and Eastern European ethnics as locations for “major addresses” on NATO policy. Milwaukee in January 1994, Cleveland in January 1995, and Detroit in 1996 made it obvious that administration officials were aware of public interest on
NATO enlargement in these communities. Goldgeier (1999, p. 62) wrote: “Clinton’s emphasis on enlargement in front of ethnic communities in places like Cleveland and Detroit in 1995-96 provides clear evidence of the perceived political value of NATO expansion.” With two weeks to go before the presidential election, Goldgeier noted in a conversation with Chief of Staff Leon Panetta that the “political imperatives of naming a date in front of an ethnic audience were obvious” (p. 106). The administration establishing lines of communication with ethnic-group leaders was consistent with a strategy to “continue and expand the unprecedented access to the White House and key Administration decision-makers for the leadership of the ethnic communities” (Mitchell, 1997). Electoral considerations played a role in the administration’s decision to forge ties with the ethnic communities.

The power of the ballot is a source of political influence for groups with grassroots mobilization potential. This was reflected in statements by leaders of the ethnic coalition. Eugene Iwanciw of the Ukrainian National Association, one of the founding organizations of the CEEC, said: “There are 23 million Americans who trace their heritage to Eastern Europe, including over 9 million Poles. There are a dozen states—very important states for any presidential election—where they constitute more than 5 percent of the electorate. Taking an expansionist position on NATO is a no-lose way of appealing to these voters” (Dobbs, 1995). The reason for Clinton’s choice of Detroit for the announcement, according to Casimir Lenard, director of the Washington D.C. office of the Polish American Congress, was: “He [Clinton] needed votes. That’s how it happened” (Longworth, 1998). Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, a proponent of enlargement, underscored the electoral factor: “The NATO expansion issue has galvanized the ethnic groups into action. If Clinton
is going to win the next election, he will have to win in the old industrial belt, which begins in Connecticut and ends in Illinois, where the ethnic groups are very strong” (Dobbs, 1995).

The ethnic leaders wanted to impress on the Clinton campaign that support for the President within the ethnic communities was far from assured, largely due to the administration’s position on enlargement. As long as the administration remained uncommitted to announcing the date of enlargement, there was still possibility that it may never occur. The political stakes increased when the Republican presidential candidate, Senator Robert Dole (R-KS), on 4 June 1996 endorsed the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act at an event on Capitol Hill with former Polish President Lech Walesa and House Speaker Newt Gingrich, where Dole criticized the Clinton’s administration’s “deliberately slow” approach to enlargement and spending time “studying and discussing, but not acting” (Dobbs, 1996). Dole promised that by 1998 Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary would join NATO (Asmus, 2002, pp. 165-6; Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 102-3; Hoagland, 1996).

NATO enlargement emerged as a campaign issue for Americans of Central and Eastern European background. The letter-writing campaign directed at the administration and legislative alerts issued for the congressional initiatives on enlargement demonstrated their political activism on behalf of the issue. However, in order for a foreign-policy issue to be “activated” in an election, voters have to be able to discern differences in the position between candidates (Aldrich, Sullivan, & Borgida, 1989). Dole promised 1998 and Clinton 1999 when the “first group of countries” would join NATO. But was this significant enough for the issue to be activated in an election? From the perspectives of the ethnic voters, announcing the date meant that NATO enlargement would occur. Clinton’s delay reinforced skepticism within the ethnic communities regarding the administration’s commitment to
enlargement. The Republican Party, since assuming control of Congress, sought to define a
tougher approach in U.S. policy toward Russia (Williams, 1994). The Republican
presidential candidate’s position on NATO enlargement underscored a rationale of hedging
against Russia seeking to reassert its influence in Central and Eastern Europe. This
contrasted with the administration’s rationale of emphasizing a “strong and cooperative
relationship between NATO and Russia” (Mitchell, 1996). In a speech at the World Affairs
Council of Philadelphia on 25 June 1996, Dole said:

President Clinton’s misguided romanticism towards Russia has led him and his advisers to try to fine-
tune the intrigues of Russian domestic politics instead of guarding against the nationalist turn in
Russian foreign policy that has already occurred. . . . And many of those challenges were excused,
ignored and even encouraged by the Clinton Administration. . . . Russian officials have conducted a
campaign of threats against NATO expansion, and President Clinton got the message. He deferred and
delayed, placing the threats of Russian nationalists before the aspirations of democrats in countries like
Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. . . . I will stand firmly with the champions of democracy. I
will not grant Russia a veto power over NATO enlargement (New York Times, 1996).

There was evidence that leaders of the ethnic coalition sought to energize their
lobbying campaign through electoral politics. On 21 May 1996, Dole met with leaders of the
CEEC at a breakfast meeting on Capitol Hill. The presumptive Republican presidential
nominee reiterated his support for NATO enlargement and said: “We must not allow Russia
to intimidate its neighbors and to dictate the course of U.S. policies on aid and NATO
expansion. We must make it clear to the Russians that while we are willing to engage in a
dialogue with them on NATO security matters, we will act in our own interests” (Ukrainian
Weekly, 1996). Leaders of the CEEC also met with the chairmen of the Democratic and
Republican national committees to have NATO enlargement adopted in their platforms
before their party conventions (Koszorus, 2007). While the Democratic party platform expressed a pledge to “add new Central European members to NATO in the near future,” the GOP platform was more explicit in stating the Party’s support “for Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to enter NATO by 1998” (Polish American Congress, 1999).

It was at the May 1996 meeting when CEEC leaders suggested that Dole should address members of the ethnic coalition in Detroit. There was an opportunity in July when Dole was in town for a Republican National Leadership Award Dinner; however, the idea was rejected by his campaign advisors. It is worth noting that Dole was “trailing badly in polls across the industrial Midwest and Northeast” at the time (Harden, 1996). Central to the Republican prospects of winning the White House was, according to political consultant Roger J. Stone, “the blue-collar Catholic vote” (Kirschten, 1995). A meeting with members of the coalition might help win back the support of the “Reagan Democrats.” Julie Finley, co-chair of Dole’s Finance Committee and member of the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO, recalled the failure to seize the opportunity reflected a “complete breakdown in advance work, scheduling, and political judgment” (Grayson, 1999, p. 97).

The Clinton administration notified the CEEC that the President would make a “major address” on NATO policy in Detroit and asked the CEEC to ensure the event would be “well attended” (Koszorus, 2007; Grayson, 1999, p. 97). The Detroit area is a well-known location for presidential addresses on Central and Eastern European policy owing to the concentration of communities who traced their ancestry to that part of the world. Former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft (1999, p. 48), in choosing the location for President George H. W. Bush’s April 1989 speech on Eastern European policy, wrote: “They [White House planners] hit upon the town of Hamtramck, Michigan, a Detroit enclave
and a natural for the speech. Its hallmark was patriotism, it had a high concentration of families with ties to Eastern Europe, particularly Poland, and it had lots of Reagan Democrat blue-collar workers” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 106). The perceived political value of a foreign-policy speech before a predominately Polish-American audience was apparent among Clinton campaign aides. They acknowledged that “Detroit was regarded as a good choice for such a speech because of its population of Central and Eastern European ethnics” (Harris, 1996).  

30 White House spokesperson Michael McCurry said: “It is certainly true that this subject is of keen interest in communities here in the United States that have an ethnic identity with these countries” (Thomma, 1998).

On 22 October 1996, Clinton spoke at Fisher Theater in downtown Detroit and underscored his administration’s commitment to NATO enlargement. He said: “Today I want to state America’s goal. By 1999, NATO’s 50th anniversary and 10 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the first group of countries we invite to join should be full-fledged members of NATO.” With an eye toward securing domestic support for Senate ratification, Clinton went on: “I look forward to working with Congress to ratify the accession of new members, to provide the resources we need to meet this commitment, to secure the support of the American people. It will advance the security of everyone: NATO’s old members, new members, and nonmembers alike” (1996, p. 2143).

On 5 November 1996, President Clinton was re-elected to a second term, defeating Dole by 379 to 159 electoral college votes (Balz, 1996). Clinton won Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan, states historically having “unusually large concentrations of

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30 The coverage in the Washington Post emphasized that the speech was aimed “in part at ethnic voters.” See also the op-ed “NATO and the Campaign” (1996).
Americans of Eastern European ethnic background” (Garrett, 1978, p. 312). Balz (1996) wrote: “Clinton sailed to a near-sweep through the nation’s industrial heartland, recording victories in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and Missouri, the area that Dole once believed held the key to his hopes but where he never dented the president’s early leads.” In a state famous for its “Reagan Democrats,” Clinton won Michigan with 51.69% of the popular votes.\(^{31}\) The closely-contested nature of electoral politics in Michigan may have motivated the Clinton campaign to choose Detroit as the site for the President’s speech on NATO enlargement. The failure by the Dole team to organize an event for ethnic leaders in July 1996 may be one of the “what if” moments of the 1996 presidential election year, considering many of the ethnic leaders are top Democratic Party activists and played a role in helping Clinton win these states in 1992. Clinton solidified his support among Polish Americans. As Grayson (1999, p. 98) observed, “Polish Americans awarded Clinton nearly half their votes, up from 44 percent in 1992 and 42.3 percent for Dukakis in 1988.” Of the 10 congressional districts with the highest concentrations of Polish Americans, Clinton beat Dole in eight of them (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 100).\(^{32}\) The following table shows the concentrations of Polish Americans in some of the congressional districts Goldgeier identified. The data is based on the 1990 census and cited from Gory (1996, p. 209).

### Concentrations of Polish Americans in Selected Congressional Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State and Congressional District</th>
<th>Number of Polish Americans (1990 census)</th>
<th>Total Number of Persons (1990 census)</th>
<th>Percentage of Polish Americans (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NY-30</td>
<td>145,436</td>
<td>580,818</td>
<td>25.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI-4</td>
<td>134,787</td>
<td>543,482</td>
<td>24.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{31}\) Source: [http://uselectionatlas.org](http://uselectionatlas.org).

\(^{32}\) They are: NY-30; WI-4; IL-3, 5, 6, 13; MI-10, 12, 16; PA-11 (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 194 [fn. 70]).
The importance of the battleground states, and the high concentrations of Central and Eastern European ethnics in these states, do not suggest that NATO expansion was the issue that decided the outcome of the 1996 presidential election. In a closely-contested state like Michigan, however, there is perception that a single issue such as NATO expansion may prove decisive. The Clinton campaign saw the political value of organizing a NATO-related speech in Detroit two weeks before the election, while the Dole campaign missed an opportunity to appeal to a group of ethnic leaders vociferous in their support for the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary into NATO. A president running for re-election has certain advantages. As head of state of a NATO member—and by far the most influential—Clinton could call for a NATO Summit where a decision could be made to invite the Visegrad countries into NATO, exactly what Clinton stated in his “Detroit speech.” While Dole stated his support for bringing the three countries into NATO by 1998 based on a rationale that was closer to the preferences of the ethnic leaders, the only promise the Republican presidential nominee could make was an earlier date. And Dole could deliver on that promise only if he is elected president.

The ethnic coalition’s strategy throughout the election year was to demonstrate the clout of the ethnic communities as the potential “swing vote” in the election. The ethnic-group leaders were able to increase the political stakes on NATO enlargement by conveying
to Democrats and Republicans the importance of this issue in the ethnic communities. The meetings with Dole and GOP officials allowed the ethnic leaders to extract more political leverage. They were able to use this leverage to pressure the administration, suggesting that support within the ethnic communities remained undecided based largely on the administration’s position. The ability for the ethnic leaders to extract concessions from both the Clinton and Dole campaigns was based on the premise that support within the ethnic communities was “up for grabs.” Perception matters in politics, and ethnic leaders played this up to their advantage. It was noticeable that from July 1996 onwards administration officials became more committed to expanding NATO. The political and strategic tracks became aligned after the Russian presidential election. But the political track began to gain momentum as the U.S. presidential election approached. And as Goldgeier (1999, p. 107) observed, “any electoral benefits would come from those favoring enlargement; there is no American constituency that votes based on a concern about a good relationship with the Russians.” This set the stage for Clinton to announce in front of a predominately Polish-American audience that NATO would expand by 1999.

It is difficult to ascertain how Americans of Central and Eastern European ancestry voted based on the NATO enlargement issue (Grayson, 1999, p. 98). However, their concentration in the battleground states, higher than national average voter turnout, and identification as “Reagan Democrats” helped establish a pattern that illustrated their potential for political activism. Statements by the ethnic coalition as an organization composed of 18 national grassroots organizations representing over 20 million Americans implied the potential for electoral pressure. Outside lobbying provides a “rehearsal” for what is likely to occur on election day. The objective of outside lobbying is to force policymakers to pay
attention. By demonstrating political activism on behalf of NATO enlargement, the ethnic communities were successful in making known to policymakers that their issue of concern would bear electoral consequences.

**Summary**

This chapter focuses on the developments from January 1995 to November 1996. Two key events are important to the analysis at this stage: the Republican takeover of Congress and the 1996 presidential election. The shift in party control of both houses of Congress marked the beginning of divided government, a pattern that would last through the remainder of the Clinton presidency. The pledge by the House Republicans to legislate on the planks of the Contract with America, including NATO enlargement, provided the platform for the ethnic coalition to intensify its lobbying. The ethnic coalition’s support for the congressional initiatives, combined with administration opposition, increased contention between the executive and legislative branches. Divided government provided opportunities for House Republicans to highlight policy differences, and this benefited the ethnic coalition’s strategy of using congressional support to pressure the administration. There is support that groups are more likely to lobby Congress when the legislative branch takes the lead in setting the agenda.

The other major event of this period was the 1996 presidential election. The Democratic and Republican parties were aware of a powerful constituency in the battleground states vociferous in its support for expanding NATO into Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. The ethnic coalition sought to energize its lobbying campaign through electoral politics. The outside lobbying demonstrated the ethnic communities’
political activism, and more importantly, political mobilization served as a “rehearsal” for deploying mass electoral pressure. This was by far the most important source of political influence for the ethnic leaders. Statements by the ethnic coalition representing over 20 million Americans intimated their electoral clout ahead of the presidential election. Both the Clinton and Dole campaigns devoted attention to the NATO expansion issue in states with high concentrations of Central and Eastern European ethnics. But Clinton, running as the incumbent for re-election, was in a better position to deliver on his campaign promises. In Michigan, a closely-contested state where Clinton won by a two-percent margin, and a state in which 15% of its population is of Eastern European ethnic ancestry (Dobbs, 1995), it was apparent that announcing when the first group of countries would join NATO had political benefits. The “Detroit speech” reaffirmed the administration’s commitment to NATO enlargement and may have helped Clinton solidify his support within the ethnic communities in the 1996 presidential election. Groups with members concentrated in key swing states are more effective in demonstrating mass electoral pressure. This could be considered a strategy to influence presidential decision-making as election day approaches.
President Clinton declared NATO enlargement a top foreign-policy priority for his second term. In the State of the Union speech on 4 February 1997, Clinton (1997) said:

To that end, we must expand NATO by 1999, so that countries that were once our adversaries can become our allies. . . . And we must build a stable partnership between NATO and a democratic Russia. An expanded NATO is good for America, and a Europe in which all democracies define their future not in terms of what they can do to each other but in terms of what they can do together for the good of all—that kind of Europe is good for America.

An office was established at the State Department in March 1997 to spearhead the administration’s ratification campaign. Jeremy D. Rosner, who served in the National Security Council during Clinton’s first term, was appointed Special Advisor to the President and Secretary of State for NATO Enlargement Ratification. His office was tasked with two important objectives: building congressional and public support for NATO enlargement.

Two developments on the international stage helped facilitate the ratification process. First, the NATO-Russia Founding Act was signed in May 1997, which provided Moscow with a “voice” but not “veto” over Alliance decision-making (Asmus, 2002, pp. 175-211;
Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 110-7; Talbott, 2003, pp. 217-50). Second, a NATO Summit was convened in Madrid in July 1997 where allies invited Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to join the Alliance as full members. In the United States, the ratification process officially began when President Clinton submitted the protocols of accession to the Senate on 11 February 1998. In an address at the White House, Clinton said: “Successful ratification of these Protocols demands not only the Senate’s advice and consent required by our Constitution, but also the broader, bipartisan support of the American people and their representatives” (Clinton W. J., 1999, p. 97).

The focus of this chapter is on the developments from March 1997 to the Senate vote on 30 April 1998. Central to the analysis is the administration’s objective to achieve an overwhelming ratification of NATO enlargement. Divided government returned after the 1996 election as Republicans retained control of both chambers of Congress. While the Republicans lost seats in the House, the GOP increased its majority in the Senate by two seats (Yang & Pianin, 1996; Dewar & Vobejda, 1996). From 1994 to 96, most of the congressional action on NATO enlargement was initiated by the House. However, the Senate became the decision-making arena in the ratification stage. Reinforcing the goal of securing ratification in the Republican-controlled Senate was a strategy to build a groundswell of public support for NATO enlargement. The ethnic groups, who earlier demonstrated their support for bringing Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary into NATO, became part of the administration’s campaign to round up grassroots support for enlargement. Another important pro-enlargement group that emerged on the scene in mid-

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33 The decision to invite three countries at the Madrid Summit was not consensual at first. France and Italy lobbied for a larger group, including Romania and Slovenia. It was decided that a group of three best signified NATO’s open door policy. Admission of a larger group may jeopardize momentum for the next round of enlargement (Asmus, 2002, pp. 212-50; Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 117-22).
1997 was the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO. The administration working with like-minded groups to build grassroots support for NATO enlargement proved decisive in generating bipartisan consensus amid partisanship in executive-legislative relations. Rosner said: “There is still a foundation for bipartisanship in foreign policy, but you have to work for it. . . . You have to pick the right fights and fight hard” (Dewar, 1998). While much of the case study so far is focused on the pressure aspect of group strategies, this chapter focuses on the supply aspect—that is, the strategies interest groups use to help the administration achieve its policy objective: the ratification of NATO enlargement.

The Impact of Republican Control

The composition of the Senate after the 1996 election was a factor in Rosner’s choice of ratification strategy. Senator Bob Kerrey (D-NE), chairman of the Senate Democratic Campaign Committee, said: “The Senate will stay Republican, and it is going to be much more conservative than it was before—much more conservative” (Dewar & Vobejda, 1996). The record number of 14 open Senate seats in the 1996 election, according to Rosner (1997), “helped produce a new Senate in which many of its most experienced and moderate voices on foreign policy have been replaced by members who are more extreme and far less knowledgeable on these issues.”

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35 Of the 14 open Senate seats in the 1996 election, 8 were held by Democrats and 6 by Republicans. As Dewar and Vobejda (1996) pointed out, “it was the large number of retirements by veteran Democrats from the South that shaped the dynamics of this year’s battle for control of the Senate.” Democrats lost seats to Republicans in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, and Nebraska. However, the retirement of Senator Sam Nunn (D-GA) boded well for ratification because he was opposed to NATO enlargement. As an entrepreneur on arms-control issues, he would have led the fight on the Senate floor against ratification. Democrats retained control of his seat with the election of Max Cleland.
Another obstacle to ratifying enlargement was the partisanship over foreign policy after the Cold War (Rosner, 1995). Rosner (1996, p. 15) wrote: “The final hazard for the ratification of enlargement stems from Congress’ greater assertiveness, partisan fervor, and volatility on foreign affairs since the end of the Cold War.” Democrats were less likely to desert the President on an important foreign-policy issue such as NATO enlargement. The concern for the administration was support from GOP senators; and thus Rosner selected a “center-out” strategy aimed at securing Republican support (Asmus, 2002, p. 254; Goldgeier, 1999, p. 124). Rosner justified his choice in a memo to National Security Advisor Samuel “Sandy” Berger and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright: “While most of the votes we need to pick up at this point are from Democrats on the left, the most serious prospect for defeat entails a broad defection by Republicans on the right” (Asmus, 2002, p. 254).36 There was concern that Rosner might emphasize an anti-Russia rationale in selling NATO enlargement to conservative Republican senators. In reference to the dual track of pursuing enlargement in tandem with cooperation with Russia, Deputy Secretary of State Talbott told Rosner: “I want you to approach this with two lobes of your brain, not just one” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 124). Rosner pointed out in his memo that the ratification campaign should be pursued “in a way that does not harm, and hopefully advances, other US objectives, such as constructive relations with Russia” (Grayson, 1999, p. 113).

The challenge throughout the NATO enlargement debate was reconciling the different rationales for enlargement. This was the key in maintaining consensus among the diverse groups that composed the pro-enlargement coalition. Asmus (2002, p. 252) pointed

36 Excerpts of the memo “Initial Thoughts on NATO Enlargement Ratification Strategy,” dated 26 February 1997, could be found in Grayson (1999, pp. 113-5).
out: “The Clinton Administration had embraced enlargement as part of a broader overhaul of
the Alliance to help unify Europe and create a new trans-Atlantic partnership oriented toward
new threats. . . . In contrast, many Republicans were inclined to support enlargement as a
geopolitical hedge against Moscow. They were suspicious of, if not opposed to, negotiating
the NATO-Russia Founding Act.” There was fear that the outcome of the NATO-Russia
agreement would provide Moscow with too much influence over NATO decision-making.
Conservative Republicans were not ready to relinquish the role of NATO as a military
alliance to hedge against Russian resurgence. Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) (1997), Chairman
of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, expressed this viewpoint in an op-ed in the Wall
Street Journal (European edition): “A central strategic rationale for expanding NATO must
be to hedge against the possible return of a nationalist or imperialist Russia.” Although the
Senate in July 1996 passed the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act by a margin of 81 to 16,
the measure only expressed a sense of Congress and was thus non-binding. In the final
analysis, congressional support was “broad but thin” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 122; Isaacs, 1997).
Partisanship between the Clinton White House and Republican-controlled Congress could
diminish any prospect for cooperation between the branches. Rosner (1997a, p. 10)
observed: “The end of the Cold War has made it less politically risky for Congress to oppose
White House positions on national security, while divided control of the two ends of
Pennsylvania Avenue gives many members added political reason to do so.”

The administration sought to solidify congressional support by building a sense of
public momentum for ratifying NATO enlargement. Obtaining endorsements from a diverse
array of outside groups would demonstrate to senators a groundswell of public support for
enlarging NATO and thus making it “easy for Senators to vote in favor of enlargement”
Bringing new groups into the pro-enlargement coalition showed that grassroots support for enlargement is nationwide, not just confined to the ethnic communities. The goal is to “transform enlargement from an ethnic issue to an American one” (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 133), so NATO enlargement would not be perceived “solely a priority for Polish Americans and other constituencies” (Grayson, 1999, p. 114). Rosner said: “we certainly are using all the resources available to make the case—both to the Congress and the public—for why we think NATO enlargement is good for American national security” (U.S. Information Agency, 1997, p. 11).

Another group that arrived on the scene in 1997 was the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO. In October 1996, Bruce P. Jackson, who at the time was National Finance Co-Chairman of the Dole presidential campaign, approached the Clinton administration about forming a bipartisan group to promote the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe (Grayson, 1999, p. 131; Asmus, 2002, pp. 255-6). Jackson’s association with the GOP foreign-policy establishment (he was a Defense official during the Reagan administration) helped the administration secure support from officials of past Republican administrations. As Asmus (2002, p. 257) observed, “the Committee members helped reach out to the target audience the Administration needed the most—conservative Republican Senators.” Director of the Committee Cece Boyer said: “Our focus is on the Senate . . . If a senator is wavering, we arrange for a meeting between that senator and a member of our committee” (Mesler, 1997). The role of Republican heavyweights working outside government was instrumental in generating bipartisanship in securing the ratification of enlargement. Goldgeier (1999, p. 138) observed: “And most important from the standpoint of building a national campaign, the leading figures in the committee were neither ethnic Americans nor Democrats.”
While serving as president of the Committee, Jackson was also director of strategic planning for Lockheed Martin—a top U.S. defense contractor. His association with both organizations would lead to charges that the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO was a front for the arms industry lobbying for increased sales to Central and Eastern Europe (Gerth & Weiner, 1997; Seelye, 1998; Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 135-6). Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary would become lucrative markets for defense firms after they are admitted into NATO. Charles Manor, a spokesperson for Lockheed Martin, said: “When the day arrives and those countries are in a position to buy combat aircraft, we certainly intend on being a competitor” (Seelye, 1998). Although defense contractors have intensified their efforts to promote new markets after the Cold War, there is nothing to suggest their lobbying activities were specifically linked to NATO expansion.

There were assertions that the ethnic coalition’s lobbying for NATO enlargement was financed by the arms industries. Seelye (1998) wrote: “Corporate sponsors are also supporting ethnic groups that have championed NATO membership for their native countries.” Granville (1999, p. 167 [fn. 1]) pointed out that “some United States weapons manufacturers financed ethnic organizations in the United States that favor NATO expansion, such as the Polish-American Congress, the Hungarian-American Foundation, and the American Friends of the Czech Republic.” There was the possibility for coordination between ethnic groups and defense contractors. Myra Lenard, executive director of the Washington D.C. office of the Polish American Congress said: “Boeing and the others are pushing their own line, but we work alongside them” (Longworth, 1998). Both the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO and ethnic groups shared the goal of expanding NATO into Central and Eastern Europe. Sophia Miskiewicz, legislative and public affairs director for
the Polish American Congress, said: “We will be working with [the committee] more and more as ratification comes up” (Mesler, 1997).

The coordination of the two major outside groups in the administration’s ratification campaign was important in generating support for enlargement at both the elite and grassroots levels. It helped minimize perception that domestic support for enlargement was driven by parochial interests. The ethnic groups supported NATO enlargement to bring their ancestral homelands into U.S.-led security institutions. The U.S. Committee to Expand NATO was perceived as an organization lobbying for increased arms sales to Central and Eastern Europe. It was imperative to synchronize the actual or perceived goals of the different groups in the pro-enlargement coalition to the administration’s rationale, which was predicated on America’s long-term security interests in Europe. The administration’s ratification team traveling across the country obtaining endorsements from various groups and local and state legislatures provided proof that support for NATO enlargement was found in various levels of American society. Rosner said: “We are also talking with the public, going all over the country to forums on these kinds of issues, talking with groups who are interested in NATO enlargement—ranging from veterans’ community to the religious community to the business community to ethnic communities” (U.S. Information Agency, 1997, p. 11).

37 For a list of public endorsements the NATO Enlargement Ratification Office received, see Grayson (1999, pp. 128-9).

38 The administration “going public” in search of support for NATO enlargement had mixed results. For example, five people attended an event at Portland State University (Grayson, 1999, p. 117; Goldgeier, 1999, p. 134). But for the most part, the campaign was fairly successful. Rosner traveled to San Francisco where he obtained the endorsement from the Conference of Mayors. He also presented the administration’s case for enlargement at the American GI Forum, a Hispanic veterans organization, where Jess Quintero, the local commander, said: “He [Rosner] said that adding all those new voices would make Europe more stable . . . that
The administration’s effort in building public support received a major boost when groups joined forces and created the NATO Enlargement Ratification Working Group. At the inaugural meeting on 30 September 1997, Casimir Lenard, executive director of the Washington D.C. office of the Polish American Congress, said: “Although we come here from varied backgrounds, we are like-minded in our commitment to NATO enlargement.” Frank Koszorus of the Hungarian American Coalition said: “the existence of the Working Group unequivocally demonstrates that a cross-section of Americans support NATO’s enlargement and recognize that a rejuvenated Alliance serves the security interests of the United States” (Hungarian American Coalition, 1997).39

The administration sought support from particular groups to dampen the potential for opposition on various fronts. Maintaining consensus among the key groups that made up the pro-enlargement coalition was key to generating the public momentum needed for ratification. Rosner (1997) wrote: “The real danger to the ratification of enlargement, therefore, would come if some energetic and influential group of elites were to spring into action against the issue, or if there were to be a falling out among the different elite factions that compose the pro-enlargement coalition.” For example, gaining the support of labor unions helped downplay perception that NATO enlargement would be portrayed as a “guns vs. butter” issue. The support of Jewish-American organizations was important due to Poland’s legacy of anti-Semitism (Goldgeier, 1999, p. 134). The administration receiving

39 The Working Group included organizations which have publicly endorsed their support for NATO enlargement. They are: American GI Forum; American Jewish Committee; American Legion; AMVETS; Association of the United States Army, Central and East European Coalition; International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers; Jewish War Veterans; New Atlantic Initiative; Polish Legion of American Veterans, USA; Reserve Officers Association of the United States; U.S. Committee to Expand NATO; U.S. Conference of Mayors; Veterans of Foreign Wars. Information cited from Polish American Congress (1999).

Support from Polish-American groups was important since “state legislatures and trade organizations typically include Polish Americans” (Goldgeier, p. 138). Considering the concentration of Polish Americans in certain congressional districts in the Midwestern and Northeastern U.S., for example, in the 30th congressional district of New York where one out of four residents is of Polish background, this would make the task of rounding up local- and state-level support in these communities much easier.

The administration sought to reduce the potential for partisanship to derail ratification by generating a sense of public momentum for NATO enlargement. It would be difficult if not impossible for senators to reject a foreign-policy initiative supported by all major organizations in American society. Enlisting various groups in the pro-enlargement coalition and harmonize them under the administration’s rationale demonstrated to senators that public opinion was clearly in favor of enlargement. The public-relations component reinforced the congressional component of the administration’s strategy. Building a sense of public momentum for enlargement provided the foundation for the bipartisanship that would emerge during the Senate ratification vote.

**Stimulating Public Debate**

The strategy memo Rosner wrote to Albright and Berger stated that “a ‘good win’ . . . must include a sense of broad public support after a full public debate” (Grayson, 1999, p. 115). Part of the administration’s plan was to demonstrate to equivocal senators that there was widespread public support for enlargement. It also helped counter the claim that the
administration rushed the ratification vote before the public had an opportunity to debate the issue. The endorsements the administration received from various groups and local and state assemblies provided evidence that the enlargement issue had been fully debated. NATO enlargement was an issue that did not spark much public interest across the U.S., except in the ethnic communities. The lack of public awareness on the enlargement issue benefited the administration’s campaign. Pro-enlargement groups would play a decisive role in shaping public opinion and mobilizing grassroots support for ratification. Milbank (1998) observed that the administration “gave the senators cover for their ratification vote by creating the appearance of a groundswell of support for NATO expansion when, in reality, the general public did not care much one way or the other” (emphasis in original). Generating a groundswell of public support was a necessary component of the administration’s strategy to secure ratification, even though the grassroots pressure appeared contrived, suggesting that the administration attempted to build “astroturf” support (Kollman, 1998, p. 158).

Two polls conducted prior to the ratification vote indicated low public interest on NATO enlargement. A January 1997 poll by the Pew Research Center found that among those surveyed, only 5% followed the issue “very closely.” A poll conducted by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) in February 1997 found that only 7% had strong awareness of the issue.40 Steven Kull, the principal investigator of the PIPA poll said: “The public is not paying a great deal of attention” (Dobbs, 1997). A Pew Research Center poll conducted on 3-6 April 1997 found that among the 6% who followed the issue closely, 61% favored expansion while 28% preferred keeping NATO the way it is (Dobbs, 1997). In other words, those who were aware of the issue were more likely to support NATO enlargement.

An administration official said: “Foreign policy issues like this tend to be decided less by general public opinion than by highly organized segments of opinion . . . All the pressure, in terms of organized pressure, is in favor of expansion” (Dobbs, 1997a). Groups who have already demonstrated their willingness to outside lobby helped the administration make its case for the intensity of public support for NATO enlargement, in particular the political activism of the ethnic groups. “We wanted them to make their views known in a way that signaled to the Senate there is a base of support,” said a senior administration official (Mitchell, 1998).

Rosner (1996, p. 13) wrote: “The low salience of the issue makes the politics of ratification vulnerable to the sway of ethnic interest groups: the less the general public cares about an issue, the greater the influence of those who care a great deal.” Furthermore, “mass opinion from a public that is little focused on foreign affairs has had less impact than the opinion of highly vocal elites or splinter groups” (Rosner, 1997). Groups vociferous in their support for enlargement entered the scene early and have already shaped public opinion inclined toward ratification. The proclamations and resolutions ethnic groups received from local and state assemblies provided evidence to senators of public support for NATO enlargement. By far, the most active organization capable of mounting grassroots pressure on senators was the ethnic coalition. Thus, organized pressure is clearly in favor of expansion.

Opposition groups seemed “diffuse and disorganized” (Rosner, 1997). Opposition was mainly confined to the academic and think-tank communities and op-eds by the New York Times’ Thomas Friedman (1997; 1998). Groups that campaigned against enlargement included the Coalition Against NATO Expansion (CANE), an organization composed of far-
left and right groups. Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream organized a campaign called Business Leaders for Sensible Policy (BLSP), a last-ditch effort to derail ratification by portraying NATO enlargement as a “guns vs. butter” issue (Asmus, 2002, p. 281; Grayson, 1999, pp. 137-146; Schmitt, 1998). Opposition groups arrived on the scene much too late to affect public opinion. They focused mainly on the East Coast, especially in the Washington D.C.-New York-Boston corridor (Grayson, 1999, pp. 144-6). The endorsements the administration’s ratification team received reflected nationwide support. Asmus (2002, p. 281) wrote: “But the opposition was unable to make significant political inroads—either in the Senate or in the broader public. They were not well organized politically, too disparate in their ideological composition, and unable to put together a broad-based coalition. Above all, they could not enlist a critical mass of political leaders, neither on Capitol Hill, nor more generally from the political center—which the Administration had assiduously cultivated.”

It was easy for the administration to generate a sense of public momentum if groups involved in the public debate all supported NATO enlargement. All signs pointed toward ratification since pro-enlargement groups dominated the debate. The administration orchestrated a debate among like-minded groups. This served the objective of achieving a “good win” after a full public debate, even though it was fairly one-sided. But who was there to debate the issue when the general public did not care about NATO enlargement one way or another? With the exception of the ethnic communities, there was no other organized interest politically active on the issue, and they played a major role in shaping public opinion toward NATO enlargement. By generating grassroots support for an issue that lacked public awareness, there is support that the administration’s campaign attempted to build “astroturf”
support. It is possible that astroturf pressure is equally effective in persuading senators to ratify NATO enlargement.

The Impact of Electoral Politics

The electoral clout of the ethnic communities was a factor driving the domestic politics of NATO enlargement. The issue’s appeal to voters of Central and Eastern European background intensified the contention between the Clinton administration and Republican-controlled Congress in the lead-up to the 1996 U.S. presidential election. Rosner (1997) attributed electoral politics as a factor favoring ratification. He wrote: “There are nearly 20 million Americans of Central European descent in the US, and they are most heavily concentrated in 14 states accounting for 194 electoral votes—more than two thirds the amount needed for a majority in the presidential elections. Many of these states, such as Michigan, Ohio, and New Jersey, are pivotal, ‘battleground’ states in American politics.” Grassroots activism by the ethnic groups demonstrated the intensity of their preferences for expanding NATO and helped maintain pressure on senators of those states as the ratification vote approached.

The only constituency active in the NATO enlargement debate with electoral clout was the coalition of ethnic groups. There was no organization with the potential to mobilize grassroots pressure that opposed enlargement. Ratifying NATO enlargement was the correct political decision—at least from an electoral standpoint. As Kupchan (2000, p. 134) observed, “Voting for enlargement kept happy Americans of central European extraction, the defense industry, and conservative Russophobes. In contrast, voting against enlargement
may have been the right thing to do, but it had no political pay-offs.”

Isaacs (1998) wrote, “Those few who care strongly enough to pressure their senators tend to be ‘ethnic Americans’ who identify with one of the proposed members.” NATO enlargement was clearly a “no-lose” issue; however, voting against it may carry electoral consequences. The potential for electoral backlash loomed large if senators in the battleground states were to vote against enlargement. For example, the New Jersey division of the Polish American Congress mobilized against Senator Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) after he supported delaying the ratification vote in March 1998. The demonstrators warned him: “We will remember in November” (Thomma, 1998; Goldgeier, 1999, p. 139).

An asset for the administration’s ratification campaign was the coalition of ethnic groups capable of grassroots mobilization. The outside lobbying by the ethnic coalition at this stage of the process helped the administration convert grassroots pressure into legislative influence. By coordinating the activities of a wide array of public groups in support of enlargement, the administration demonstrated to senators public momentum for ratification. Milbank (1998) pointed out that “NATO enlargement may well have cleared the Senate without NERO’s [the acronym of the administration’s ratification office] sales job,” but the support from the ethnic groups added another layer of reinforcement: electoral pressure. Take for example a story from the Minnesota Hungarians, a sister organization of the Hungarian American Coalition, in their campaign for NATO enlargement:

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41 Note that Kupchan, a Europe expert in the Clinton NSC, emerged as an opponent of NATO enlargement after he left government.

42 Torricelli was already on the Polish American Congress’ radar as early as 1995 when he (then a member of the House) change the target date of enlargement from January 10, 1999 to “in the near future” in the NATO Participation Act Amendments (Polish American Congress, 1999). On 30 April 1998, he voted for ratification.
In 1996 a group of the Minnesota Hungarians (MH) joined forces with fellow Minnesotans of Czech and Polish origin to promote the idea of NATO expansion, specifically to advance the inclusion of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. We got our informal name, “The Cookie Coalition,” because a group member brought in cookies decorated with “vote for NATO” to a meeting with Sen. Wellstone. We supported each other to reach our common goal, by writing letters to Senators, collecting signatures from our communities and giving TV interviews about the advantages of NATO enlargement. One member of each group was asked to testify before a Minnesota Senate Committee and a House Committee about this issue. We were proud that Minnesota and California were the only two states that expressed support for NATO expansion (Hungarian American Coalition).43

Before the ratification vote, the Polish American Congress (1999) issued a call to all 50 state divisions and chapters, as well as hundreds of other national Polish American organizations, for a letter-writing campaign to senators. Accounts of “Central and East-European ethnic groups roam[ing] the corridors of the Senate office buildings in search of votes” provided evidence of their political activism (Grayson, 1999, p. 147). Garrett and Omestad (1998) reported: “Nineteen U.S. ethnic groups, under the banner of the Central and East European Coalition, bombarded the Senate with letters and phone calls on behalf of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.” The CEEC maintained pressure on senators with “congressional scorecards that kept a running count of each U.S. Senator’s position on expansion.” These activities were “part of a larger grass roots outreach campaign that intensified during the Senate debate on enlargement” (Koszorus, 2007). In recognition of the public support for NATO enlargement, a “Dear Colleague” letter, dated 24 April 1998, from Senators Roth (R-DE), Lieberman (D-CT), and McCain (R-AZ) noted that “these endorsements are a powerful reflection of the broad consensus affirming that NATO

enlargement is in America’s national interest and deserves the full support of the Senate” (Asmus, 2002, p. 285).

On 30 April 1998, the U.S. Senate by a vote of 80 to 19 ratified the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary into NATO, the fifth NATO legislature to ratify the protocols of accession.44 Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) said: “NATO enlargement will make Europe more stable and America more secure” (Schmitt, 1998a). The 84-year old Jan Novak, national director of the Polish American Congress, said: “I never thought that I would live to see the day when Poland is not only free—but safe” (Asmus, 2002, p. 288). Of the 80 “yea” votes, 45 were from Republicans and 35 from Democrats. In what Grayson (1999, p. 208) termed “Ethniclandia,” the ten battleground states in the Midwestern and Northeastern U.S., 18 of the 20 senators voted for ratification.45

In recognition of this momentous occasion, Edward Moskal, President of the Polish American Congress (1999), said:

This is a historic moment for Poland, Europe and the United States. Together we are building a stable and secure future. I wish to thank all Polish Americans and our friends who took an active part in the appeals and campaigns of letter writing and telephone calls organized by the Polish American Congress over the past seven years to bring Poland into NATO. Together we made it happen!

Together we did it!

The efforts of the Polish-American community was recognized by the Polish government.

Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek said:

44 The admission of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary required the unanimous ratification by all NATO legislatures.

45 The two senators from “Ethniclandia” who voted “nay” were Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY). For a complete breakdown of the ratification vote, see http://govtrack.us/congress/votes/105-1998/s117.
We thank all of those who have supported us on our journey to NATO and helped in the ratification process. We express our special thanks to all Americans of Polish heritage, particularly the Polish American Congress, whose support for Poland’s aspirations has played such a pivotal role (Polish American Congress, 1999).

Summary

This chapter focuses on the developments from March 1997 to April 1998. Recognizing the importance of NATO enlargement as a foreign-policy goal for Clinton’s second term, an office was established to spearhead the administration’s ratification campaign. Rosner, appointed special advisor for NATO enlargement, was aware of the political obstacles that could potentially derail ratification. First and foremost was the composition of the Senate after the 1996 election, which became more Republican and conservative. Rosner chose a ratification strategy predicated on securing Republican support. The administration also incorporated a public dimension in its ratification campaign by rounding up support from diverse societal groups to build a sense of public momentum for ratifying enlargement. Along with the coalition of ethnic groups, the administration also received support from labor unions, veterans organizations, and the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO—notable for its ties to foreign-policy officials of past and future Republican administrations. The goal of the administration was to develop a broad base of domestic support to achieve bipartisan consensus for the ratification of NATO enlargement.

The administration was able to utilize the resources of various groups to generate a sense of public momentum for ratification. There is support for the proposition that administration officials mobilized like-minded groups to generate public support for initiatives that lack public awareness. NATO enlargement was an issue that fits this
category. The key asset for the administration’s ratification campaign was the coalition of ethnic groups who demonstrated their willingness to outside lobby. The grassroots action helped shape public opinion on the NATO enlargement issue, and most importantly, forced policymakers to pay attention. The endorsements from local and state legislatures groups received on behalf of the administration created the appearance that NATO enlargement had been publicly debated, when in reality, much of the “debate” was stimulated by the pro-enlargement groups themselves. On an issue that did not attract much attention in the public arena, they were decisive in generating a sense of public momentum the administration needed to achieve a “good win” in the Senate.

Rosner pointed out that the electoral clout of the ethnic communities was a factor favoring enlargement. The importance of this constituency as the potential swing vote in the 1996 presidential election was a factor in triggering the executive-legislative contention over NATO enlargement. Another objective of outside lobbying is that it serves as “rehearsal” for electoral mobilization. Mass electoral pressure was directed at the Senate during the ratification stage. The ability for the ethnic coalition, especially the Polish American Congress, to mobilize electoral pressure made it more likely that senators from the battleground states would be committed to voting “yea” as the ratification vote approached. By maintaining voting records of senators and bombarding them with letters and other forms of communications, leaders of the ethnic coalition organized a campaign that assisted the administration’s drive to obtain as many votes as possible. The outside lobbying in the lead-up to the ratification vote signaled the intensity of support for NATO enlargement in the ethnic communities and generated electoral pressure for senators to put their votes in the “yea” column. Building a sense of public momentum for enlargement created the perception
that it would be politically costly for senators to vote against the preferences of their constituents.
This thesis focuses on the impact of executive-legislative relations on the lobbying strategies of interest groups by using the Clinton administration’s decision to enlarge NATO as the case study. Central to the examination is the coalition of ethnic groups representing Americans of Central and Eastern European ancestry lobbying for the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary into NATO. Three variables are posited to guide the theory development in group strategies in foreign-policy lobbying: party control of government; issue salience; and electoral pressure. The concluding chapter is divided into three parts. Part One discusses the findings of the NATO enlargement case study and the significance of the findings to the proposed theoretical framework. Part Two offers implications on the study of interest groups in U.S. foreign policymaking. Part Three proposes some suggestions for further research based on this study that could advance our knowledge of organized interests in foreign policymaking in U.S. and non-U.S. political settings.

**Part I: Findings**

*Party Control*
The “party control” variable posits the importance of the domestic structure on the lobbying strategies of interest groups. Since U.S. political power is divided and shared between the executive and legislative branches, interest groups have two separate yet interdependent decision-making arenas to consider. A focus on the U.S. policymaking structure must take into account the impact of party control on executive-legislative relations. Animating this variable is the proposition that a change in party control of government would result in a shift in agenda-setting dynamics between the branches. Under unified government, there is expectation for Congress to delegate to the executive branch in setting the agenda. Since the president’s co-partisans are in control of the levers of power in Congress, a compatibility of policy preferences is more likely to occur. However, when there is divided party control of government, there are partisan and institutional incentives to highlight policy differences between Congress and the administration. There is greater expectation for congressional assertiveness under divided government. An interest group’s decision to target a particular decision-making arena is shaped by the branch of government that assumes the lead in setting the agenda. Thus, it is proposed that interest groups are more likely to target the executive branch during unified government, and interest groups are more likely to target Congress during divided government. What does the evidence in the NATO enlargement case say about the impact of party control on the lobbying decisions of interest groups?

The executive branch was a primary decision-making arena and a target of the ethnic coalition. After learning about the Clinton administration’s decision to emphasize the Partnership for Peace at the 1994 NATO Summit, the most significant coordinated action was a massive letter-writing campaign to make known the ethnic communities’ displeasure over the administration’s decision to prioritize cooperation with Russia over the aspirations
of Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Republics to join NATO. With over 100,000 pieces of communications directed at various administration officials, this was a significant statement by the ethnic groups to force Clinton administration officials to pay attention. This provided clear evidence that the ethnic coalition targeted the executive branch during unified government. With the absence of Congress challenging the administration when Democrats controlled both branches of government, leaders of the ethnic coalition made the strategic decision to target the Clinton administration. There is support for the hypothesis that interest groups are likely to target the executive branch during unified government.

An auxiliary, or “follow-on,” hypothesis concerns the choice of lobbying strategies. Since outside lobbying is a strategy of mass persuasion, it is aimed at a large number of lawmakers, thus a strategy suited for Congress. The hypothesis advanced here is that interest groups are more likely to outside lobby Congress. The NATO enlargement case provides an unexpected development. The most significant outside lobbying conducted by the ethnic coalition was directed at the presidential administration, not Congress. Attention given to the enlargement initiatives was significant in building congressional support, but these efforts did not match the magnitude of the letter-writing campaign directed at the Clinton White House in December 1993. Administration officials may have responded to the barrage of communications by organizing a meeting with ethnic-group leaders the evening before the presidential speech in January 1994.

Outside lobbying is not a strategy geared toward a particular branch of government and its susceptibility to public pressure. The decision to outside lobby may be related to the importance group leaders attach to a particular decision-making arena at a particular stage of policy development. Before divided government occurred in January 1995, the decision to
enlarge NATO was largely confined within the administration. This was the stage before the decision-making was exposed to congressional pressure. Ethnic leaders wanted to make their point in the most overt way possible by targeting the Clinton administration with well-coordinated grassroots action. Due to the challenge of mobilizing collective action, ethnic leaders were motivated to outside lobby the White House by the fact that the executive branch was deemed the most important to foreign-policy formulation. And thus, group decision to outside lobby has relatively little to do with the institutional designs of the decision-making arenas, but is largely dependent on which arena assumes the role in setting the agenda. This study shows that the executive branch is not immune to strategies of mass persuasion.

Divided government resulted in a shift in the ethnic coalition’s strategy. The Republicans assuming control of Congress marked the beginning of congressional assertiveness on the NATO enlargement issue. The Contract with America, the GOP’s legislative agenda, provided the platform for the ethnic coalition to pressure the administration. There was a “before and after” effect as a result of the change in party control of Congress. The ethnic coalition lobbying for the enlargement initiatives under unified government was unsuccessful owing to the lack of congressional interest and support. Administration opposition precluded further congressional action when Clinton’s co-partisans controlled Congress. But under divided government, administration opposition in fact encouraged House Republicans backed by the ethnic coalition to promote legislation aimed at defining the “who” and “when” of enlargement. The legislative alerts issued by the Polish American Congress for the National Security Revitalization Act, the bill that developed from the Contract, provided evidence of the ethnic coalition lobbying for
Republican-led initiatives. It also displayed the willingness of the ethnic leaders to engage in partisan politics. Divided government creates an executive-legislative context ripe for conflict expansion (Schattschneider, 1960). Contention between the branches does create a political environment conducive for societal actors to enter the policy process. Republicans in need of outside support for their congressional initiatives created opportunities for the ethnic coalition to access the legislative branch. Congress became the base of support for the ethnic coalition’s strategy to pressure the administration, and this strategy was aided in part by a change in party control of Congress. Thus, the evidence in the case study does validate the hypothesis that interest groups are likely to lobby Congress under divided government.

Although this study did not examine every aspect of the “party control” variable due to a limited number of observations, its use did generate insights into how shift in party control of Congress and its relations with the Presidency influence the strategic choices of interest groups. Of particular interest is the impact of divided government, which has become a fixture in the contemporary American political landscape. The examination of split-party control is not exhaustive as there are other possible configurations of divided government. One possible configuration, which occurred during the NATO enlargement case, is the change in party control of both chambers of Congress after the 1994 midterm election. A configuration that did not occur, but merits further research, is the impact of a split Congress, where party control is divided between the House and Senate. Executive-legislative relations under this configuration could be complex since there is interplay of both unified and divided governments. There could be same-party control between the administration and Senate, but divided control between the administration and House, or
vice-versa. A distinction could be made between simple and compound divided government (Bowling & Ferguson, 2001).

The potential for a divided Congress complicates group lobbying decisions. Not only do interest groups have to deal with inter-branch competition, but there is also the possibility of intra-branch competition. In the NATO enlargement case, congressional assertiveness stemmed from the House due to the fact that the Contract with America was a pledge taken by House Republicans, but the Senate became the decision-making arena during the ratification stage due to its constitutionally-mandated responsibility to ratify treaties. Although a divided Congress did not come into play, the possibility of a Democratic-controlled Senate may have resulted in the administration selecting a different ratification strategy, which in turn could influence how pro-enlargement groups lobby for congressional support. Most of the lawmaking responsibilities are shared between the House and Senate. When party control of the legislative branch is split itself, this imposes a hurdle on the policy process. It is possible that a divided Congress is more conducive to policy gridlock (Binder, 1999). Guiding legislation along the legislative process is an important measure of group lobbying influence. Understanding how interest groups navigate through different configurations of divided government creates new wrinkles to the research on the impact of executive-legislative relations on group lobbying strategies.

Another issue worthy of further research is whether divided government is the result of a presidential or midterm election. Coleman and Parker (2009, p. 395) asked: “Does it make any difference if the divided government starting point is a presidential rather than midterm election?” Shift in party control of Congress in the middle of a presidential term has occurred on several occasions. Recent examples include the change from a Republican-
Democratic-controlled House after the 2006 election and from a Democratic- to Republican-controlled House after the 2010 election. Both elections signified the shift from unified to divided government in the middle of a presidential term. Pertaining to the NATO enlargement case is the shift from a Democratic- to Republican-controlled Congress (House and Senate) after the 1994 midterm election. The results of the 1996 election continued the pattern of divided party control of the executive and legislative branches. The focus has been on divided government as a result of a midterm election. Perhaps a more dramatic development would be change in party control of the White House. Considering the executive branch is central to foreign-policy formulation, a change in presidential administration could significantly shape the political landscape. How interest groups adjust their lobbying strategies when a new presidential administration arrives in Washington is a topic of interest.

Party control not only entails the change from unified to divided government, but also the change from divided to unified government. Investigating variance on the “party control” variable must involve both directions of the causal relationship. This study focuses on the former, using the NATO enlargement case to examine the change from unified to divided control on the lobbying strategies of interest groups. Assuming the circumstances are similar to the case used in this study, change of party control as a result of a midterm election during the first term of a presidential administration, are the lobbying strategies likely to be the mirror opposite to the findings of this study if there is change from divided to unified party control of government? Or is it possible that a change of party control in the other direction would result in a different pattern of lobbying strategies? And if so, what explains this peculiarity? An examination of the party control of American political institutions on
interest-group strategies is developing into a fairly robust research agenda that could reveal surprising findings. The issues raised here all provide avenues for further research.

**Issue Salience**

The second variable posited in this study relates to issue salience. The key questions driving the investigation are when and why interest groups outside lobby. The “party control” variable discussed earlier addressed the “when” by pointing out that the level of contention in the political environment is a determinant in group decisions to outside lobby. The detection of political opposition is likely to motivate groups to pursue outside strategies. Seeking to answer “why” is the major reason for selecting issue salience as a variable in the theoretical framework. Kollman (1998, p. 76) stated: “outside lobbying forces policymakers to pay attention.” More precisely, outside lobbying convinces policymakers that an issue is salient to the attentive public. Groups need to demonstrate mass support for an issue to enhance the electoral significance of grassroots mobilization. As Eshbaugh-Soha and Peake (2004, p. 184) observed, “policies that are salient push electoral leaders to respond to public concerns or face electoral consequences.” Grassroots action is an effective way for groups to signal the salience of an issue to policymakers. Since this study is focused on the role of grassroots groups, the ability to bring mass pressure onto policymakers is a major source of political influence. This begins by demonstrating the intensity of their policy preferences to policymakers through outside lobbying.

The letter-writing campaign directed at the Clinton administration in December 1993 provided evidence of the ethnic coalition raising awareness of the NATO enlargement issue by outside lobbying. Based on the volume of communications sent to the White House, the
letter-writing campaign was successful in demonstrating the intensity of support within the ethnic communities for the admission of the Central and Eastern European states into NATO. The objective of outside lobbying is fairly straightforward: mobilizing grassroots support forces policymakers to pay attention. White House officials responded to the letter-writing campaign by organizing a meeting with leaders of the ethnic coalition in Milwaukee in January 1994. Even in the absence of congressional pressure in late-1993, outside lobbying made administration officials realized the importance of NATO enlargement in the ethnic communities. Coordinated grassroots action helped the ethnic coalition established access to the White House. The Milwaukee meeting signified the first in a series of exchanges between administration officials and ethnic leaders through the course of the NATO enlargement debate. Outside lobbying does not often occur due to the difficulty of organizing collective action (Olson, 1965). But when it is successful, its effects could be wide-ranging.

The decision by group leaders to outside lobby did not occur in a vacuum. A factor that aided the effectiveness of outside lobbying was contention in the policymaking environment. Divided government creates partisan and institutional incentives to highlight policy differences between the branches. The ethnic coalition using Congress to pressure the administration contributed to tensions between the executive and legislative branches over the NATO enlargement issue. Outside lobbying probably would have been effective in demonstrating the intensity of policy preferences in the ethnic communities regardless of the party configuration of government. But divided government intensified the executive-legislative contention, which increased the effectiveness of conflict-expansion strategies such as outside lobbying. Not only did the outside lobbying by the ethnic groups brought out
differences in the policy positions of the Clinton administration and the Republican-controlled Congress, but the demonstration of mass pressure increased the electoral stakes associated with the NATO enlargement issue. It is fair to assume that group leaders need to take into account the level of political contention in the policymaking when planning their lobbying strategies. This is especially important for leaders of groups dependent on grassroots mobilization as a source of political influence.

The discussion so far focuses on the pressure aspect of outside strategies. This is the expectation normally associated with the role of interest groups in U.S. politics. However, it is also important to examine how grassroots mobilization could become an asset for policymakers. This issue surfaced during the ratification stage when the administration needed to generate a sense of public momentum to ratify NATO enlargement by an overwhelming margin. The administration through its ratification campaign sought to convert public support into legislative influence. But whether presidential appeals could generate congressional support “depends upon the extent to which salience is a political asset” (Canes-Wrone, 2001, p. 324).

With the exception of the ethnic communities, public awareness of the NATO enlargement issue was low. The administration mobilized pro-enlargement groups to generate a groundswell of public support for ratification. The goal was to make senators of all 50 states aware of the importance of NATO enlargement, and not just senators representing states with high concentrations of voters of Central and Eastern European ethnic backgrounds. The lack of opposition at the grassroots level provided latitude for pro-enlargement groups to shape public debate inclined toward ratification. If anti-enlargement groups were able to mobilize at the grassroots level, that would have undermined the
administration’s goal of achieving a “good win” for ratification. There would have been competition for public opinion if awareness of the issue was higher. But NATO enlargement was an issue that did not stimulate much general public interest. The factor that benefited the pro-enlargement coalition was the absence of opposition at the grassroots level. The low salience of the issue meant that outside groups were decisive in shaping public debate and played a major role in drumming up public support. Thus, the NATO enlargement case does provide support for the hypothesis that policymakers are likely to rely on groups to mobilize grassroots support for issues lacking public awareness.

Issue salience is a variable that captures both the pressure and supply aspects of group relations with policymakers. Interest groups seek to raise awareness of issues of concern by mobilizing their members for grassroots action. But raising awareness of an issue also makes policymakers pay attention. It is well established at this point that outside lobbying is a pressure strategy. However, less attention is devoted to ways outside lobbying could be a tool for policymakers. Policymakers need public opinion on their side to push their initiatives through Congress. The ability for interest groups to mobilize grassroots support is an asset for policymakers seeking to convert issue salience into legislative influence. Relations between policymakers and interest groups are not uni-dimensional. There is, of course, the potential for like-minded groups to offer services to policymakers. It is thus useful to think of group relations with policymakers as a continuum, with the pressure side on one end and supply side on the other. The role of societal interests in U.S. foreign policymaking needs to focus more on the “inside-out” aspect of lobbying, where groups become part of a continuing reciprocal relationship with executive officials. Since presidential appeals for public support often fall “on deaf ears” (Edwards, 2003), the need for
presidents to appeal to supportive segments of society, in particular, like-minded groups becomes greater (Cohen, 2010). U.S. foreign policymaking is not immune to the influence of public opinion, and especially on decisions requiring congressional involvement, there is thus greater expectation for presidential-group interaction.

Electoral Pressure

The third variable posits the importance of electoral pressure. A source of political influence for grassroots groups is electoral mobilization. The ability to mobilize at the grassroots level is intimated in statements identifying the coalition of ethnic groups lobbying for NATO enlargement as an organization “representing more than 20 million Americans with roots in Central and East Europe” (CEEC position paper, 1996). Electoral politics motivated the Republicans to include NATO enlargement in the Contract with America due largely to the issue’s appeal to the ethnic voters in the “battleground states.” The importance of these states in the 1996 presidential election played a part in Clinton’s decision to announce 1999 when the “first group of countries” would join NATO before a predominately Polish-American audience. These two examples provide support for the influence of electoral politics in the U.S. decision to enlarge NATO. Groups representing a large number of members have greater potential to mobilize electoral pressure. Another factor is the organization of the membership bases of grassroots groups. Paul and Paul (2009, pp. 102-112) distinguishes between ethnic groups with members dispersed across the country and concentrated in selected states. The organization of membership bases may have a minimal impact on groups influencing congressional decision-making. But since this study focuses particularly on ethnic groups’ interactions with the executive branch, the organization of members would play a greater role in determining the ability for grassroots groups to
influence presidential decision-making through electoral pressure. And thus, *electoral pressure is more likely to be a source of influence for groups in states where members constitute key voting blocs.*

The organization of grassroots groups matters less in lobbying Congress because it is a branch of government more responsive to public pressure. Regardless of whether their membership bases are dispersed or concentrated, groups should have enough members at the grassroots level to persuade members of Congress to take up their causes. Since congressional elections occur every two years, members of Congress are sensitive to constituent concerns due to the imperative of re-election (Mayhew, 1974). However, foreign policymaking does need to take into account the importance of the executive branch. Groups do need to consider the executive branch a target when lobbying foreign-policy decisions. The White House is more insulated from public pressure compared to Congress, but it is not impenetrable. The opportunity to influence presidential decision-making with electoral pressure is far and few, perhaps the fourth year of the first term when a president is seeking re-election. The need to win votes from a key voting bloc in key swing states may motivate presidents to be responsive to group pressure. The importance of the battleground states with significant number of voters of Central and Eastern European ethnic backgrounds was a reason that the NATO enlargement issue received attention in the 1996 presidential campaign.

The high concentration of voters passionate about NATO enlargement in states that could decide the outcome of the 1996 presidential election made electoral pressure a credible strategy of influence. Deploying electoral pressure is based on creating the perception that grassroots pressure could influence electoral outcomes. Electoral pressure and issue salience
are closely connected. The outside lobbying by the ethnic communities demonstrated the intensity of their support for expanding NATO and made known to policymakers the electoral consequences associated with the issue. Another point about outside lobbying is that it simulates electoral mobilization. It helps reinforce perceptions of elected officials that if voters are active in demonstrating their preferences on an issue, then how they vote would most likely be based on that issue. This motivates elected officials to be sensitive to group pressure, especially if members are willing to engage in grassroots action. The Clinton and Dole campaigns in 1996 believed in the importance of the NATO enlargement issue in the key swing states, and ethnic leaders reinforced this perception by making known to both campaigns the importance ethnic voters attached to this issue.

Is the policy advocacy of ethnic groups enhanced if members constitute major voting blocs in key swing states? For example, the number of Cuban Americans in Florida and New Jersey or the percentage of Polish Americans in certain congressional districts of the Midwestern and Northeastern U.S. underscores the observation that although ethnic groups constitute a small percentage of the overall U.S. population, they could still exert significant political influence. Having members concentrated in states that could decide the outcome of a presidential race helps a group demonstrate its electoral clout, but that is only half the story. The other half rests on the political activism of its members. Key to policy advocacy for grassroots groups is the willingness of their members to pursue political action. Electoral pressure as a lobbying strategy has to be considered in tandem with a group’s ability to mobilize for political action. Electoral pressure would not have been as effective if voters of Central and Eastern European ethnic backgrounds were not motivated to lobby for NATO expansion. Ethnic leaders mobilized them in a letter-writing campaign and thereby provided
the NATO enlargement issue with electoral significance. The presence of ethnic voters in
key swing states in itself was not going to trigger the electoral pressure necessary to
influence presidential decision-making. The intensity of support or opposition on an issue
has to be demonstrated through political action. Outside lobbying requires coordination, and
above all, leadership. The ability to coordinate grassroots action and be implemented
effectively signifies a group has overcome the dilemma of collective action. It is possible
that groups with concentrated membership bases are more effective in mobilizing grassroots
pressure than groups with dispersed bases. But the key to determining the validity of this
proposition depends on the willingness of group members to engage in political action.

Groups with members concentrated in key swing states may have organizational
advantages over groups with dispersed membership bases, but that by itself is not likely to
convert electoral pressure into a strategy of political influence. It needs to be “activated” by
a well-organized outside lobbying campaign. Salience of an issue is the factor determining
the ability for groups to convert grassroots mobilization into electoral pressure. Group
mobilization is an important factor in shaping the influence of grassroots groups since their
source of influence depends on politically-active members. While the hypothesis posited to
test the “electoral pressure” variable proves inconclusive, an amended hypothesis could be
offered here. Thus, the ability for grassroots groups to provide an issue with electoral
significance depends on the level of salience members attach to that issue. Although this
study is focused on the impact of the policymaking environment on the strategies of interest
groups, how groups overcome the dilemma of collective action and allocate their resources
are important in determining their ability to exert political influence. If electoral pressure is
an effective strategy for grassroots groups, then more research is needed to examine the internal-external nexus of outside lobbying.

**Part II: Implications**

The examination of the coalition of ethnic groups lobbying for the expansion of NATO underscores the influence of societal interests in U.S. foreign policymaking. Ethnic groups constitute a major part in the constellation of interest groups seeking to influence foreign-policy decisions. This study could be applied toward a broader area of study on groups reliant on grassroots mobilization as a source of political influence. Berry (1999) observed that the rise of citizen groups may point to the emergence of a “new liberalism.” The rise in the political activism of ethnic groups in the post-Cold War era suggests that a similar pattern may be developing in foreign policymaking (Smith T. , 2000). Interest-group behavior has responded in kind to the overall changes of the policymaking environment. As the foreign-policy process becomes more pluralist and exposed to societal pressure, groups involved have greater latitude to use grassroots mobilization as a strategy of influence. The outside lobbying by the ethnic coalition in the NATO enlargement case demonstrated that such provocative strategies force policymakers to pay attention. The effectiveness of outside lobbying also suggests the possibility of enhanced democratic participation in foreign policymaking. This study helps dispel the notion that U.S. foreign policymaking is confined to small circles of advisors in settings well insulated from public pressure. Even on a significant issue such as NATO expansion, public influence, in particular, the role of organized interests could have an impact on U.S. decision-making. The study on the domestic sources of U.S. foreign policy must take into account the role of societal groups and the strategies they use to access the political process.
Group activism contributes partly to the development of a pluralist foreign-policy system. But the exposure of the foreign-policy process to public pressure is also the result of increased partisanship in executive-legislative relations. Congressional assertiveness has provided opportunities for groups to enter the policy process. The role of Congress as a decision-making arena also creates opportunities for congressional entrepreneurs to seek interest-group support for their initiatives. The institutional context plays an important role in shaping the behavior of interest groups. This study seeks to contribute to the discussion by examining how groups exploit partisan divisions in the policymaking environment to enhance their lobbying influence. One of the findings established in this study is that when executive-legislative relations are contentious, interest groups are more likely to use conflict-expansion strategies such as outside lobbying. When the potential for a “contested agenda” between the branches are at its greatest, this sets up the political environment in which conflict-expansion strategies thrive. An aim of this study is the consideration of the ways groups develop access to the executive branch. Of course, groups could seek direct access by forging ties with White House officials. The direct access path assumes there is a compatibility of interests; however, that is not always the case. This study suggests the possibility of groups developing indirect access by using Congress as a platform to pressure the administration. A shift to divided government creates incentives for congressional entrepreneurs to push initiatives that highlight policy differences between the branches. Lobbying for these initiatives provide opportunities for groups to enter the policy process. Building congressional support thus makes it more likely that the administration would respond to public pressure. Group do need to consider how partisanship influences their choice of lobbying strategies. And thus, attention needs to be paid to the impact of the
in institutional context on group strategies in foreign-policy lobbying. Pluralism alone does not adequately explain why interest groups have been more successful in lobbying foreign-policy decisions in the post-Cold War era. The explanation has to be combined with the rise in partisanship and divided party control of Congress and the Presidency.

Thomas Dine, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), developed a lobbying strategy in the 1980s based on three objectives: “Spread the power base. Go to the grass roots. Get involved in the political process” (Smith H., 1988, p. 226). Even one of the most influential lobbies in foreign policy in Washington D.C. adjusted its strategy in response to the changing political context. The increase in the number of actors involved in foreign policymaking inside government is a reason for the increased use of strategies of mass persuasion. This study clearly demonstrates that foreign policymaking is not immune to grassroots lobbying (Clough, 1994). But an issue to consider is whether outside lobbying reflects a genuine expression of mass political participation or what may be considered attempts in “astroturf building.”

There is optimism that the rise in grassroots lobbying reflects the emergence of a “bottom-up” approach in the flow of ideas in the foreign policymaking process. The rise in group activism and use of outside lobbying does point to increased pluralism in the foreign policymaking process, but not to the extent where ideas flow from bottom to top. What may appear to be grassroots mobilization could actually be attempts in astroturf building. There are suggestions that the administration sought to generate a groundswell of public support for NATO enlargement to increase the margin of ratification amid general public apathy regarding the issue. Attempts in generating popular support for an issue of low salience suggests that the Clinton administration may have colluded with pro-enlargement groups to
manufacture astroturf (Kollman, 1998, p. 158). If there is no effective opposition at the grassroots level, who was there to question whether the public support the administration developed was genuine or contrived? Democratic theorists may be disappointed to find out that outside lobbying may be subject to deception, thus falling short of representing true grassroots action. But from a more pragmatic, policymaking perspective, the simple question is: does it matter as long as outside lobbying can put pressure on policymakers? The administration’s objective during the ratification stage was fairly straightforward: pressure senators to ratify enlargement. As Hedrick Smith (1988, p. 251) observed: “They [members of Congress] dare not ignore any major pressure group, even if the pressure looks contrived. For mass mail usually shows organizational force, and that threatens to touch the politician’s lifeline of survival and reelection.” Thus, achieving policy outcomes may be more important than the substance of the strategy.

The final point made regarding the limits of pluralism in U.S. foreign policymaking rests within the arena of interest-group politics. Mancur Olson (1965) observed that the key to political action for groups is to overcome the dilemma of collective action. Groups that could mobilize for political action are clearly the ones representing the constellation of interest groups in the foreign-policy arena. The NATO enlargement case shows the role of the Polish American Congress spearheading the lobbying campaign by mobilizing grassroots support from its local and state divisions and chapters. This is especially apparent for grassroots groups reliant on their members as a source of political influence. Group leaders need to convince their members to pursue political action, and the grassroots pressure would force policymakers to pay attention to their causes. This study shows that political mobilization is a prerequisite for group influence in the policy process. Having groups with significant
presence in electorally-influential areas is a factor, but if they are not able to mobilize for grassroots action, then they are not likely to convert that into political influence. Outside lobbying is not devoid of organization and leadership. In fact, they are critical to the success of any grassroots campaigns. Outside lobbying connects the internal organizational aspect of group influence with the policymaking arena. More importantly, it demonstrates to policymakers the potential for groups to mobilize for grassroots action. The key to explaining the lack of diversity in ethnic activism in U.S. foreign policy is the fact that some groups have not been able to overcome the dilemma of collective action. The inability for some groups to mobilize for political action is a key factor limiting the diversity of ethnic-group influence in the politics of U.S. foreign policy. Simply put, some groups do not have the organizational skills to force policymakers to pay attention.

Related to the issue of collective action is the lack of general public awareness for foreign-policy issues. Groups that are able to mobilize for political action have members who are passionate about the issues of concern. The NATO enlargement case shows that the ethnic communities of Central and Eastern European origins are passionate regarding issues concerning U.S. relations with their ancestral homelands. The same could be said about the roles of Cuban Americans, Armenian Americans, and Jewish Americans, other influential ethnic groups involved in U.S. foreign policymaking today (Paul & Paul, 2009, pp. 136-51). This study shows that grassroots groups could exert influence over the policy process if they could mobilize for political action. This study did not find that the strategies groups used to lobby foreign-policy decisions are different from those used in domestic-policy lobbying. Outsidelobbying, regardless of the policy dimension, shared the same objective in forcing policymakers to pay attention. However, what is apparent in group politics in foreign-policy
lobbying is the lack of competition. The mobilization of bias is clearly in favor of groups willing to pursue political action (Schattschneider, 1960). It is possible that intermestic issues, such as international trade, are more likely to see a healthy debate between groups arguing the pros and cons of an issue. But it is less apparent where the domestic consequences rest on international security issues, such as NATO enlargement, except for the assurance in the ethnic communities that their ancestral homelands are integrated in U.S.-led security institutions. Groups involved on issues not regarded by the general public as salient are more likely to shape public debate. The limits to diversity and pluralism in U.S. policymaking is attributed to the fact that not all groups are created equal. Groups that have better organizational capabilities and financial resources are more effective in mobilizing for political action. But the general public apathy on most foreign-policy issues means that groups able to mobilize on these issues are likely to dominate public discourse, and thus more likely to win as well.

**Part III: Directions for Further Research**

*The Transnational Impact*

Although this study focuses on U.S.-based groups in the domestic politics of NATO enlargement, the role of foreign governments also deserves attention. By far the most important figure was Poland’s ambassador to the U.S. Jerzy Kozinski (Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 138-9). The Polish embassy orchestrated a lobbying campaign for NATO membership that, in many ways, paralleled the administration’s effort. The Polish embassy in Washington D.C. mobilized its consulates in Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York to build U.S. public support for NATO enlargement. Grayson (1999, p. 181) wrote about the efforts of the Polish
diplomatic corps at the grassroots level: “The consul-generals helped build support among local business, trade unions, civic associations, and fraternal organizations. Polish diplomats actually took the lead in obtaining endorsements from nineteen state legislatures. Later, they joined Rosner in soliciting support from governors, mayors, and city councils, an activity the embassy had begun before NERO’s [the administration’s ratification office] formation.” The Polish embassy’s efforts to build grassroots support was also assisted by the local divisions and chapters of the Polish American Congress (Goldgeier, 1999, pp. 138-9). The Czech and Hungarian embassies in Washington pursued similar efforts, but the campaign by the Polish embassy carried the most weight owing to the large number of Polish Americans.

Robert Putnam (1988), in his seminal essay on two-level games, noted the potential for foreign governments to collude with domestic groups to affect the terms of ratification for international agreements. Knopf (1998, p. 70) also raised a similar point: “it is important to consider the possible impact of interaction between U.S. activism and advocacy efforts by governmental and societal actors abroad.” The politics of NATO enlargement presents an opportunity to examine the possibility of candidate states seeking to influence the decision-making of NATO members, especially the U.S. A strategy foreign governments use is domestic political penetration, and according to Walt (2005, p. 198), this strategy is effective when “a foreign government can rely upon a sympathetic group of supporters within the target country.” Unlike hiring professional lobbyists, who are often portrayed as “hired guns,” foreign governments working with domestic groups confer a level of legitimacy to their lobbying activities. The Polish government bolstered its legitimacy by working with the Polish American Congress and the administration’s ratification team. The ability to connect
with both domestic groups and the U.S. government in Poland’s campaign for NATO membership points to a new path of research in the lobbying behavior of foreign governments. While there are numerous stories of foreign governments spending million of dollars seeking to improve their images in the U.S., an avenue of research is the examination of how foreign governments seek to legitimize their lobbying activities through cooperation with domestic groups.

Keeping NATO’s Door Opened

The role of the ethnic coalition in lobbying for NATO expansion did not end when Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary were officially admitted into NATO in April 1999, the 50th anniversary of the Alliance’s founding. Clinton’s vision of an unified, democratic Europe could only be realized if NATO expansion did not establish new lines of division. Goldgeier (1999, p. 172) wrote: “The paradox of enlargement, however, is that the first round only makes sense if NATO delivers on the Clinton administration’s open-door promise in the future.” The presence of the ethnic coalition after the completion of the first round demonstrated continued public support for NATO enlargement. What was significant about the role of ethnic groups was that they lobbied together on behalf of a common endeavor. The 18 organizations that comprise the Central and East Europe Coalition all support NATO memberships for their ancestral homelands. During the first round of enlargement, Baltic-American associations were just as enthusiastic about bringing Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary into NATO as the Polish American Congress and Hungarian American Coalition. The two organizations returned the favor by lobbying for a second round of enlargement, which included the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) plus Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Slovenia. Even before Senate ratification of the first round was
completed, the CEEC lobbied the Clinton administration to keep NATO’s door opened. In a letter to Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, the CEEC stated: “The time has come, we feel, to make it clear that the second round of enlargement will follow” (Hungarian American Coalition, 1998). The signing of the U.S.-Baltic Charter in January 1998 was important in expressing U.S. support for the aspirations of the Baltic states to join NATO (Asmus, 2002, pp. 155-63). However, the decision regarding the next round of enlargement would be made by the George W. Bush administration.

The second round presents an opportunity for another case study on the role of interest groups in NATO enlargement. This is an interesting case since not much is known about the activities of the ethnic coalition and other pro-enlargement groups during the debate on the second round. The research design of this study could be applied and would complement the use of structured, focused comparison. While the case study on the first round considered the shift from unified to divided government as a result of a change in party control of Congress, the second round presents a case to analyze the shift from divided to unified government as a result of change in party control of the presidential administration. The change from a Democratic to Republican administration was a significant political development. Owing to the importance of the executive branch in foreign-policy initiation, its impact on the agenda-setting dynamics may be more important than change in party control of Congress. An issue to consider here is how did change in party control of the executive branch affect the ethnic coalition’s access to the White House vis-à-vis Congress.

If congressional interest in the second round is less than the first, generating public momentum would be even more important. The Bush administration did not establish an office tasked with NATO enlargement ratification similar to what the Clinton administration
did during the first round. The lobbying by the ethnic coalition in the lead-up to the
ratification vote during the first round was coordinated by the administration. An issue to
examine is the ethnic coalition cooperating with other pro-enlargement groups to build
grounds support for the second round in the absence of administration links built
specifically for ratifying enlargement. A case study based on the events of the second round
of NATO enlargement would be a logical extension of this study. The lack of secondary
sources on the second round would necessitate interviews with members of Congress,
administration officials, ethnic leaders, etc. This would further the understanding on the role
of interest groups in the U.S. politics of NATO enlargement and provide an original
contribution to the topic.

*Comparative Politics of NATO Enlargement*

NATO is an institution that operates according to constitutional principles. Article 11 of the
Washington Treaty called for the ratification of amendments be subjected to the
“constitutional processes” of all NATO members. Rosner (1996) observed that while other
NATO members required simple majorities in party-disciplined legislatures for ratification,
the U.S. imposed the highest political hurdle, requiring a two-thirds majority from the
“notoriously independent Senate.” Differences in the terms of ratification among NATO
members offers an opportunity to propose a research agenda examining the comparative
politics of NATO enlargement. This line of research puts into focus the impact of domestic
structure on state-society relations. As Risse-Kappen (1991, p. 484) observed, “Domestic
structures determine how political systems respond to societal demands.” The institutional
setup of political systems impact how societal groups exert influence over the policy process.
For example, the U.S., with political power divided and shared between the executive and
legislative branches, creates opportunities for interest groups to seek access to two separate yet interdependent decision-making arenas. The lobbying behavior of interest groups in parliamentary systems could be different due to the executive being responsible to the legislature. Thus, “A state’s structure may affect the balance of power between domestic groups, their opportunities for striking coalitions, and their ability to construct issue-linkages” (Rauchhaus, 2000, p. 180). While attention is focused on the role of ethnic groups in the U.S. lobbying for NATO enlargement, this genre of research could be extended to examine the role of societal groups in non-U.S. settings. It would further our understanding on variation in domestic structures on group lobbying behavior.

**Final Thoughts**

The aim of this study is to examine the impact of partisanship in policymaking on the behavior of interest groups. The findings suggest that the executive-legislative context indeed shapes the strategies groups use to access the respective decision-making arenas. In fact, increased contention in executive-legislative relations may actually provide interest groups more latitude in exerting influence over the policy process. Foreign policymaking is not immune to the partisan politics normally associated with domestic policymaking. Partisanship and divided government are likely to remain an integral part in relations between Congress and the White House in the 21st century. Cooperation and contention between both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue are likely to shape the parameters of interest-group access. If there is greater cooperation between the executive and legislative branches, interest groups would have less opportunity to exploit partisan divisions. However, if executive-legislative contention intensifies, this may be a positive sign for interest groups. There are indications that the partisanship that defined foreign policymaking in the 1990s
would remain in the 21st century. With less agreement about the role of the U.S. in world affairs, an executive-legislative “tug-of-war” over foreign policymaking is likely to continue. Thus, pessimism for cooperation between the branches means optimism for interest-group activity. Interest groups have been a vibrant part of American political life and would remain so in the 21st century. Their active involvement is contributing to the growing pluralism in U.S. foreign policymaking in a partisan era.
CHAPTER NINE

WORKS CITED


