

# **Military Threats**

The Costs of Coercion and  
the Price of Peace

Branislav L. Slantchev

**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

# Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	x
<i>List of tables</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xii

## **Part I Coercion and Credibility** 1

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Commitment and Signaling in Coercive Bargaining</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1	A Stylization of a Crisis	14
2.2	The Purely Informational Approach	18
2.3	The Search for Credibility	29
2.3.1	Costly Signaling	31
2.3.2	Constraining Future Choices	42
2.3.3	Manipulating Incentives	46
2.4	Conclusion	60

## **Part II A Theory of Military Threats** 63

<b>3</b>	<b>A Model of Military Threats</b>	<b>65</b>
3.1	Characteristics of a Military Threat	65
3.1.1	Military Moves Are Inherently Costly	67
3.1.2	Military Moves Change the Distribution of Power	75
3.1.3	Military Moves Can Reveal Capability	78
3.2	Modeling Military Threats	80
3.2.1	The Technology of Conflict	81
3.2.2	The Military Crisis Game	84
3.3	Threats with Complete Information	86
3.4	Threats under Uncertainty	96
3.5	Conclusion with an Aside on Reputation	116

<b>4</b>	<b>Comparing the Instruments of Coercion</b>	<b>119</b>
4.1	Stability and Expected Mobilization	119
4.2	The Basic Simulation Setup	121
4.3	Comparing Threat Instruments	123
	4.3.1 Functions of Coercive Instruments	123
	4.3.2 Escalation and Resistance	125
4.4	Threats and Stability	127
	4.4.1 Appeasement	127
	4.4.2 Escalation Stability	129
	4.4.3 Crisis Stability	133
4.5	Gaining More by Risking Less	135
	4.5.1 Power, Risk, and Gain in Crisis Bargaining	136
	4.5.2 Why Stronger Types Must Run Higher Risks	136
	4.5.3 Risk and Gain with Non-Military Threats	139
	4.5.4 Risk and Gain with Military Threats	141
4.6	Choosing the Instrument of Coercion	147
4.7	Tying the Knot of War: A Conjecture	150
	<b>Part III Elements of Militarized Deterrence</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Militarization and the Distribution of Power and Interests</b>	<b>159</b>
5.1	Stability and Deterrence Failure	160
5.2	System Militarization and Military Threats	163
5.3	System Militarization and Deterrence	168
5.4	The Distribution of Power and Interests	173
5.5	The Sino-Indian War of 1962	178
<b>6</b>	<b>The Expansion of the Korean War, 1950</b>	<b>191</b>
6.1	An Outline of the Argument	193
6.2	Militarized Deterrence in Korea	195
6.3	The Evolution of US War Aims and Chinese Signals	202
	6.3.1 Liberation without Unification	202
	6.3.2 Unification Becomes a Tempting Possibility	204
	6.3.3 The Closing of the Window of Opportunity	207
	6.3.4 The Chinese Make Up Their Minds	210
6.4	Did the US Irrationally Dismiss Clear Chinese Threats?	214
6.5	Conclusion	221
<b>7</b>	<b>The Price of Peace and Military Threat Effectiveness</b>	<b>224</b>
7.1	The Paradoxical Burden of Peace	225
	7.1.1 Stability and the Costs of War	225
	7.1.2 High War Costs and Aggressive Mobilization	228
7.2	Do Audience Costs Improve the Prospects for Peace?	232

7.3	Deterrent Efficacy of Military Threats: Power or Beliefs?	238
7.4	Bluffs, Sham Crises, and Deterrence	247
<b>Part IV Conclusions</b>		253
<b>8</b>	<b>Implications</b>	255
<i>Appendix A</i>	<b>Formalities for Chapter 2</b>	259
<i>Appendix B</i>	<b>Formalities for Chapter 3</b>	265
<i>Appendix C</i>	<b>Formalities for Chapter 4</b>	282
<i>Appendix D</i>	<b>Formalities for Chapter 5</b>	286
	<i>Bibliography</i>	288
	<i>Index</i>	303