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Bipartisanship, Partisanship, and Ideology in Congressional-Executive Foreign Policy Relations, 1947–1988

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This paper examines two perspectives on the nature of congressional-executive relations in the making of American foreign policy: the bipartisan perspective, which says that politics stops at the water's edge, and the political perspective, which sees foreign policy as subject to the same partisan and ideological disputes that characterize domestic policy-making. The results demonstrate that the bipartisan perspective applies best to the Cold War years, and that the political perspective applies throughout the postwar era. The Vietnam War, hypothesized to have been a major catalyst in the breakdown of a bipartisan approach to foreign policy, cannot be shown to have produced a major watershed in the postwar record.

We need a new engagement . . . between the Executive and the Congress. . . . There's grown a certain divisiveness . . . And our great parties have too often been far apart and untrusting of each other.

It's been this way since Vietnam. That war cleaves us still . . . A new breeze is blowing—and the old bipartisanship must be made new again.

George Bush, January 20, 1989.

President Bush's observation in his inaugural address highlights two major perspectives on the nature of congressional-executive relations and, by im-

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plication, the role of Congress in the making of American foreign policy since World War II. One sees American foreign policy as largely the product of bipartisan accord between the president and Congress. It is typically applied to the first two decades of the postwar era. The other focuses on the divisiveness caused by the Vietnam War and views policy since that time as the product of partisan and ideological discord. According to the first perspective, politics stops at the water's edge; according to the second, foreign policy, like domestic, is subject to, and the object of, partisan and ideological dispute.

Our purpose in this paper is to determine whether these alternative viewpoints apply to the historical periods in which they allegedly operated. Specifically, we shall address whether a bipartisanship perspective accurately reflects the way policy was shaped by Congress and the executive in the first two decades of the post-World War II era and whether a political perspective embracing partisanship and ideology provides a better view in the post-Vietnam years. In the course of the analysis, we shall also compare the relative effects of the Vietnam and Korean Wars insofar as they relate to these alternative viewpoints.

ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVES OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY-MAKING: AN OVERVIEW

Congressional voting behavior provides insight into these alternative perspectives on congressional-executive foreign policy-making processes. Previous analyses lend credence to both and to the argument that Vietnam demarcates them historically. Nearly four decades ago, for instance, Robert A. Dahl identified "support for certain policies *in Congress* by both parties" as one of the key practices associated with a bipartisan foreign policy.¹ He examined the voting records of Democrats and Republicans on several key bipartisan proposals between 1945 and 1948 and concluded that "the record of bipartisan proposals between 1945 is an excellent one" (Dahl 1950, 228). Almost two decades later, Aaron Wildavsky's (1966) classic essay on the two presidencies also demonstrated the close cooperation between the president and Congress. Drawing on the Congressional Quarterly's annual "presidential boxscore" for 1948 through 1964, Wildavsky (1966, 8) concluded that "Presidents prevail about 70% of the time in defense and foreign policy, compared with 40% in the domestic sphere."² More recently, Ole R. Holsti

¹The others he identified were "*executive consultation* or collaboration with foreign policy leaders of both parties" and "the exclusion of certain policies from *campaign* debate, particularly the presidential campaign" (Dahl 1950, 227-28). See also Crabb (1957, 161-72). Nelson (1987) describes the way John Foster Dulles went about building bipartisan support in Congress for Eisenhower's foreign policies.

²The analogous question raised in the two-presidencies literature is whether developments since Wildavsky first published his article may not have undermined the argument (see, e.g., LeLoup and Shull 1979; Peppers 1975; Sigelman 1979; but cf. Edwards 1989; Fleisher and

and James N. Rosenau again looked at congressional voting behavior to probe the question of whether “a substantial foreign policy consensus” existed during the two decades following World War II. Citing the overwhelming support given by the House and Senate to several issues related to the fundamental aspects of America’s role from 1945 to 1964—the United Nations, the Truman Doctrine, the Partial Test Ban Treaty, and the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, among others—they concluded that congressional voting behavior in these instances strongly supported the proposition that a consensus did indeed exist (Holsti and Rosenau 1984, 218).³ It is reasonable to describe that consensus as bipartisan.

I. M. Destler, Leslie H. Gelb, and Anthony Lake (1984) also describe the emergence of bipartisanship in the immediate postwar years, but they outline its demise following the onset of Vietnam. As more Americans were drafted and sent abroad following the escalation of the war begun in 1965, and as the conflict became a regular feature on the evening news, President Johnson found himself facing a domestic political problem every bit as challenging as the war itself, they argue. By the second half of Johnson’s term, the containment policy as practiced in Southeast Asia became too costly for many Americans. The results were profound: “The conceptual basis of American foreign policy was now shaken, and the politics of foreign policy became more complicated” (Destler, Gelb, and Lake, 1984, 61).⁴ Thus, in the space of about four years (1965–1968), the domestic face of American foreign policy was transformed—from bipartisan unity to partisan and ideological division.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, writing at about the same time as Destler, Gelb, and Lake, has aptly described this post-Vietnam transformation: “Our foreign policy became increasingly the object of contestation, of sharp cleavage, and even of some reversal of traditional political commitments. The Democratic

Bond 1988). Recently, Wildavsky (Oldfield and Wildavsky 1989) conceded that the two presidencies thesis was “time and culture bound” in that it explained differences in foreign and defense policy compared with domestic policy during the Eisenhower administration, but that it has been unable to do so in the environment that emerged beginning in the late 1960s, during which time partisan and ideological dispute came to characterize contention over foreign and defense policy as well as domestic policy.

³Kesselman (1961, 1965) provides some evidence of departures from bipartisan voting behavior in the House. Based on data for the eighty-first, eighty-sixth, and eighty-seventh Congresses used to compare voting behavior on foreign-policy issues when the party in the White House changes (from Truman to Eisenhower, and from Eisenhower to Kennedy), Kesselman found that most of the members of Congress who moved toward internationalist voting postures were members of the new president’s party, while most of those who moved in the isolationist direction were members of the opposition party. The results are partially confirmed for the Senate by Tidmarch and Sabatt (1972).

⁴Destler, Gelb, and Lake (1984, 18) do acknowledge in an earlier passage that what the president enjoyed “from 1945 to 1965 . . . might better be labeled a solid majorityship than a free bipartisan ride.”

Party, the party of internationalism, became increasingly prone to the appeal of neo-isolationism. And the Republican Party, the party of isolationism, became increasingly prone to the appeal of militant interventionism. And both parties increasingly found their center of gravity shifting to the extreme, thereby further polarizing our public opinion" (Brzezinski 1984, 15–16).

Brzezinski's view is supported by several empirical studies of specific foreign-policy issues addressed by Congress in the 1970s and 1980s. Virtually all of them demonstrate that bipartisanship no longer exists, and that partisanship and ideology are better explanations of congressional behavior in the post-Vietnam period. Studies of the antiballistic missile issue (Bernstein and Anthony 1974), the Panama Canal Treaties (McCormick and Black 1983), the nuclear freeze (McCormick 1985), strategic arms (Wayman 1985), and the B-1 bomber (Fleisher 1985), for example, consistently demonstrate that ideology is a potent factor in explaining foreign-policy voting in Congress and that significant fissures along partisan lines also exist.

We do not dispute the conclusions reached in these studies given the data the authors examined, but we do wonder whether a more thoroughgoing examination of the record of congressional voting across the broad sweep of foreign-policy issues that members of the House and Senate inevitably face will yield equally clear-cut conclusions. Such an approach will carry us beyond the "hurrah" issues of the pre-Vietnam period analyzed by others, on which bipartisan unity might be expected to be greatest, and also beyond the most visible issues relating to the shape of the U.S. role in the post-Vietnam era examined by still others, which arguably can be expected to be particularly divisive. There is also reason to suspect that a more complete examination of the Truman record than has been completed heretofore would demonstrate that the Korean War had an impact on congressional-executive relations similar to that now attributed to the Vietnam War.

Our effort to evaluate the political perspective on foreign-policy voting is consistent with the bulk of work that seeks to explain congressional behavior in general, as partisanship has often been identified as the crucial determinant of how members of the House and the Senate decide upon matters of public policy (e.g., Cherryholmes and Shapiro 1969; Turner 1970; Weisberg 1978). Similarly, recent congressional studies have emphasized the potency of personal ideological predispositions in explaining general patterns of roll-call behavior in the Congress (e.g., Schneider 1979; Shelley 1983; Smith 1981).

On the other hand, our emphasis upon bipartisanship challenges this tradition by arguing that congressional behavior in the foreign-policy domain is different from the domestic arena. Its distinctiveness derives from the belief that the president plays a larger role in these issues than in domestic ones, that members of Congress are less constrained by constituency and interest-group pressures and hence freer to support the executive (Edwards 1989), and, most importantly, that issues involving the nation's security are too im-

portant to be subject to domestic contention. Clausen (1973), for example, found that presidential (as well as constituency) influence is strong and party influence weak on what he labels "international involvement" issues, and that voting patterns on these issues are distinctly different from patterns on domestic issues.

MEASURING BIPARTISANSHIP, PARTISANSHIP, AND IDEOLOGY

Bipartisanship has generally been viewed as a mechanism that enables Congress and the president to work together in pursuit of common objectives, even while from time to time they may disagree on particulars. Bipartisanship, from this perspective, is essentially a process that entails two elements: (1) "unity in foreign affairs," which means "policy supported by majorities within each political party," and (2) a set of "practices and procedures designed to bring about the desired unity" (Crabb 1957, 5).

For purposes of examining congressional voting behavior from this perspective, we focus on the first of these two elements, that is, on the degree to which the president and members of Congress agree with one another on foreign-policy issues. This conceptual definition, operationalized below, articulates what Dahl and Holsti and Rosenau implicitly did in their analyses, since they looked only at congressional votes on issues that were high on the foreign-policy agendas of the respective administrations in power at the time. The approach is also reasonable, since we are interested in *bipartisanship in congressional-executive relations*, not in congressional behavior alone, as a literal reading of Dahl's (1950, 228) definition of bipartisanship implies.

Presidential Foreign-Policy Votes

As suggested earlier, and in contrast to previous studies, we selected for analysis all votes on foreign-policy issues from 1947 to 1988 in the House and Senate on which the president took a position. Foreign-policy issues were defined broadly to include relations with other nations, national security, foreign aid and trade, internal security, and immigration, including authorizations and appropriations related to them.

For the eighty-third through the one-hundredth Congresses (1953–1986), the president's position was taken from reports in the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*. For the three Truman Congresses, the eightieth, eighty-first and eighty-second (1947–1952), for which the Congressional Quarterly did not indicate the president's position on issues before Congress, the Congressional Quarterly's rules, as described in its annual volumes beginning in 1954, were used to determine Truman's position.⁵ The *Congressional Quar-*

⁵ Sigelman (1979) has argued that the Congressional Quarterly boxscores used by Wildavsky to develop the two presidencies thesis contain many trivial issues and thus are not adequate tests of presidential success on major foreign and domestic issues (cf. Shull and LeLoup 1981).

terly Almanac for the years 1947–1952 and the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman* comprised the data sources.⁶ In all, some 2,400 foreign-policy issues on which the president took a position are included in the analyses.

The historical period under consideration encompasses 21 Congresses. For analytical purposes, we divided the votes in the eighty-eighth Congress between Kennedy and Johnson and in the ninety-third Congress between Nixon and Ford using the dates appropriate for the transition of power from one president to the other. For reporting purposes, we focus on the bipartisan record for each of the eight presidents who occupied the White House between 1947 and 1988, not on the individual Congresses.⁷

Measuring Bipartisanship

We define bipartisanship in two ways. First, we define it as the percentage of foreign-policy votes on which a majority of Democrats and a majority of Republicans agree with the president's position. We call this the Congress Index (CI), since the congressional vote is the unit of analyses. Although the index ignores differences in intraparty unity once a majority threshold is reached (e.g., unanimity versus a 51%–49% split), it does yield a straightforward measure of interparty agreement with the president.

Second, we also define bipartisanship as the percentage of agreements for each member of the House and Senate with the president's position across all foreign-policy issues.⁸ This is the familiar member support score, which we call the Member Index (MI). It differs from CI in that the individual member of Congress is the unit of analysis. An advantage over other measures is that it permits characteristics of congressional members themselves to be incor-

The criticism is especially germane to the Truman administration, since the Congressional Quarterly Service itself has warned that the boxscores for the Truman administration and for the first year of the Eisenhower administration are not comparable to those in later years, as an examination of the data makes readily apparent. Unfortunately, however, no alternative measures for the early Cold War years are readily available, which doubtless explains why they have generally been ignored. The suspicion is that by excluding the Truman administration in particular, and especially the years 1951 and 1952, our understanding of the pre-Vietnam experience may be biased, for it was during this period that "the nation had both an unpopular war and a highly unpopular President" (Levering 1978, 102).

⁶The authors each coded the president's position from one of these sources, and then compared results. Differences were resolved through consultation. The unevenness of coverage in the two data sources precluded the use of systematic tests of intercoder reliability.

⁷The data by Congress and administration are available from the authors on request.

⁸In order to maximize the amount of information, a member's actual vote or his or her indicated position, pairing for or against, or announcing a position for or against a measure was used to calculate the index. To make the analysis as comparable across Congresses as possible, only members who served during the entire Congress in the House or the Senate were included. Thus members who died, retired, resigned, or filled vacancies were not included. Additionally, the speaker of the House, who rarely votes, was excluded throughout.

porated into the analysis.⁹ Thus it provides a straightforward means to assess the impact of partisanship and ideology on foreign-policy outcomes.

Measuring Partisanship and Ideology

Partisanship is measured simply as whether each member of Congress is a Republican or Democrat. Third-party members are excluded from the analysis. Only seven members had third-party affiliations in the 42 years spanned by the analyses.

Ideology was measured by grouping members of Congress into one of three ideological categories—conservative, moderate, or liberal—on the basis of their voting record as rated by the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA). The members within each group for each administration were determined by pooling the data for the relevant Congresses for each president. The categories themselves were derived as follows. First, a mean ADA score was calculated for each chamber and each Congress. Conservatives were then defined as those members whose ADA scores were more than half a standard deviation below the mean for each chamber and Congress; moderates as those whose ADA scores were equal to or within half a standard deviation above or below the mean; and liberals as those whose ADA scores were more than half a standard deviation above the mean. Some of the foreign-policy votes in our dataset overlap with the votes used by ADA to determine its rating of each member of Congress. Their elimination yields somewhat different ADA scores, as would be expected, but the overall interpretation of the analytical results is not materially affected.

THE BIPARTISAN PERSPECTIVE

Scholarly and political commentary suggests that bipartisan voting was greatest in the early Cold War Congresses, particularly during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, and that it declined thereafter. Based on the argument advanced by Destler, Gelb, and Lake, the years from 1965 through 1968 (eighty-ninth and ninetieth Congresses) can be hypothesized to be a transition period, with bipartisanship less in evidence thereafter and partisan and ideological differences more in evidence.¹⁰

⁹The most common measure of congressional voting behavior vis-à-vis the president is a presidential success index, which measures the percentage of times a president's position is supported by members of Congress. Although from the vantage point of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue winning is perhaps the most important perspective that presidents bring to congressional-executive relations, as a measure of bipartisanship the index is less than satisfactory, as it neither accounts for the party composition of a president's legislative victories nor permits characteristics of the members who supported or opposed the president to be assessed. For discussions of alternative measures of congressional voting behavior, see Covington (1986), Edwards (1985), and Fleisher and Bond (1988).

¹⁰Clausen (1973) provides some empirical support for this demarcation. He describes congressional voting behavior in the foreign and defense policy domain as falling along an "inter-

Our analysis of the historical record using the Congress Index (CI) reveals that the high point of bipartisan foreign-policy voting in the House occurred in the eighty-sixth (1959–1960) Congress, when President Eisenhower enjoyed majority support from both parties on four-fifths of the foreign-policy issues he supported, and the low point occurred in the ninety-ninth Congress (1985–1986), when President Reagan received bipartisan support on only one of every seven issues he supported. In the Senate, where one would expect bipartisan support to be greater due to the traditionally stronger foreign-policy role played by the upper chamber, the CI peaked at 75% in the eightieth Congress (1947–1948), and it reached its low point in the ninety-fifth (1977–1978) Congress, when President Carter received bipartisan support just over a quarter of the time. In all, presidents received majority support from both parties (the CI) on a majority of votes that they supported in about two-fifths of the Congresses in the House and three-fifths in the Senate.¹¹ In both chambers five of these occurred during the Truman and Eisenhower presidencies.

Figure 1 suggests that the overall trend is toward less bipartisan voting,¹² but it should be noted that within this temporal pattern wide variations are

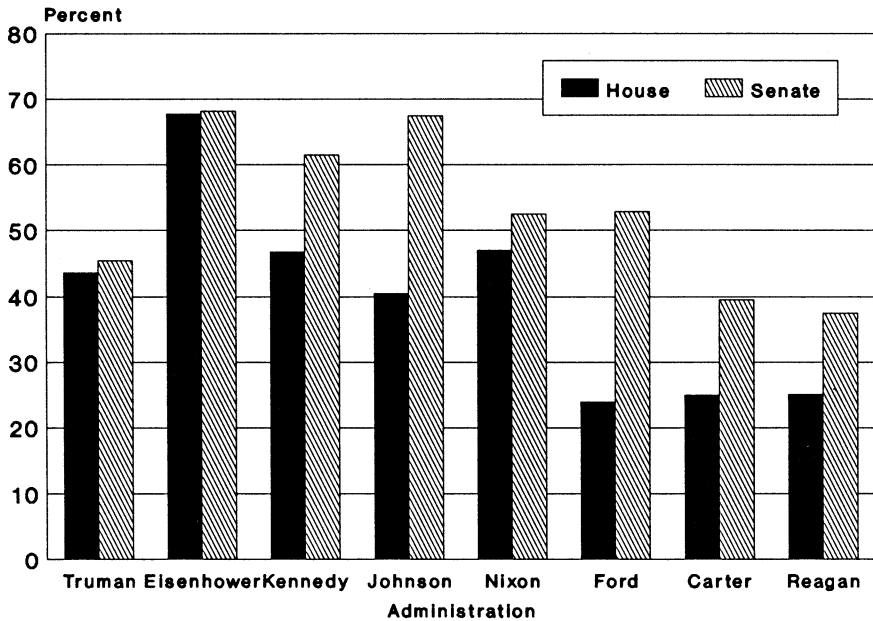
national involvement" dimension (which closely parallels an internationalism-isolationism dimension) and argues that the dimension manifests continuity and stability from 1953 to 1964 and again from then through 1969–1970. However, he reports that "during the Ninety-first Congress, 1969–1970, we witnessed the emergence of a policy dimension, concerned with the Vietnam War and the defense establishment, that was independent of the international involvement dimension" (Clausen 1973, 229–30).

¹¹The precise numbers are eight of 21 Congresses in the House, or eight of 23 if the split of eighty-eighth Congress between Kennedy and Johnson and the ninety-third between Nixon and Ford are both counted as two Congresses; and 12 of 21 in the Senate, or 13 of 23 if the eighty-eighth and ninety-third are counted twice.

¹²The number of "partisan unity votes" in each Congress as reported by Congressional Quarterly can be used as a benchmark against which to compare these bipartisanship scores. Party unity votes are the recorded votes in Congress on which a majority of voting Democrats oppose a majority of voting Republicans. The greater the number of party unity votes, the greater is the degree of partisanship (and, hence, the lower the degree of bipartisanship). Based upon the data reported in various issues of *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, we determined the number of party unity votes as a proportion of all votes for the eight administrations in our study (for the Truman administration data are available for 1949–1952 only). For the House and Senate, respectively, the proportions are as follows: Truman, 54% and 65%; Eisenhower, 48% and 44%; Kennedy, 48% and 50%; Johnson, 42% and 38%; Nixon, 34% and 38%; Ford, 40% and 46%; Carter, 39% and 43%; and Reagan, 51% and 45%. Comparing these data with the results reported in figure 1, the patterns are markedly different from one another. While our data reflect a general decline in bipartisanship over time, the party unity votes reflect a more curvilinear trend across the eight administrations, with a high degree of partisanship in the early administrations, a decline around the Nixon years, and some increase since then. In this sense, the trends in foreign-policy voting are quite distinct from what is occurring in congressional voting generally. These patterns ought to be kept in mind as we probe into foreign-policy voting further using the Member Index.

For a recent assessment of trends in party voting in Congress, see Patterson and Caldeira (1988).

FIGURE 1
BIPARTISAN FOREIGN-POLICY VOTING IN THE HOUSE
AND SENATE, 1947–1988



Note: Each bar represents the proportion of foreign-policy votes on which a majority of both parties supported the president's position.

also sometimes evident. Truman's experience is especially notable. He received bipartisan support for his foreign-policy positions roughly two-thirds of the time in both chambers during the eightieth Congress, which was Republican, but his level of bipartisan support plummeted to about one-third in the two subsequent Congresses controlled by Democrats. Partisan differences over Truman's Asian policies may account for these dramatic shifts. Despite strong congressional support for the containment of communism in Europe, Truman's application of the principle in the Far East came to be bitterly opposed (for being too soft) by Republican members of Congress. Symbolic is the position of Arthur H. Vandenberg, the Republican Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, whose conversion from isolationism to internationalism contributed so much to the emergence of an internationalist foreign policy following World War II. Vandenberg backed Truman on Europe; he attacked Truman on Asia.

The impact of the Korean War on the pattern of foreign-policy voting provides some insight into this dynamic. In the Senate, Truman received bipartisan foreign-policy support 45% of the time prior to the North Korean attack

on South Korea on June 25, 1950, but following the attack, the proportion dropped to only 29%. Interestingly, however, the reverse occurred in the House, where Truman experienced an increase in support of nearly 20 percentage points, as the CI moved from 24% to 53%. The apparent anomaly arises from the fact that Truman lost significant support among members of his own party, but he actually gained some among Republican members of the House. During the eighty-second Congress, however, the patterns in the House looked much like those in the previous Senate. Truman relieved General Douglas MacArthur of his Korean command on April 11, 1951. The House took 22 recorded votes on foreign-policy issues after that date. Truman's success rate on them, as measured by the CI, was only 32%. The absence of a majority among Republicans for the president's position was responsible for the failure of bipartisan support on three-fifths of the remaining foreign-policy votes. Thus the overall pattern is clear: Korea had an immediate and profound effect on Truman's relations with Congress.

Did Vietnam have a similar impact? The average level of bipartisan voting among the pre-Vietnam presidents (Truman through Kennedy) was 52% in the House and 58% in the Senate, compared with 32% and 50% in the respective chambers among the post-Vietnam presidents (Johnson through Reagan). The division between Kennedy and Johnson conforms roughly to the 1965–1968 period postulated by Destler, Gelb, and Lake as one of change, and the data suggest that a transition from a bipartisan to a more political environment may have occurred.

The hypothesized impact of Vietnam on this apparent transition can be assessed systematically using one-way ANOVA tests or an interrupted time-series design. The latter is appropriate for the House, where the temporal changes depicted in figure 1 are statistically significant (the average decline in the CI per administration is 4.8%); the former is appropriate for the Senate, where the changes do not manifest a significant linear decline. Interestingly, however, in neither the House nor the Senate are the differences in the before and after Vietnam administrations significant statistically.¹³ Change may have occurred, but Vietnam appears not to have caused it.

¹³To test the effect of Vietnam in the House where a significant linear decline is evident, the Congress Index was regressed on a time variable, a dummy variable for the Vietnam interruption (0 before Vietnam, 1 after Vietnam), and a counter variable (0 before Vietnam, 1, 2, 3, etc., after Vietnam) (see Lewis-Beck 1979, 1132, for a discussion of this specification of the interrupted time-series design). None of the coefficients was significant statistically.

For the Congress data, there is a significant downward trend in the CI for both the House and the Senate. However, when the data are analyzed using the simple time-series model described earlier, none of the coefficients is significant for the House, but the counter variable is significant for the Senate. This indicates that the trend in bipartisanship is different after Vietnam compared with the entire postwar period, which is evidence pointing to the impact of the war on senatorial foreign-policy voting behavior.

Unfortunately, this specification suffers from multicollinearity among the independent vari-

TABLE 1
DIFFERENCE-OF-PROPORTION TESTS ON THE CONGRESS INDEX
BETWEEN THE VIETNAM TRANSITION PERIOD (1965–1968)
AND THE EIGHT ADMINISTRATIONS

Administration	House	Senate
Truman	–.6	–24.0*
Eisenhower	22.8*	–1.3
Kennedy	2.6	–8.0*
Johnson (88th Congress)	16.2*	–11.0*
Nixon	2.9	–17.0*
Ford	–20.3*	–16.7*
Carter	–19.2*	–30.0*
Reagan	–19.0*	–31.8*

Note: Cell entries are differences in CI between the transition period and the administrations listed in column one.

* $p \leq .05$.

Another way to test the Destler, Gelb, and Lake argument more directly is through a series of difference-of-proportions tests between the CI for the Vietnam transition period (the eighty-ninth and ninetieth Congresses) and the preceding and succeeding administrations (table 1). If this time frame is the transition period in congressional-executive bipartisanship in foreign policy, the magnitude and sign of these differences ought to be large and positive for the pre-Vietnam administrations and large and negative for the post-Vietnam administrations. For the House, the results are generally consistent with the Vietnam casualty proposition. The signs are generally positive before the transition period and negative after it, and the magnitude in most cases is quite large. However, one important anomaly is also present: the sign for the Nixon administration is positive and the differences are not significant statistically, indicating that the Johnson and Nixon periods are not distinguishable.

In the Senate, the results are less consistent with the proposition. All of the signs are negative for this chamber and the differences are fairly large. Indeed, the Johnson bipartisan score for the transition period in the Senate is the highest of any administration, even higher than Eisenhower's, whose presidency is often portrayed as the epitome of bipartisanship. Thus it is difficult to argue convincingly that the Johnson period serves as a transition

ables. As an alternative test to determine whether the Vietnam variables are significant, we calculated an F-statistic (see Hanushek and Jackson 1977, 126–27) to compare the amount of explained variance with the full model against the model with only time as the explanatory variable. The results are consistent with the interpretation reported above, that is, the model with the collinear variables is preferable to the one with only time as an explanation.

period except to note that the decline in bipartisan voting is more pronounced in the post-Vietnam administrations (and especially the Carter and Reagan ones) than in the pre-Vietnam ones.

What then are we to conclude about the impact of Vietnam? Unlike Korea, its impact was less immediate and was felt more in the House than in the Senate. Its overall impact may best be viewed as a catalyst to other changes within the Congress and between the Congress and the executive branch. These changes, in turn, may have contributed to a sharp drop in bipartisan voting. Note, for example, the extraordinarily low bipartisan scores in the Ford, Carter, and Reagan administrations in the House and the Carter and Reagan administrations in the Senate in figure 1. While Vietnam cannot be discounted from contributing to these sharp changes in bipartisanship, other intervening factors (e.g., Watergate, the seizure of American hostages in the Middle East, and Central American unrest) may also have operated. Disentangling the effects of Vietnam from the impact of other events becomes increasingly difficult over time. We shall return to this point as we discuss partisan and ideological divisions in congressional foreign-policy voting. For the moment, however, one message is clear: the Korean War had a sharply polarizing effect on executive-congressional relations during the Truman administration in a way that the Vietnam War never did for the Johnson administration.¹⁴

Why Korea and Vietnam should produce such different consequences is not entirely clear, for both were Asian policy where the consensus about containment was seemingly limited. What appears to have distinguished Korea from Vietnam is that partisan differences over the conduct of the war and its political objectives, brought to a head when Truman fired MacArthur, were especially pronounced (see Spanier 1965). This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that the polarizing effect of Korea first evident in the eighty-first Congress and repeated again in the eighty-second did not carry over into the first Congress of the Eisenhower administration, the eighty-third, which, unlike its two predecessors, was a Republican Congress sitting with a Republican president. Eisenhower's campaign pledge to visit Korea and seek a peace agreement doubtless contributed to defusing partisan differences over the war.

THE POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Advocates of bipartisanship often seem motivated by an urge to restore the domestic political environment of the early postwar era, when the inter-

¹⁴The test of the Vietnam effect used here is a simple one, and alternative indicators of the war and its impact might be explored. One of them, following John Mueller's (1971) analysis of trends in popular support for the wars in Korea and Vietnam, is the number of casualties incurred, which measures the severity of the conflict. We entertained the possibility that the severity of the war may have affected congressional voting behavior but found it difficult to analyze systematically, since the relevance of increasing casualties pertains to a narrow time frame.

nationalist consensus in popular and elite opinion supported active U.S. involvement in world affairs and bipartisan cooperation between the president and Congress laid the basis for the principles of the containment foreign policy that would be pursued for decades to come.

Aside from the untoward policy consequences that resulted from consensus and bipartisanship—the Vietnam War is the preeminent case—it is also evident that partisanship and bipartisanship coexisted simultaneously. Similarly, the historical record of the Truman and Eisenhower years demonstrates that different ideological perspectives often colored the approach of members of Congress to various presidential policy proposals. The empirical question, then, is whether partisanship and ideology separately or in combination have grown markedly stronger in the post-Vietnam era. We can begin to answer the question by mapping variations in the *partisan gap*—the difference between the two parties' level of support for the president (see Edwards 1985)—to determine whether it has widened through time, and, if so, whether that growth is related systematically to Vietnam.

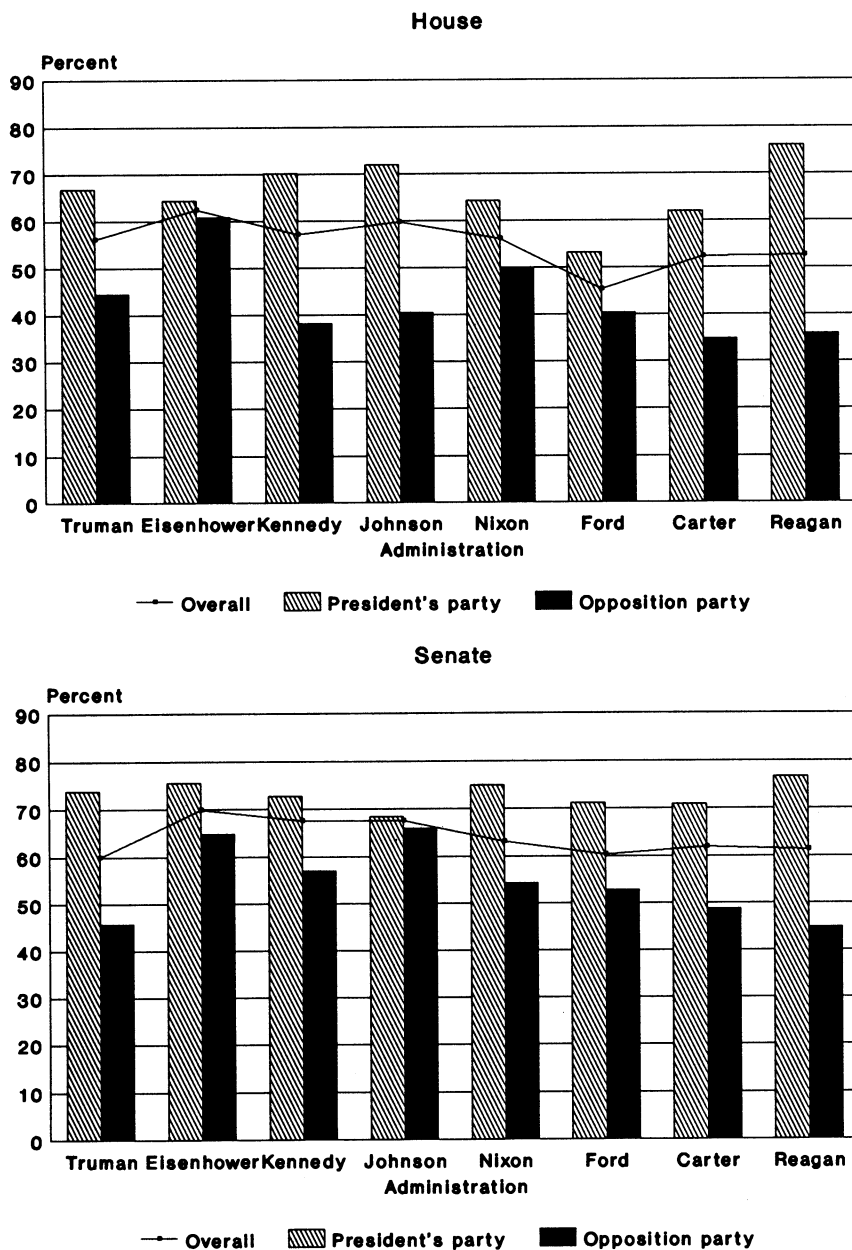
Figure 2 shows for each administration the average Member Index (MI) for the president's party and the opposition party in each congressional chamber. The figure highlights the significant partisan gap that has existed throughout virtually the entire postwar era. In the House, members of the president's party provided support that averaged 66% on foreign-policy issues while members of the opposition party provided support that averaged only 43%, thus yielding an average partisan gap of more than 20%. Only the Eisenhower administration enjoyed a partisan gap that was markedly less. In the Senate, the average level of support is higher among both the presidents' party members (73%) and the oppositions' (54%), but the partisan gap is again nearly 20%, and only two administrations, Eisenhower's and Johnson's, enjoyed a noticeably lower level.¹⁵ Thus congressional voting on foreign-policy issues has always been a more partisan phenomenon than suggested by the concept of bipartisanship.

Even though partisanship has always characterized foreign-policy voting by Congress, has it been more marked since Vietnam, as the proposition that bipartisanship was a Vietnam casualty argues?

There is some hint, depending on the points used for comparison, that the gap may have grown over time and that the war may have had some discernible impact on the trends, but the war was not a measurably significant factor

¹⁵One-way ANOVA tests using the administration data show that differences between parties are significant in both chambers for all of the administrations except in the Senate during the Johnson administration. For the Congress data, the results show that in the House the differences between the president's party and the opposition party are significant statistically at $p \leq .01$ in all but two of the Congresses (the eighty-sixth, where $p \leq .05$, and the ninety-first, where the differences are not significant), and in the Senate in all but five (the eighty-fourth and ninetyeth, where $p \leq .05$, and the eighty-fifth, eighty-eighth [Kennedy], and eighty-ninth, where the differences are not significant).

FIGURE 2
THE PARTISAN GAP IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE, 1947-1988



Note: Each bar represents for each party the average percentage level of support by members of Congress for the president's position on foreign-policy votes. The overall line measures the average level of support for the president regardless of party.

in accounting for differences in voting patterns in the pre- and post-Vietnam periods (again using Kennedy and Johnson to demarcate them). In the House, for instance, the partisan gaps averaged 19% before Vietnam and 25% after it, while in the Senate they averaged 18% and 19%, respectively. In neither case are the differences significant statistically.¹⁶ Thus the historical record once again fails to support the view that the Vietnam War caused a pronounced change in the nature of congressional voting on foreign-policy issues.¹⁷

It is important to emphasize that this conclusion does not prove in any definitive sense that Vietnam did not contribute to an erosion of bipartisanship and perhaps a rise in partisan differences, only that its effects are indistinguishable from others. Noteworthy in this respect is that the Congress-by-Congress data suggest that break-points in congressional-executive relations occurred not with the Johnson administration but later, with the Nixon and Ford administrations (a view reinforced by the data for the House in table 1). In this sense Watergate may more easily be identified as the immediate causal factor, even though the background to the affair was lodged in the antiwar sentiment Nixon had determined to eliminate. At the same time, the congressional-executive tug-of-war over Vietnam spurred Congress to undertake reforms whose effect was to loosen leadership control of congressional policy-making, especially in the House (see Smith and Deering 1984), and many of those newly elected to Congress in the immediate aftermath of Vietnam—particularly the House members of the so-called “class of ’74”—adopted different attitudes toward foreign-policy issues compared with their predecessors (Schneider 1989). Vietnam is appropriately viewed as a causal as well as coincidental agent underlying these changes, even though its separate effects remain elusive.

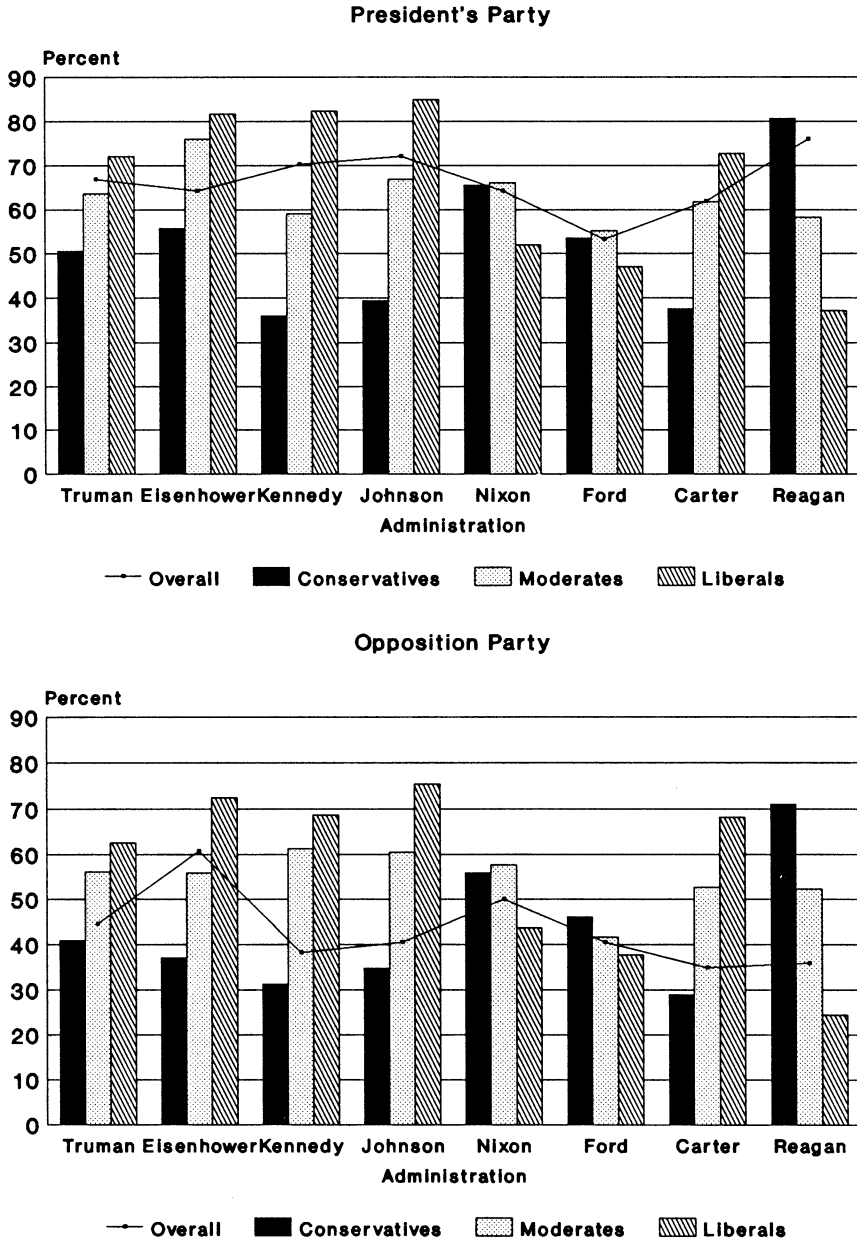
What about ideology? A central tenet of the Vietnam casualty proposition is that the war in southeast Asia contributed not only to growing partisanship in the foreign-policy domain but also to greater ideological dispute. The proposition can be examined empirically by tracing through time the simultaneous impact of partisanship and ideology.

Figures 3 and 4 show for each administration in the House and Senate the level of foreign-policy support across our three ideological groups within the president's party and the opposition party. The results demonstrate that

¹⁶One-way ANOVA tests were used to assess the differences in the partisan gaps before and after Vietnam. None proved significant for either the administration data, as reported above, or for the Congress data.

¹⁷Our conclusions about the impact of the Vietnam War remain even if the end of the Johnson administration rather than the beginning is used to demarcate the pre- and post-Vietnam periods, as might arguably be preferable. The results are exactly the same for the CI analyses and almost the same for the MI analyses. Only for the partisan gap test with the Congress data in the Senate MI analyses do we find that post-Vietnam period is different from the pre-Vietnam one. Our results are therefore consistent with the argument advanced by Edwards (1989).

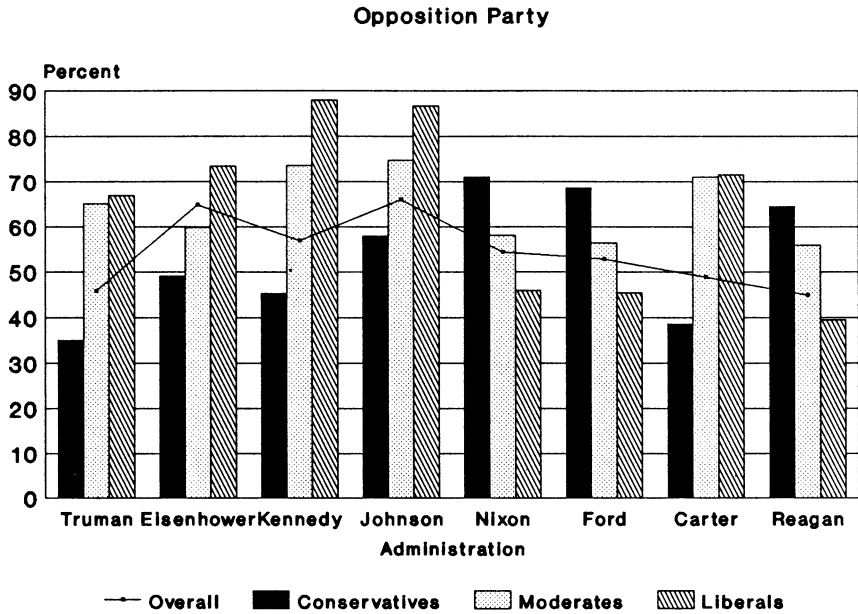
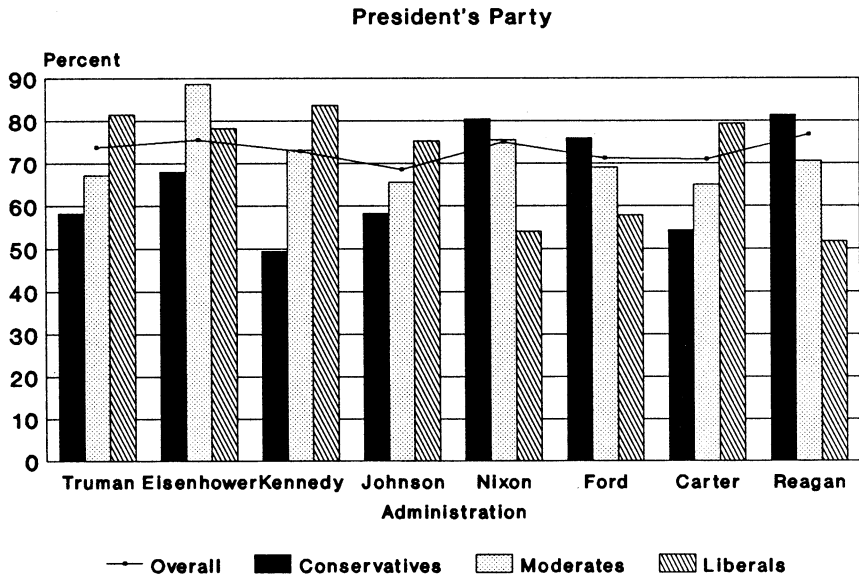
FIGURE 3
PARTISANSHIP AND IDEOLOGY IN THE HOUSE, 1947-1988



Note: Each bar represents for each ideological group the average percentage level of support by members of Congress for the president's position on foreign-policy votes. The overall line measures the average level of support for the president in each party regardless of ideology.

FIGURE 4

PARTISANSHIP AND IDEOLOGY IN THE SENATE, 1947-1988



Note: Each bar represents for each ideological group the average percentage level of support by members of Congress for the president's position on foreign-policy votes. The overall line measures the average level of support for the president in each party regardless of ideology.

even during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations—presumably the time of widespread bipartisanship—foreign-policy voting displayed a marked ideological dimension. Liberals in both parties in the House gave strong support to Truman's and Eisenhower's foreign policies, moderates a bit less, and conservatives the least support. The pattern is the same in the Senate for the Truman administration, although Eisenhower enjoyed a greater level of support from moderates of his own party than from liberals.¹⁸ For the Democrats in the Senate, however, the ideological pattern paralleling Truman's is again evident. Party (the president's party versus the opposition party) also makes a difference, as hypothesized, but ideology typically makes a greater difference.

Ideological divisions hold across most of the administrations from the 1960s onward, just as they do for Truman and Eisenhower. There is a difference, however, in that Republican presidents since Eisenhower have tended to enjoy their greatest support from conservatives, not liberals, as Eisenhower did.¹⁹ The pattern is especially striking for Reagan in the House, where the gap in presidential support between conservatives and liberals is 43% among Republicans and 47% among Democrats. (Nixon received roughly equal levels of support in the House from conservatives and moderates in both parties, as did Ford among Republicans.) Using the Eisenhower administration as the historical benchmark, the changing patterns of foreign-policy voting described here suggest a realignment of partisan attachments and ideological predispositions since the 1970s in such a way that they now reinforce once another. Republicans appear to have become the conservative party in foreign as well as domestic policy, and Democrats the liberal party.

The comparative effects of partisanship and ideology on foreign-policy voting can be determined more precisely using multivariate analysis-of-variance procedures with MI as the dependent variable, and party and ideology as the predictors. The results, summarized in table 2, demonstrate that ideology is statistically significant for every administration in both chambers and party is significant in all but the House and Senate for the Kennedy administration.²⁰ The interaction of party and ideology, on the other hand, is significant only about half of the time. Thus partisanship and ideology contribute independently to an explanation of congressional foreign-policy

¹⁸For the "cleaned" ADA data, that is, the ADA scores calculated without the votes that overlap with the foreign-policy votes comprising our dataset, moderate Republicans in the Senate gave Eisenhower his greatest support (89.7%), followed by conservative Republicans (70.2%) and liberal Republicans (69.3%).

¹⁹For the "cleaned" ADA data for the Kennedy administration in the House, moderate Republicans provided greater support (58.1%) than liberal Republicans (54.6%). For the "cleaned" ADA data for the Carter administration in the Senate, moderate and liberal Republicans provided essentially the same level of support (70.2%).

²⁰For the "cleaned" ADA data for the Kennedy administration in the House, the party variable was also significant.

TABLE 2

MULTIVARIATE ANOVA AND MULTIPLE CLASSIFICATION ANALYSES OF
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONGRESSIONAL FOREIGN-POLICY VOTING,
PARTISANSHIP, AND IDEOLOGY, BY ADMINISTRATION, 1947-1988

Administration/ Source of Variation	House		Senate	
	<i>N</i>	Mean (beta)	<i>N</i>	Mean (beta)
Truman				
Party (<i>P</i>)				
Republican	590	52	139	54
Democrat	656	60 (.20)**	135	66 (.24)**
Ideology (<i>I</i>)				
Conservative	555	46	104	43
Moderate	273	60	85	66
Liberal	418	68 (.47)**	85	76 (.59)**
<i>P</i> × <i>I</i> significant at:	not sig.		<i>p</i> ≤ .01	
Eisenhower				
Party (<i>P</i>)				
Republican	759	72	172	61
Democrat	936	55 (.40)**	197	81 (.54)**
Ideology (<i>I</i>)				
Conservative	662	46	144	58
Moderate	447	65	105	74
Liberal	586	79 (.66)**	120	81 (.55)**
<i>P</i> × <i>I</i> significant at:	<i>p</i> ≤ .01		<i>p</i> ≤ .01	
Kennedy				
Party (<i>P</i>)				
Republican	344	55	64	67
Democrat	499	58 (.05)	129	68 (.03)
Ideology (<i>I</i>)				
Conservative	350	34	73	47
Moderate	161	60	45	73
Liberal	332	81 (.75)**	75	84 (.70)**
<i>P</i> × <i>I</i> significant at:	<i>p</i> ≤ .05		not sig.	
Johnson				
Party (<i>P</i>)				
Republican	497	56	102	71
Democrat	778	62 (.10)**	191	66 (.14)*
Ideology (<i>I</i>)				
Conservative	566	38	113	57
Moderate	211	64	71	69
Liberal	498	83 (.79)**	109	78 (.53)**
<i>P</i> × <i>I</i> significant at:	not sig.		<i>p</i> ≤ .05	

TABLE 2 (continued)

Administration/ Source of Variation	House		Senate	
	<i>N</i>	Mean (beta)	<i>N</i>	Mean (beta)
Nixon				
Party (<i>P</i>)				
Republican	542	61	125	70
Democrat	725	52	166	58
		(.20)**		(.30)**
Ideology (<i>I</i>)				
Conservative	567	60	111	75
Moderate	279	61	70	66
Liberal	421	47	110	50
		(.28)**		(.56)**
$P \times I$ significant at:	not sig.		not sig.	
Ford				
Party (<i>P</i>)				
Republican	327	51	78	67
Democrat	526	42	115	56
		(.25)**		(.25)**
Ideology (<i>I</i>)				
Conservative	354	48	68	71
Moderate	190	47	50	61
Liberal	310	41	75	50
		(.17)**		(.43)**
$P \times I$ significant at:	not sig.		not sig.	
Carter				
Party (<i>P</i>)				
Republican	299	47	79	58
Democrat	552	55	114	65
		(.18)**		(.16)*
Ideology (<i>I</i>)				
Conservative	360	34	74	45
Moderate	195	59	48	67
Liberal	296	70	71	77
		(.74)**		(.66)**
$P \times I$ significant at:	not sig.		$p \leq .01$	
Reagan				
Party (<i>P</i>)				
Republican	709	58	205	68
Democrat	995	50	191	54
		(.15)**		(.34)**
Ideology (<i>I</i>)				
Conservative	677	76	155	74
Moderate	356	56	91	63
Liberal	671	28	150	46
		(.78)**		(.60)**
$P \times I$ significant at:	$p \leq .05$		not sig.	

Note: Cell entries are average Member Index (MI) foreign-policy support scores for each administration. Only main effects are shown.

p* ≤ .05 and *p* ≤ .01.

voting. Moreover, their contributions are temporally invariant, thus eroding further the Vietnam casualty proposition, which says that partisan and ideological disputes have been greater since Vietnam than before.

The results also demonstrate that the comparative impact of ideology is greater than partisanship. This can be determined from the beta (standardized regression) coefficients, which are almost uniformly greater for ideology than partisanship. The single exception occurs in the House during the Ford administration, when the beta for party is somewhat larger than the beta for ideology.²¹ The political perspective on congressional-executive relations thus holds throughout the post-World War II era as an explanation of congressional foreign-policy voting behavior, but ideology appears to have been the more potent of its two components. At the same time, the ANOVA results reaffirm that a realignment has occurred in the pattern of foreign-policy support given Republican presidents since Eisenhower. Conservatives are now the strongest supporters of Republican presidents, compared with moderates and liberals earlier.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The question we posed at the outset is whether bipartisanship or politics hold as appropriate explanations of congressional-executive relations in the historical periods to which they are typically applied, namely, the pre-Vietnam period in the case of bipartisanship, and the post-Vietnam period in the case of politics. The evidence suggests, first, that the bipartisan perspective applies best to the first two decades of the postwar era, but that it has not been replaced by the political perspective, in which partisanship and ideology are central concepts. Instead, the political perspective applies throughout the postwar era, even though it may now appear more pronounced because its most visible aspects are no longer overlaid by what is typically thought to be the moderating influence of bipartisanship. In this sense the two viewpoints are appropriately seen not as competing but as distinctly separate perspectives on the politics of policy-making that coexist simultaneously.

Second, the evidence also suggests that the decline in bipartisanship is consistent with the Vietnam casualty hypothesis, but it does not support the often claimed hypothesis that the war, by itself, was a watershed in postwar American bipartisanship. While some substantive differences in the levels of bipartisanship between the pre-and post-Vietnam periods are evident in our data, they are not large enough to support the contention that Vietnam was primarily responsible for them. Change has occurred in congressional foreign-policy voting, and much of it can be linked to issues and events which themselves are related to the Vietnam conflict, but the impact of the

²¹ For the "cleaned" ADA data for the Eisenhower administration in the Senate, the beta for party is larger than the beta for ideology.

war itself cannot be separated from the effects of other potential explanatory factors.

As an aside to the Vietnam question, the results for the Truman administration suggest some parallels in congressional-executive relations immediately after the onset of Korea and after Vietnam, but the effects of Korea are more easily identifiable and of much greater intensity, albeit of seemingly shorter duration, than those that might be attributed to Vietnam. In effect, the Korean War appears to have produced a more pronounced short-run erosion of bipartisanship than did the Vietnam War.

Third, the results germane to the political perspective demonstrate that a "partisan gap" existed during the height of bipartisanship as well as more recently. While these patterns are not logically incompatible (since partisan divisions can still exist even when a majority of the members of the two political parties agree with the president), the underlying assumption implicit among those who use the concept seems to be that if bipartisanship exists, partisanship does not. Ideology has also provided continuity in foreign-policy voting during the height of the Cold War and beyond. Liberals, conservatives, and moderates within both parties tend to vote similarly on foreign-policy issues, regardless of the president in power, and this ideological dimension has been more important throughout the postwar era than even party ties.

Finally, the results demonstrate that who occupies the White House affects the ideological component in executive-legislative relations. Prior to the Nixon administration, liberals typically provided presidents their greatest foreign-policy support, regardless of the party in power, and conservatives the least. Beginning with Nixon, however, conservatives have generally provided Republican presidents their greatest support and liberals Democratic presidents (i.e., Carter) their (his) greatest support. Congressional voting behavior insofar as it supports active U.S. involvement in world affairs is thus consistent with a description of the Republicans as the party of conservative internationalism and the Democrats as the party of liberal internationalism.²² Little wonder that foreign policy has seemingly become the subject of greater partisan and ideological dispute and bipartisanship a more elusive goal.

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²²For comparable evidence at the level of mass foreign-policy beliefs, see Wittkopf (1990).

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