

War and Peace

International Institutions and War

The Puzzle

- **In a well-governed country, the police prevent and punish acts of violence between individuals. Where are the police in international politics? Why is it so hard for the international community to prevent and punish acts of aggression?**
 - **Or, how do international institutions affect the prospects for peace and war?**

Anarchy

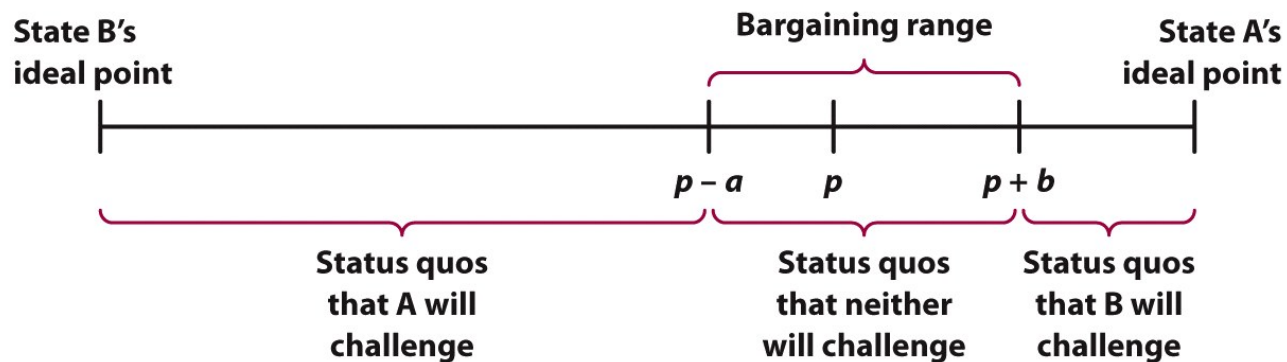
- **In the international system, there is no single political authority higher than the state. In other words, the system is anarchic.**
- **In anarchy, states are dependent upon self-help. In short, there are no “police.”**
- **Nonetheless, states do cooperate and build institutions that affect their security and the prospects for war and peace.**

Alliances

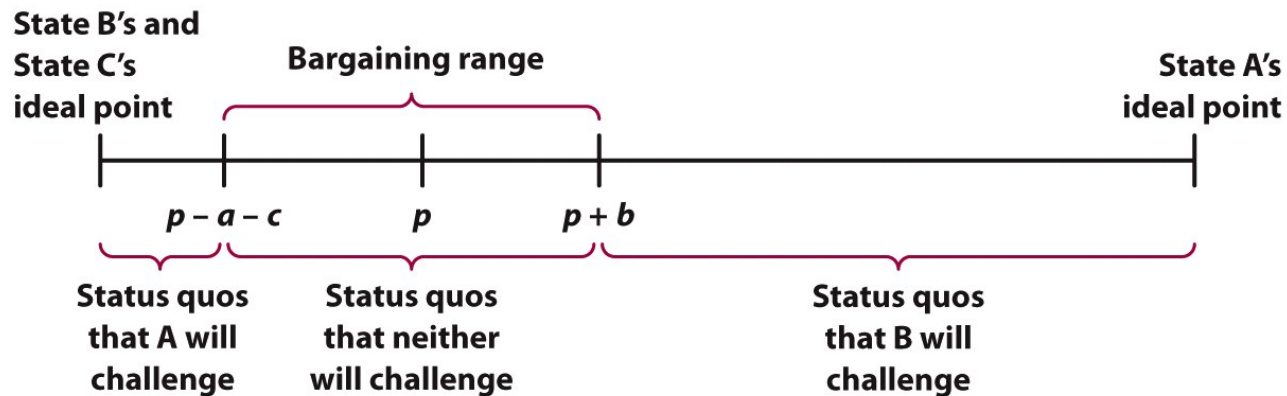
- **Alliances are institutions that facilitate military cooperation.**
 - **Offensive alliances (e.g., agreement between Germany and Soviet Union in 1939 to dismember Poland; “coalition of the willing” in Iraq in 2003)**
 - **Defensive alliances (e.g., alliance between Britain, France, and Poland prior to WW II, NATO)**
- **What do (defensive) alliances do?**
 - **augment the power of member states, deterring challenges**
 - **increase the costs of war, expanding the bargaining range**
 - **create new information asymmetries, leading to new bargaining failures**

Bargaining Between Three States: B and C ally against A

(a) The bargaining interaction between States A and B



(b) The bargaining interaction when State C is expected to join State B in the event of war



Alliances and Incomplete Information

- **A and B have the same potential for bargaining failures as in two-party conflicts.**
- **In addition, C has private information about its willingness to come to B's aid. C's promise may not be credible.**
 - **A & B may have different estimates of C's reliability.**
 - **If A believes C is unreliable, will demand "too much."**
 - **If B believes C is reliable, will refuse A's demand.**

Alliances and Incomplete Information

- **To make alliance credible, C must demonstrate its commitment.**
 - **Costly signals: public treaties, joint military exercises, mobilization in favor of B**
 - **Tying hands: reputation, stationing troop**

Tying Hands in Berlin

- **Schelling: “The garrison in Berlin is as fine a collection of soldiers as has ever been assembled, but excruciatingly small. What can 7,000 Americans do...? Bluntly, they can die. They can die heroically, dramatically, and in a manner that guarantees that the action cannot stop there...and they can apparently hold the entire Red Army at bay.”**



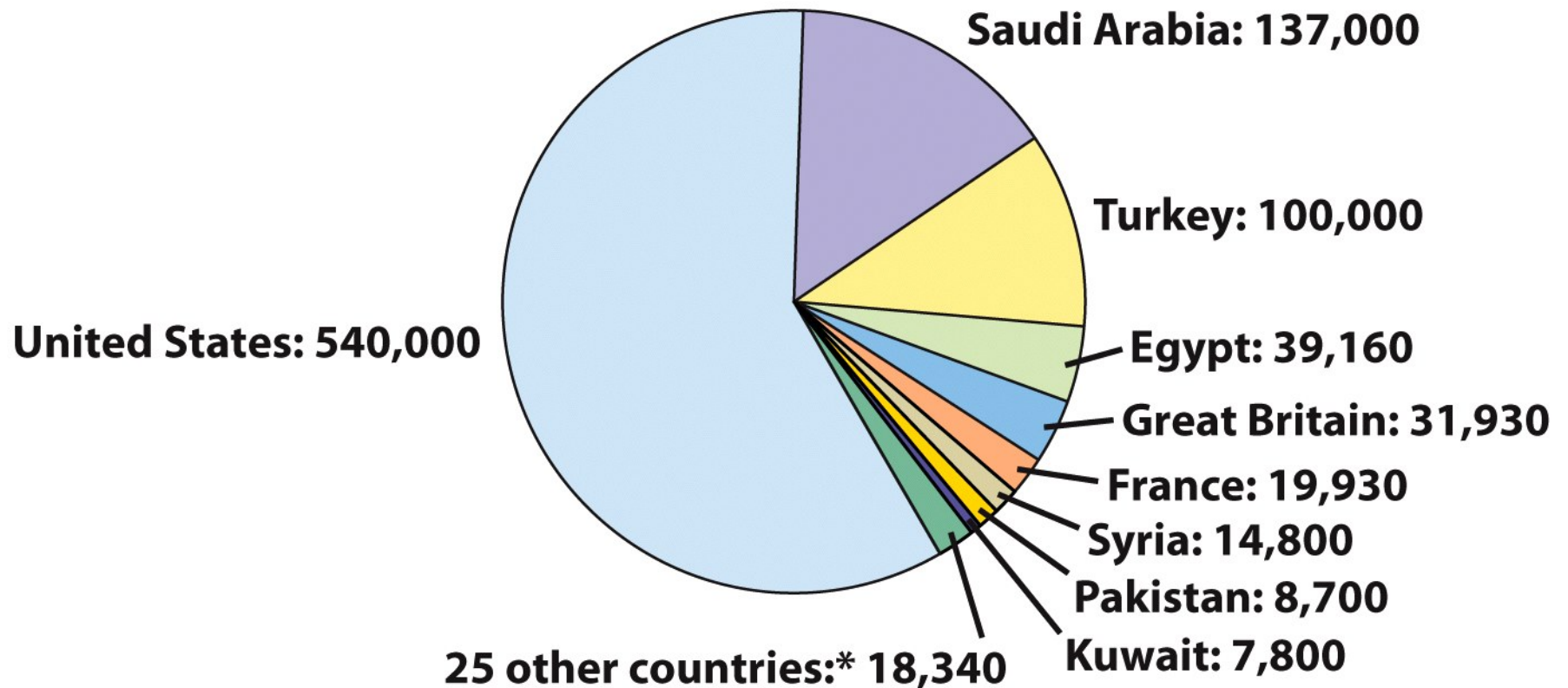
Incomplete Information and Moral Hazard

- **Due to “moral hazard” problem, C will usually not make an absolutely binding commitment.**
 - **Problem of Germany’s “blank check” to Austria-Hungary**
- **Neither A nor B can ever be sure of C’s commitment to B.**

Collective Security and Collective Action

- **Logic same a 3-party example of alliances. Overwhelming coalition would deter all challengers.**
- **Yet, promises to defend any member not credible. Each state has incentive to free ride on all others.**
- **Collective security enforced only when some state has an incentive to provide a significant share of the public good on its own.**
 - **One or more large countries form a privileged group.**

Allied Troop Contributions to the Persian Gulf War, 1990-91



Ill-founded Premise

- **Not all states share an interest in preserving the status quo.**
 - **Germany in the League of Nations**
 - **Deadlock in the UNSC during the Cold War**

United Nations and the Cold War Deadlock

TABLE 5.2

THE UNITED NATIONS DURING AND AFTER THE COLD WAR

	Cold War, 1946–1989	Post–Cold War, 1990–2008
Security Council resolutions approved	646	1,213
Vetoed resolutions	192	22
Peacekeeping missions	18	45

Sources: United Nations Security Council, un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions.html. Great Britain, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/4175218/vetoes-2008-2. United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/ (accessed 3/17/09).

What Collective Security Organizations Can Do

- **Lower costs of joint decision-making. Create a forum with established rules on when and how to intervene.**
- **Serve as third party guarantors. Through peacekeeping or peace enforcement, can enhance promises to honor agreements that might not otherwise be credible.**
- **Yet, commitment of third parties may not be credible. Political will is necessary. If violence breaks out (e.g., Somalia), third parties may not remain to enforce agreement.**

Collective Security Organizations

- **Collective security organizations can only “police” international politics when there is broad agreement among states.**
- **Member states must care enough to contribute the necessary resources.**

War: What Do We Know?

- **“Conflicts of interest” are necessary but insufficient to explain war.**
- **States fail to reach mutually preferred bargains when information is incomplete, agreements lack credibility, or issues are indivisible.**
- **Domestic interests typically make countries more belligerent, but usually do not directly cause war.**
- **Democratic institutions reduce information asymmetries and the likelihood of war with other democracies.**
- **International institutions facilitate cooperation and deter challengers but exacerbate problems of incomplete information.**