

**PARTISAN CONFLICT, PUBLIC OPINION, AND
U.S. FOREIGN POLICY**

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Abstract

Since the 1970s American politics has become increasingly polarized along partisan and ideological lines. This polarization has been widely observed and debated in the area of domestic economic and social policymaking, and since September 11th and since the war and U.S. occupation of Iraq, there are signs of this in the conflict among political leaders concerning American foreign policy. If partisan and, especially, ideological conflict were to be a persistent characteristic of foreign policy debates, this would be a major change in the nature of American politics, in which such conflict thus far has not extended beyond domestic politics. This paper examines the surveys conducted from 1998 to 2004 by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations to see the extent to which, if any, the American public's as well as leaders' opinions toward foreign policy issues have become more polarized than in the past along Democratic-Republican partisan and ideological lines. It finds that elite opinions have indeed become more polarized, and there are indications that this may be occurring for the mass public as well, especially in ideological terms. Such increasing divisions in leaders' opinions on foreign policy issues, if they persist, and the extent to which similar divisions have become more pervasive among the public, would indicate that American partisan politics and the nature of public opinion has changed in profound ways over the last fifty years.

KEY WORDS: U.S. public opinion. Elite opinion. Leadership. U.S. foreign policy. Partisanship. Ideology. Surveys.

Introduction

Since the 1970s American politics has become increasingly polarized along partisan and ideological lines. This polarization has been widely observed and debated in the area of domestic economic and social policymaking. In the last few years, however, since the September 11th terrorist attacks followed by the war and U.S. occupation of Iraq, there are signs of this in the conflict among political leaders concerning American foreign policy. If partisan and, especially, ideological conflict were to be a persistent characteristic of foreign policy debates, this would be a major change in the nature of American politics, in which such conflict thus far has not extended beyond domestic politics.

The question we have posed here in one sense reflects the reality of the widely recognized political conflict between Republican and Democratic leadership in the United States today, which has visibly spilled over to U.S. involvement in Iraq. President George W. Bush recently sharply criticized “Democrats who have accused him of misleading the nation about the threat from Iraq’s weapons programs, calling their criticism ‘deeply irresponsible’ and suggesting that they are undermining the war effort” (Stevenson, 2005, p.A1). However, it is a new development to talk about “ideologically polarized” politics with regard to not just one contentious matter but to a wide range of foreign policy issues. Ideology in American party politics – as normally described by the press, pundits, or mainstream political scientists – is associated with how Democrats and Republicans differ along liberal-conservative lines on domestic economic and social issues as this is understood in public discourse and in the press (Converse, 1964; Stimson, 1998, 2005; Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson, 2002). In contrast, positions on foreign

policy and defense issues, with the possible exception of defense spending as this is related to the “guns-butter” tradeoff, are not easy to define as liberal or conservative, and political leaders have thought about them differently at different times (cf. Shapiro and Jacobs, 2002; Menton, 2005; Hughes, 1978, Chapters 3 and 5; and especially the apt review by Hurwitz and Peffley, 1987). While it is easy to think of conservatives and Republicans as being tougher when it comes to defense and foreign policy, liberals and Democrats have led the country aggressively through two world wars, Vietnam and Korea, the Cold War, and other international conflicts and foreign policy initiatives with support from Republicans. And Democrats have supported not only the first Republican-led war in Iraq but also the second invasion, as well as the foreign policies of Republican presidents. This history of foreign policymaking is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is a history that reflects either bipartisanship or non-ideological partisanship that has occurred on national security issues. As we saw in the 2004 election, the Iraq war and the ability to deal with terrorism were issues that divided Democratic and Republican voters (See Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde, 2005; Campbell, 2005; Hillygus and Shields, 2005). But these were specific issues during a single election and did not reflect persistent and current partisan divisions associated with domestic issues such as social security, medical care, abortion, civil rights, gay rights, and others.

Thus, it is a new development to raise questions about ideological polarization in the case of views toward and perceptions of American foreign policy, international institutions, important nations in U.S. foreign affairs, and threats to the United States. This paper first reviews the evidence for increasing partisan and ideological polarization in the United States that has occurred in domestic politics. It then examines the surveys

conducted from 1998 to 2004 by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR) to see the extent to which, if any, the American public's as well as leaders' opinions toward foreign policy issues have become more polarized than in the past along Democratic-Republican partisan and ideological lines.

Partisan and Ideological Polarization

Politics by definition involves conflict but the level of visible conflict during the 2004 American presidential election was great for reasons that were both election-specific and related to divisive and ideology-based party politics. The election-specific issues involved the personal attacks on each presidential candidate's activities during the Vietnam war, in addition to the immediate issues regarding how the Bush administration's was dealing with the Iraq war and the threat of terrorist attacks. Ideologically, the candidates' parties were divided on the longstanding issues of the role of government in the economy, race and civil rights (though civil rights issues per se were not debated much during the campaign, beyond the implicit racial aspects immigration and questions that arose related to barriers to voting), and social issues, including abortion rights and sexual orientation and other matters related to personal morality. These issues have come to sharply divide the parties, which are now essentially evenly matched as they compete for control of both the presidency and Congress. The 2000 election controversy and how politics determined the election outcome in the courts revealed starkly the level of partisan conflict that has risen in the United States.

This divisiveness began to emerge in the 1970s as the parties underwent a transformation as the Democratic Party, with the departure of conservative southerners from its ranks over civil rights issues, became an increasingly more consistent liberal party. At the same time, with the moderates from its ranks dwindling, the Republican Party leadership became more consistently conservative (see Carmines and Stimson, 1989). The most widely cited data showing this are Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal's (1997, 2001; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, 1997) "Nominate" roll call voting scores that estimate the varying-degree of conservative-liberal ideological voting across Congresses. Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the ideological trends in roll call voting by Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate, respectively, from 1971 to 2002, reported by Gary Jacobson (2005a). The key finding in these graphs is the increase in ideological divergence in the behavior of the legislators in each party. Figure 3 shows this increase in partisan disagreement in terms of the long-term trend in *bipartisanship* in Congress from 1989 to 2002. Peter Trubowitz and Nicole Mellow (2005) estimated the bipartisan votes in the House of Representatives as the percentage of votes in which a majority of legislators of both parties voted together or if the difference in support levels of opposing majorities was 20 percentage points or less. The decline in bipartisanship after 1970 reveals a sustained increase in partisan divergence and this is the most sustained decline in bipartisan cooperation since 1889. Moreover, while bipartisanship, as might be expected, has historically occurred more frequently on foreign policy than domestic issues (the adage that "partisanship stops at the water's edge" also reflects how foreign policy positions are not normally readily associated with a liberal-conservative ideology), we see the same close parallel decline for *both* types of issues. Trubowitz and

Mellow (2005) find that both domestic and foreign policy bipartisanship is affected by economic growth, party competition, and divided government.

(FIGURES 1, 2 AND 3 ABOUT HERE)

The above trends summarize what has happened at the elite leadership level in government. What, then, has happened at the level of the electorate—at the level of mass public opinion? While it is possible the elites have been responding to or reflecting voters' wishes -- and there is evidence for this (e.g., Trubowitz and Mellow, 2005, found in their multivariate analysis that regional polarization is negatively related to bipartisanship, and the findings in King, 1997, show that there are strong partisans in the electorate that parties must appeal to), the reverse influence is more persuasive theoretically and substantial empirical analysis substantially bears this out (see especially Heatherington, 2001; Carmines and Stimson, 1989). The public relies heavily on leaders for information communicated through the mass media (see Key, 1961; Bennett, 1990, on “indexing”; Zaller, 1992; Page and Shapiro, 1992; Mermin, 1999; Zaller and Chiu, 2000), and there is evidence that the increase in partisan polarization among elites preceded and penetrated the public's psyche (Layman and Carsey, 2002; Heatherington, 2001; Carmines and Stimson, 1989). Other evidence has been growing and cumulating that shows the increasing importance and centrality of partisanship and also a liberal-conservative ideology closely bound to partisanship. A number of studies have shown that partisanship has made a comeback in its influences on presidential voting (see Bartels, 2000, and Bafumi, 2005), and there is evidence in the aggregate for increasing ideological voting in House and Senate elections (Jacobson, 2005b, see especially Figure 10 and Figure 11). At the same time the relationship between self-reported ideology and

partisanship among the public has increased (see especially Abramowitz and Saunders, 1998, 2005; Erikson, Wright, and McGiver, 2005; Knight and Erikson, 1997; Bafumi, 2005, indirectly suggests this and increasing effect of ideology on presidential voting; see also Green, Palmquist, and Schickler. 2002, Table 2.3, p.31).

Figure 4 summarizes Alan Abramowitz's and Kyle Saunders' (2005) results showing the increase in the correlation between party identification and self-reported liberal-conservative identification, both measured on seven point scales. If we square these correlation coefficients to get an estimate of the proportion or percentage of the variance (by multiplying times 100) in party identification that is explained by ideology, we find that this percentage has increase from approximately 10 percent in 1972 to more than 30 percent in 2004. Figure 5 provides some parallel aggregate data findings, from Erikson, Wright, and McIver (2005), for the relationship between the average ideology and average partisanship of the publics in the American states for the 1977-1980 and the 2001-2003 periods. What is quite apparent in these "scatterplots" is that there is virtually no correlation between ideology and partisanship in the late 1970s (reliability corrected correlation of .06). This correlation, however, subsequently increased, so that by the period after the 2000 presidential election we see a striking positive correlation (reliability corrected correlation of .66).

(FIGURE 4 AND FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE)

The strong connection between partisanship and liberal-conservative ideology that we now see puts the influence of partisanship on public opinion and political behavior in a new light. To the extent that a liberal-conservative ideology has substantive meaning to

the public, the influence of partisanship on public opinion and politics is a more meaningful heuristic than it has been in the past, and its use by the public may reflect well on the public's competence when it comes to politics (cf. the different perspectives on party identification and what might be called "democratic competence" beginning with Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes, 1976 [orig. 1960], in The American Voter, along with Converse, 1964; Downs, 1957; Fiorina, 1981; Popkin, 1991; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, 2002; Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson, 2002; Shapiro, 1998; and the review provided in Glynn, et al., 2004, Chapter 8). Moreover, this now apparent ideological distinctiveness of the major political parties may now mean that the United States is approaching, if it has not already become, the kind of "responsible two-party system" that many political scientists have long proposed would best serve the country (see American Political Science Association, 1950.) Whether this is in fact the case and what the implication of this are in general and whether this extends to foreign policy and international security issues are open questions.

When it comes to foreign policy, the president is the key policy actor, so that the extent to which partisanship affects public evaluations of the president is an important question. As both the visible head of government and party leader, a president expects to get – and normally gets – deferential treatment by fellow partisans in Congress and among the public. However, in the case of foreign policy there has been "The Two Presidencies" thesis that Aaron Wildavsky (1966) first wrote about that posited that Congress would defer to the president on foreign policy in contrast to domestic issues, because presidents had advantages in information and expertise, and because members of Congress were more concerned with domestic matters. Since the time Wildavsky wrote

about this, however, research has shown that this deference may have occurred in the increasingly distant past -- pre-Vietnam -- and may have only continued among members of the president's party (e.g., see Shull, 1991; Rohde, 1994; and Fleisher and Bond, 2000). Any deference that existed was replaced by partisan disagreements on defense and foreign policy that became clear with divided party control of government beginning with the Reagan administration.

Among the public, the way partisanship has long affected support for the president is shown in the different graphs assembled in Figure 6, which are taken from Green, Palmquist, and Schickler (2002, p.131). Here we see that presidents have had noticeably greater standing among individuals who see themselves as members of the president's party. According to Bartels (2002), the impact of partisanship on these and other perceptions (of the sort we will discuss further below) attests to how party identification has remained, much as the authors of The American Voter (Campbell et al., 1976 [1960]) emphasized, "a pervasive dynamic force shaping citizens' perceptions of, and reactions to, the political world" (Bartels, 2002, p.117). Evaluations of presidential performance in particular are important to the extent that the public's perceptions of the president's performance might affect the president's ability to obtain public support for his proposed policies and actions (e.g., see Kernell, 1997; Page and Shapiro, 1984, 1992, Chapter 8)—which is often difficult to do (cf. Edwards, 2003). In addition to the consistently wide partisan differences in presidential approval, there are two additional patterns to note. One is that in the graph for the last presidency shown, the Reagan administration, the party differences are the greatest, which is consistent with the increase in partisan polarization that began in the 1970s (data for George H.W. Bush

administration, data not shown, indicate a smaller difference at the outset that later grew, and data for the Clinton administration suggest an even larger partisan difference than for Reagan by the end of Clinton's second term in office). Second, we see that while there are clear partisan differences, we also see that these differences remain constant for each president, so that when presidential approval changes over time, the trends are parallel for self-identified Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. This finding accords with the "parallel public's" thesis that new information is affecting these partisan subgroups in the same way, that is, there is a "parallel learning process" at work in which partisanship does not cloud or otherwise bias individuals' perceptions (see Page and Shapiro, 1992, Chapter 7; Gerber and Green, 1998, Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, 2002, p.130-139).

(FIGURE 6 ABOUT HERE)

Figure 7, however, shows that this pattern has been different for President Bush since he took office. The first eight months showed the expected parallel trends with a large, but constant, partisan gap. The effect of the September 11 terrorist attacks led to a convergence of public opinion across party lines reflecting the nation's unity, at both the elite and mass level, in response to the events and threat to the nation (on such "rally effects" and the conditions under which they occur, see Mueller, 1973, and Brody, 1991). Thereafter, however, we see a striking divergence that deviates sharply from the parallel public pattern. This is apparently not just Independents and Democrats returning to their pre-September 11 level, but rather they drop to lower levels, especially in the case of Democratic partisans. The decline that occurred in public support among non-Republicans reflected, at least in part, disappointment with the Bush administration's lack

of further progress in Iraq conflicts, whereas Republicans either perceived the situation differently or were less willing to hold this against the administration.

(FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE)

There is evidence that these different perceptions included misperceptions regarding the two justifications for the war: that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and that Iraq was supporting al Qaeda. Figure 8 and Figure 9 show that there were clear partisan differences in these perceptions from mid-2003 into 2004, as the members of the Bush administration remained ambiguous as they quietly acknowledged that they had no evidence for either reason used to justify the Iraq invasion. Figure 8 shows the large percentage of Republicans among the public who continued to believe that Iraq had WMDs when the war began, compared to the sharp drop in this percentage among Democrats (and nearly the same percentage among Independents) over a 10 month period. Likewise, in Figure 9, the gap between Democrats and Republican increased regarding the belief that clear evidence had been found that Iraq was supporting al Qaeda, with the percentage of Republicans believing there was such evidence increasing (!) while the percentage of Democrats decreased. The increasing partisan gap that we see in the case of these perceptions as well as in Bush's approval rating deviates from the kind of unbiased parallel learning process described above. Bartels (2002) describes the persistence any partisan gap itself as an indication of partisan bias in political perceptions that prevents convergence in opinions that might be expected as everyone obtains the same information and shares the same political experiences (but cf. Kull et al., 2003-2004). In these cases we have seen further divergence as the result of partisan bias at work.

(FIGURE 8 AND FIGURE 9 ABOUT HERE)

The most important question with regard to public opinion, however, is to what extent the increasing partisan polarization that has occurred has affected the policy preferences of different segments of the public. There is an ongoing and lively debate regarding how greatly partisans among the public are divided on domestic economic and social issues. One widely cited study of this, Morris Fiorina's Culture War (2005), argues and presents evidence that although, among the electorate, the "red" Republican and "blue" Democratic divide exists most notably on social issues -- especially abortion and issues related to sexual orientation -- these differences are not enormous. Fiorina also presents data showing that among different subgroups defined in terms of party identification, age, sex, and other characteristics, the trend data tend to show "parallel publics" (Fiorina, 2005; see also Dimaggio, Evans, and Bryson, 1996).

Further analyses of the data from the NORC General Social Surveys (GSS) and from the National Election Studies (NES) data through 2004, however, suggest that while the Fiorina and others are correct in emphasizing that the partisan differences were still on average small during the 1972-2000 period, there is also further evidence for diverging opinions on social and economic issues along partisan and ideological lines. This was first noticed by Evans (2003) in the data through 2000, and most recently by Abramowitz and Saunders (2005) looking at the NES data through 2004. It remains to be seen to what extent this polarization on domestic issues has in fact continued and expanded, based on additional analysis of the latest GSS and NES and other new survey data. The data analyses reported in recent papers by Ansolabahere, Rodden, and Snyder (2005) and Bartels (2005) suggest that to the extent that any polarization has occurred, it

has occurred to a greater extent on economic than social issues. Given the level of political conflict, it is also important to examine how partisanship and ideology has affected public opinion concerning additional issues—possibly all aspects of politics, including foreign policy and national security issues which are currently highly contentious matters as the result of the currently uncertain circumstances in the Iraq war and in the struggle against terrorism.

Political scientists in general have not emphasized foreign policy and international security as long-term issues that have divided the parties over the last sixty years. When such issues have appeared to divide partisans, as in the case of the Vietnam war, this partisan disagreement has lasted only as long as a particular conflict. Since the time of the Carter administration's difficulties during the Iran hostage crisis and the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, which led to Ronald Reagan's election as president, national defense and the country's aggressiveness in the Cold War did seem to divide the parties, with the public perceiving the Democrats to be softer on these issues. These issues, however, did not become a quintessential part of liberal-conservative ideology (see Stimson, 1998, 2005; Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson, 2002; Shapiro and Jacobs, 2002; cf. Converse, 1964; Hughes, 1978; Peffley and Hurwitz, 1987). In the wake of the end of the Cold War, both Democrats as well as Republicans supported the first Iraq war and the war in Afghanistan. But in the current short term, since George W. Bush was first elected president in 2000, we have seen the emergence of a conservative – more commonly referred to as “neoconservative” – ideology in the Bush administration's foreign policy especially after the September 11, 2001, attacks. This ideology continues a past tradition in which the United States' security interests have been defined “in terms

of the expansion of U.S.-style liberalism” in international affairs (as opposed to “realism,” where “liberalism” takes on a different meaning from the one used in public discourse and in this paper) and a “nationalist vision of the United States as a redeeming force in international politics” (Monten, p.140-141). Where the ‘Bush Doctrine’ differs from this tradition “is in the particular vehemence with which it adheres to a vindicationist framework for democracy promotion in which the aggressive use of U.S. power is employed as the primary instrument of liberal change” (Monten, 2005, p.141), for purposes that include ending authoritarianism and promoting freedom and democracy.

The force of this ideology in foreign affairs may well match that of social and moral conservatism in domestic politics, which raises the question of whether partisan and ideological polarization has started to occur on foreign policy and international security issues. What do we know about this at this point?

First, in the big picture context of American foreign policy, the preponderance of data show that in the United States there is substantial public and elite support for international cooperation and support for international institutions and multilateral action to deal with world problems. This is a theme that comes out of, for example, the recent Chicago Council on Foreign Relations’ Global Views 2004 studies (Bouton et al., 2004; see also Page with Bouton, 2005). Regarding partisanship, Kull and his colleagues’ have recently reported additional data and provided a persuasive analysis showing that there is overall bipartisan consensus – majority bipartisan agreement -- on a wide range of foreign policy and international security issues among the public and leaders in the United State (Kull, et al., 2005). One important and representative finding in their report regarding the United States role in the world is what they found in responses to the

following question asked in the July 2004 Chicago Council on Foreign Relations survey: “What do you think is the most important lesson of September 11th: that the US needs to be more willing to cooperate with other countries to fight terrorism or that the US needs to act more on its own?” The percentage of partisans among the mass public and in the sample of “leaders” who responded that the U.S. needs to work more closely with other countries was 66% for the Republican public, 79% for the Democratic public, 63% for Republican leaders, and 92% for Democratic leaders (Kull et al., 2005, p. 5)

The above example suggests that majorities of both Democrats and Republicans at both the mass and elite level support greater engagement with other countries to fight terrorism. Kull et al. (2005) find a similar pattern in responses to other questions, and these data overall point to the conclusion that to a large extent Republicans and Democrats want the same kind of U.S. foreign policy.

The data also reveal other aspects of public and elite opinion in the United States beyond determining where majorities stand on particular issues. First, there are often large differences between mass and elite opinions that may have implications for how responsive leaders are to public opinion (see Glynn et al, Ch.9; Page with Bouton, 2005, Chapter 7). These mass-elite gaps have been tracked at length over the years in the CCFR studies (see Rielly, 1999; Page with Bouton, 2005). In addition, when it comes to partisan differences, to the extent that the parties are divided – especially in a coherent ideological way – on particular issues, the overwhelming evidence shows that partisan differences among elites are greater than the differences among partisans in the mass public (e.g., see Glynn et al., 380-385). The above example shows this clearly, as do much of the other data that Kull and his colleagues cite.

The evidence for a majority consensus is compelling, since it holds up across many questions and also, especially, for different question wordings, which can affect the distributions of responses (cf. Glynn et al., Chapter 3; Page and Shapiro, 1992). But what are also noticeable are what seem to be persistent partisan divisions in responses both at the elite and mass level that indicate partisan differences that are either peculiar to disagreements over the Bush administration's specific policies, or that could be part of a broader ideological conflict pitting a potentially enduring Republican neoconservatism against the more moderate views of its Democratic opponents. The opinion data that Kull et al. (2005) emphasize, then, need to be looked at in context, since they focus on partisanship in surveys conducted during one time period. There may be longer-term changes percolating that may lead any existing bipartisan consensus to erode. We explore these changes and conflict at the elite and mass level in the remainder of this paper.

Research and Data

To examine partisan and ideological polarization on foreign policy and international security issues we focus on both elite and public opinion in the United States (we use "elite" and "leader" interchangeably). We look at the elite level since we might expect to find increasing partisan divisions there; such elite level differences on issues that divide the parties have historically been larger than mass level differences, and changes in elite opinion are likely to precede changes in public opinion more widely (see Converse, 1964; Zaller, 1992; Carmines and Stimson, 1989; Heatherington, 2001; Layman and Carsey, 2002). The process or mechanism by which elite opinions become

part of public opinion occurs directly or indirectly through communications conveyed through the mass media. Lance Bennett (1990) theorized that political leaders communicate with the public through a process that involves press reports that cite, or more precisely, “index” these leaders’ opinions. In this way leaders can have a dominant influence on public opinion through the media. There is some disagreement regarding whether indexing has continued to occur on foreign policy issues or whether indexing best described news reporting from World War II until the end of the Cold War -- and only occurred for issues related to the struggle against communism. An alternative to indexing is the media looking for non-elite sources, and reporters and editors offering their own independent analyses (cf. Mermin, 1999; Zaller and Chiu, 2002). It is an open question whether terrorists and insurgents have replaced communism as a foe and indexing continues to occur in the way Bennett (1990) described. But, in any case, segments of the public are regularly exposed to cues and information from elites that are regularly reported in the press (see Page and Shapiro, 1992, Chapter 8; Zaller, 1992; Jacobs and Shapiro, 2000).

While it is possible to study elite opinion by content analyzing news reports, such an analysis would have to assume: that “indexing” is occurring; that the same elites are cited over time in order to compare them; that one could identify the partisanship and ideology of anyone cited as a news source; and that we could find out through the media elites’ opinions’ on a wide range of issues of interest. Instead, we will directly examine elite opinion based on comparable survey samples of leaders in different sectors in the United States.

The data we examine are taken from the mass public and leader surveys sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in 1998, 2002, and 2004. The surveys provide data on a wide range of largely foreign policy and international security issues for samples of the American public and also leaders. The Chicago Council surveys have been conducted since 1974 and the data from 1998 through 2004 are the most relevant since they cover the current period from the end of the Clinton administration through the first Bush administration when partisan conflict became increasingly visible, reaching high points during the period of the impeachment of President Bill Clinton, the controversy over the 2000 election outcome, and the highly partisan and charged 2004 election. The surveys also cover the pre September 11th period, an interviewing period during the year after September 11th, and then two years later after the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq (see Rielly, 1999; Bouton and Page, 2002; Bouton et al., 2004). The question asked in the 2004 survey, including all of those used in this paper are reported in Appendix 1. More information about the surveys can be obtained at the website: <http://www.cfr.org/globalviews2004/index.htm>.

The surveys interviewed samples of the American public and a sample of leaders who have foreign policy powers, specialization, or expertise. For the leader sample, the same method of selection was used in each year and the interviews were conducted by telephone. The leaders include members of Congress or their senior staff (in both the House of Representatives and the Senate), presidential administration officials and senior staff in agencies or offices dealing with foreign policy issues, university administrators or academics who teach in the area of international relations, journalists and editorial staff who handle international news, presidents of large labor unions, business executives of

Fortune 1000 corporations, religious leaders, presidents of major private foreign policy organizations, and presidents of major special interest groups relevant to foreign policy. Appendix 2 describes the leader sample design further (see also Rielly, 1999; Bouton and Page, 2002; Bouton et al., 2004).

The surveys of the public at large were conducted differently from the leader surveys. The samples were selected using standard methods for the kind of surveys done. The 1998 survey was conducted through in-person interviews, using multistage sampling. In 2002, the Chicago Council shifted to a telephone survey using random digit dialing (RDD). It also began to explore using on-line methods by doing an additional survey with Knowledge Networks, which uses panels of respondents selected using RDD methods (for a further description, see Bouton et al., 2004, “Notes on Methodology,” p.54-56), to compare findings for questions asked in the different “modes” – that is, in the telephone versus on-line survey. In 2004, the main survey was done on-line, with a short second survey done by telephone by the company IPSOS-Public Affairs to examine “mode” effects and, to the extent possible, to examine opinion changes for responses to questions asked in the same mode in both 2002 and 2004. In analyzing these data there may be some problems if the interviewing mode leads to different responses. For our analysis, however, we are interested in partisan or ideological differences in opinions and the extent to which, if any, these differences have changed over time. While the responses to any question may be affected by the survey mode, the subgroup differences should not be so affected, so we can estimate changes in subgroups differences with little if any distortion. And where we have data based on the same survey modes, we can compare those data as well. Unfortunately, measures of partisanship and ideology were

not asked in the 2004 telephone survey, so we could not include this survey in our analysis (for the aggregate results for each survey in each mode in 2002 and 2004 and for the long-term trend data that are available, see the complete “Topline” report for the mass public surveys at:

http://www.ccf.org/globalviews2004/sub/pdf/2004_US_Public_Topline_Report.pdf).

The data we examined in these surveys were largely responses to questions concerned with opinion and perceptions concerning American foreign policy, international institutions, important nations in U.S. foreign affairs, and threats to the United States. We identified fully 122 relevant questions that were asked in the national public opinion surveys that were asked at least once in 1998 or 2002 and repeated in the 2004 survey. Of these 122 questions, 62 were also asked in the shorter 2004 leader survey and in the 2002 and/or 1998 leader surveys. Eight of the questions concern domestic issues (education, Social Security, health care, illegal drugs, racial profiling, and three questions on immigration) that we include in our initial tabulations before focusing on foreign policy. A complete listing of these survey items are presented in the tables below, and all the question wordings are reported in Appendix 1.

For these questions we focused on the responses broken down by partisanship, comparing the responses of Republicans with those of Democrats. We did the same for self-reported ideology, comparing the responses of "liberals" with the responses of "conservatives." The differences in the opinions of these subgroups are of interest, since they represent the degree of partisan or ideological differences in responses. Our main interest is in partisan polarization over time but we are interested in seeing the extent to which partisanship also identifies people in the way they describe themselves as a liberal

or conservative. Figure 4 indicates that this has become increasingly the case, and in the CCFR surveys the correlation between our three category (conservative, moderate, liberal) ideology measure and three category (Republican, Independent, Democrat) party identification measure increased substantially from .23 in 1998 to .39 in the 2002 telephone survey and .43 in the internet survey, and .38 in the 2004 internet survey. In the leader sample, as we would expect, these correlations are much stronger, and they remained the same at .71 in all three years. Thus for elites, partisanship and liberal-conservative self-identification are much closer to being synonymous than for the mass public.

The main questions we ask of our data are: To what extent do we find partisan differences in mass and elite opinions and perceptions concerning matters related to U.S. foreign policy? To what extent are there opinion and perception differences associated with self-reported ideology? And, most important, to what extent, if any, have these partisan and ideological differences changed over time, and in what direction? To answer the last questions, for the survey items asked to the public and the items asked of leaders, we estimated how often there were increases over time in partisan and ideological differences -- that is, divergence of opinions—and how often there were decreases in these differences -- that is, convergence of opinions.

Analysis and Findings

Table 1 and Table 2 present our tabulations of the partisan and ideological differences in responses to the questions asked in the leader and mass public surveys. Table 3 estimates the degree of partisan or ideological divergence or convergence over

the time, which we will focus on below. To the extent possible (if not, we just looked at differences inductively), we interpreted response categories as liberal or conservative with respect to a neoconservative ideology that, as noted above, urges government leaders not to shy away from acting aggressively and unilaterally in international affairs and not relying greatly on allies and international organizations such as the United Nations. Government should remain open to military means to resolve threats and not rely fully on economic and diplomatic options. The tables report the degree of partisan and ideological difference in responses to each question cited. Also noted are (if they are not otherwise clear) the response categories compared.

(TABLES 1, TABLE 2, AND TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE)

In estimating the partisan and ideological differences in responses to the questions, we excluded all “don’t know,” “not sure,” and “no answer” responses (and “not asked,” if a question was not asked of all respondents, which was sometimes the case in the 2002 public survey). In general, partisan or ideological differences in any one survey of 6 percentage points or more are statistically significant (assuming simple random sampling; technically the percentage point difference that is statistically significant could vary somewhat across surveys and questions depending on the sub-sample sizes and the magnitudes of the percentages, which are the two factors that determine sampling error). This percentage is also the minimum that we would consider substantively significant as well. Estimating the degree of polarization or convergence over time requires estimating the differences of these differences. To be statistically significant these differences generally have to be at least 9 percentage points, which would also be of substantive interest (though specific differences of particular interest described further below are at

least 10 percentage points). Further, if we find repeated differences in the direction that we expect – that is, if we tend to find increasing partisan differences along the lines we have described above – we might interpret further patterns of differences that fall short of 9 percentage points, though individually these differences may not be substantively impressive. We do not dwell on these smaller differences in this paper, but readers may want to take note of them in our data.

As we see in Table 1, the partisan and ideological differences in leaders’ opinions vary in magnitude, and many tend to be very large. Most of them are well above 6 percentage points and they can readily be interpreted. In contrast, among the public in Table 2, while we see a good many differences greater than 6 percent, the results in this regard are much more mixed than for the leaders (from here on we will use the term “percent” to mean “percentage point” when we refer to subgroup differences or differences over time). The tables are very detailed--they are packed with findings about partisan and ideological differences on specific issues, and we do not have the space to discuss all of them here. We will focus our discussion on the dynamics of the variations—whether there is increasing polarization over time or whether there might there be less divergence as indicated by evidence for opinion convergence.

The entries in Table 3 are percent changes that indicate divergence (positive values, indicating polarization) or convergence (negative values), with zeros indicating estimates of no change. The changes reported are from 1998 to 2004 for questions that were asked in all three years, or from 2002 to 2004 for questions asked only in those two years or for which we find changes of interest. As noted above, we only consider statistically and substantively significant changes (positive or negative) with magnitudes

of at least 9 percent. Table 3 is still a very detailed. How do we interpret all of its data? And what is our frame of reference for evaluating how much divergence or convergence is occurring?

Table 4 presents what we see as the overall summary of the key findings from Table 3. Table 4 reports for all our survey items how often we find divergence or convergence for the opinions among leaders and among the public. Most of the changes in Table 3 are of magnitudes less than 9 percentage points. This is not surprising since past research has shown that the dominant pattern to expect is not divergence or convergence but “parallel” changes. In looking for divergence and convergence of different partisan subgroups, Page and Shapiro (1992, p.291) found non-parallel trends in only 4 percent of the pairs of time points they examined, using a decision rule close to the one that we use. What does Table 4 reveal?

(TABLES 4, 4a, 4b, and 4c ABOUT HERE)

For the 62 relevant questions asked of leaders (see the “Leader Opinion” columns), we find 17 cases (27% of the 62 questions) of partisan divergence and only 6 cases (10%) of partisan convergence, for a total of 23 (37%) non-parallel changes. This is a very striking finding and the dominant pattern is one of divergence—of partisan polarization. Since the partisan and ideological differences among elites in Table 1 are already large, this would make further divergence more difficult to achieve, and if anything, we might expect a tendency toward convergence to be more likely (see Page and Shapiro, 1992, Chapter 7, and Bartels, 2002). That partisan divergence is much more likely than convergence in our data is therefore a compelling finding. Comparing ideological to partisan trends, we find a similar number of non-parallel changes for ideology -- for

conservatives versus liberals (22 or 35%) --with divergence and convergence each occurring in 11 cases. That we find the same proportion of cases of divergence and convergence—given that there are large ideological differences among leaders to begin with—suggests to us that newly developing ideological (or other) aspects of partisanship may be at work that ought to be of concern here. However, because partisanship and ideology for elites are highly correlated, it is not surprising to find that there are 7 cases (11%) in which we find both partisan and ideological divergence/polarization – in more than one out of 10 cases in the leader data. There are only 3 cases (5%) of both partisan and ideological convergence.

One caveat regarding Table 4 is that it includes the eight domestic policy questions, so that to focus on foreign affairs only, we have provided in Table 4a the calculations for the foreign policy item. The foreign policy results for leaders in Table 4a are now based on 54 questions. The revised results are that there are still 17 cases (31% of the 54 questions) of partisan divergence and but only 4 cases (7%) of partisan convergence, for a total of 21 (38%) non-parallel changes. This is again a very striking finding and the dominant pattern remains one of partisan polarization. We still find a similar number of non-parallel changes for ideology -- for conservatives versus liberals (21 or 39%) --with divergence and convergence each occurring in 10 and 11 cases, respectively. And we find that there are 7 cases (13%) of both partisan and ideological polarization, and there are only 2 cases (4%) of both partisan and ideological convergence. Still, the most striking finding is the high proportion of cases of partisan polarization as we have measured it as increasing divergence.

On what issues, then, have opinions become more polarized among leaders?

We present some of the main examples in Figures 10 through 22. Here we focus on ideological differences between the parties in ongoing political disagreements or potential disagreements. Conservative or neoconservative oriented Republican positions are those that, compared to more moderate or liberal Democratic positions, emphasize the need for a strong defense and support U.S.-initiated and largely unilateral military action abroad, especially in circumstances in which multilateral, diplomatic, and economic options may not be fully exploited. Looking at the Figures, the opinions of Republicans and Democrats diverged concerning military aid to other countries (Figure 10). Compared to Republicans, Democrats have been more supportive of cutting back military aid to other nations, with the Republican-Democratic difference in opinion doubling from 13 percent in 1998 to 27 percent in 2004.

We also see increasing polarization regarding what leaders see as very important goals of American foreign policy – in particular, the importance of maintaining superior military power worldwide and of bringing a democratic form of government to other nations. These goals are part of the centerpiece of the neoconservative agenda, as became clear with the war in Iraq and how the Bush administration justified its actions there and suggested that it wished to continue to project U.S. power to promote freedom around the world. In 1998, 31 percent more Republican than Democratic leaders thought maintaining superior military power was a “very important” foreign policy goal (Figure 11); this gap rose by 18 points to about 59 percent in 2004 as the percentage of Democrats holding this view declined to 26 percent compared to 76 percent of Republicans. In 1998, nearly the same percentage of Democratic and Republican leaders

thought that helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations was a very important goal, with slightly (though not significantly) more Democrats (33 percent) than Republican leaders (28 percent) holding this view (Figure 12). In 2002, the partisan difference increased in the same direction, with 42 percent of Democrats versus 30 percent of Republicans seeing promoting democracy as a very important goal. By 2004, however, as the Bush administration made clearer its rationale for the Iraq war and the Bush doctrine, the opinions of partisan leaders reversed, with 14 percent more Republican leaders (46 percent) than Democrats (32 percent) reporting the spread of democracy as such an important foreign policy goal. On a different set of issues, foreign economic ones, we see a widening gap between Republican and Democratic leaders concerning the importance of protecting American jobs, with Democrats more likely to see this as a very important goal of American foreign policy (Figure 13), and concerning the protection of American business, with Republicans increasingly more likely to respond that this is a very important goal (Figure 14).

Not surprising, too, there has been a substantial and increasing divergence regarding support for U.S. participation in the International Criminal Court (ICC), an institution that the Bush administration has opposed (Figure 15). The partisan gap among leaders was 38 percent in 2002, rising to 50 percent in 2004, with 89 percent of Democratic leaders supporting U.S. participation, compared to only 39 percent of Republicans. The gap for self-identified conservatives versus liberals in 2004 rose to 54 percent (Figure 16).

Concerning circumstances justifying the use of U.S. troops, most of the partisan differences we see in Table 1 and Table 3 do not show many cases of divergence. One

clear case of partisan polarization occurs for support for using U.S. troops if the government of Pakistan requested U.S. help against a “radical Islamic Revolution” (Figure 17): the difference in support for this among Republicans versus Democrats increased from 7 percent in 2002 to 25 percent in 2004 when 74% of Republicans (a bit more than in 2002) supported this use of U.S. troops compared to approximately 49 percent of Democrats (down more than 13 percent from 2002).

There are also increasing partisan differences in leaders’ views toward ways to combat terrorism, specifically: the trials of suspected terrorists in the International Criminal Court, and toppling unfriendly regimes that support terrorist groups. While large majorities of leaders identifying with both parties have supported aggressive action against terrorism such as air strikes against terrorist camps and attacks by U.S. ground troops, much smaller Republican majorities compared to Democratic majorities, as would be expected, have support putting suspected terrorists on trial in the International Criminal Court (ICC): 62 percent of Republican leaders in 2004, down from 83 percent in 1998 (Figure 18). These percentages differed from those of Democrats by fully 28 percent in 2004 compared to only 12 percent in 1998. Another particularly important partisan difference concerning how to combat terrorism occurs for the option of toppling unfriendly regimes that support terrorist groups threatening the United States (Figure 19). The already large partisan difference of 29 percent in 2002 increased to 46 percent in 2004, with only a small minority of Democratic leaders (29 percent, down from 54 percent) supporting this action compared to 75 percent of Republicans (down from 83 percent).

The last examples of increasing partisan differences occur for leaders' opinions toward long-term military bases in specific countries. With the exception of the cases of bases in Germany and South Korea, partisan differences from 2002 to 2004 increased by 9 percent or more for having U.S. bases in Pakistan, Turkey, Japan, Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan, with Republicans consistently more favorable toward having these long-term bases. Long-term bases in Turkey were supported by 78 percent of Republicans in 2004, compared to 66 percent of Democrats, a difference of 12 percent; in contrast, Democrats were slightly more supportive of these bases than Republicans in 2002. A clear majority of Republicans (69 percent) supported bases in Japan, compared to 57 percent of Democrats, a 12 percent difference that did not exist in 2002. While a large majority of Republicans in 2004, 77 percent, favored the base at Guantanamo in Cuba, only 39 percent of Democrats did so, a 38 percent partisan difference compared to a 16 percent difference in 2002 (Figure 20). The bipartisan majority support for bases in Saudi Arabia that existed in 2002 was no longer in place in 2004, with 45 percent of Republicans favoring these bases in 2004 compared to only 20 percent of Democrats, a 25 percent difference in contrast to a 5 percent partisan difference in 2002. In 2004, 57 percent of Republicans versus 44 percent of Democrats supported bases in Afghanistan, a 13 percent difference compared to a 2 percent differences in 2002 when this support was 49 percent among Republicans and 47 percent among Democrats (Figure 21). Last, there was a 24 percent partisan difference regarding bases in Uzbekistan (Figure 22), which were favored by only 43 percent of Republicans and 19 percent of Democrats in 2004, a 24 percent difference compared to

virtually no partisan difference of this sort in 2002 when Democrats were 2 percent more likely to support these bases (42 percent versus 40 percent for Republicans).

These increasing partisan differences in the leaders survey show how leaders' opinions have become polarized in ways reflecting new ideological currents and policies of the Bush administration. To what extent has this polarization also penetrated to the level of the public opinion?

Comparing the American public to elites we find noteworthy but fewer cases of partisan divergence/polarization and also less convergence, and more parallel opinion trends by party. But, what is striking is that we find relatively more frequent cases of ideological divergence—polarization among self-identified liberals versus conservatives. Returning to Table 4, we note that there were many more questions – 122 (in contrast to the 62 for the leader surveys) -- to compare in the public opinion surveys. Based on responses to the full 122 questions, as shown in Table 4, we find 19 cases of partisan divergence (16% of the 122) and only 4 cases (3%) of partisan convergence, for a total of 23 (19%) non-parallel changes. This is not as striking as for the leaders' data but the predominant pattern, again, is partisan polarization in contrast to convergence. Restricting the results to the 62 questions that were also asked in the leader survey, we find 11 cases (18%) divergence and 2 cases (3%) of convergence, for a total of 13 (21%) non-parallel changes and a further corroboration that there has been partisan polarization and a noticeable deviation from the pattern of “parallel publics.”

For ideology, we find 23 cases (19%) of divergence and 9 cases (7%) of convergence for the full 122 cases, and 11 cases (18%) of divergence and 4 cases (6%) of convergence for the 62 questions asked also to leaders. In contrast to that for leaders, the

correlation between partisanship and ideology for the public that we reported earlier, while impressive, is much lower, so it is not surprising to find fewer cases of both partisan ideological divergence and convergence. Among the full 122 questions, there are 9 cases of partisan and ideological divergence (7%) and no cases (0%) of convergence; the corresponding figure for the 62 questions asked also in the leaders survey are 4 cases (6%) of divergence and, again, no cases (0%) of convergence.

Again, because Table 4 includes the eight domestic policy items, to compare leader and the public opinion toward foreign policy matters, we need to exclude these items. Moreover, included among the 114 foreign policy questions asked of the public and included in Table 4 and Table 4a are three sets of questions that are substantively very different from other questions asked to the public and the leaders. There is a set of questions on perceptions of “possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years” and two sets of “feeling thermometer” questions that measure affect toward particular countries or peoples, and toward international organizations. As we found above in the case of leaders, the basic findings in Table 4a for the mass public are overall not significantly different from the results in Table 4. However, the data reported in Table 4a are not the most appropriate for comparing trends in public opinion with elite opinion. The reason for this is that the threat perception and feeling thermometer questions were not asked in the leader surveys. So in order to better compare the public and leaders, Table 4b reports the results for policy opinion questions, excluding the responses by the public to the threat perception and affect questions. The leader opinion data in Table 4b are the same as in Table 4a and are included just for convenient reference.

Table 4b reports the results for the public's responses to the 82 foreign policy issue questions and for the 54 items that were also asked in the leader surveys. For these questions we find partisan divergence in 11 cases of the 82 (13%) and in 10 (19%) of the 54 cases. We find many fewer cases--only 2 cases (2% of 82 and 4% of the 54)--of partisan convergence. Thus, again, there are a noteworthy percentage of cases showing partisan polarization, but less than the percentage of divergent shifts found in the leader data. In the case of ideology, with the threat perception and feeling thermometer items excluded, we still find cases of ideological divergence but it is clear that the threat perception and affect questions, as we will see further below, were more ideologically polarized. In Table 4b we see that there are 8 cases of ideological divergence—10% of the 82 cases and 15% of the 54 questions asked also of leaders. There are 7 cases of ideological convergence for the 82 questions, 9%, but only 3 among the 54 questions, 6%. With the threat perception and thermometer questions excluded, there are few cases (4 cases--5% and 7%, respectively) of both partisan and ideological divergence and, again, no cases of partisan and ideological convergence.

What are providing substantial evidence for partisan and especially ideological polarization are the public's perceptions of threats to the United States and their measured feelings toward particular countries and international organizations. These data are summarized in Table 4c. Among the responses to these 32 survey items, we find 7 cases of partisan divergence (22%) versus only 2 cases (6%) of partisan convergence. Most striking of all are the findings for ideology: there are 12 cases of ideological polarization, fully 38%; 5 cases (16%) of partisan and ideological convergence; and only 1 case (3%) of ideological convergence. That liberal-conservative ideology matters to

this extent for the dynamics of public opinion suggests that past claims regarding the public's lack of ideological attentiveness not only no longer apply but are contradicted for foreign policy issues that were never a central part of the past debates about the centrality of partisanship and ideology for American public opinion (cf. Converse, 1964; Campbell, et al. 1976 [1960], Nie et al., 1979; Shapiro, 1998).

There is clearly more polarization of public opinion than we would normally expect, especially ideological polarization, and less partisan polarization than among the elites. On what issues, then, have the public's perceptions and attitudes opinions become more polarized? We again look more closely at some specific issues.

First, to put the public opinion data in broader context it is useful to consider what has been happening for domestic issues, which have been the focus on research on partisan and ideological polarization. On some important domestic issues for which we have data from the CCFR surveys that have been largely devoted to foreign policy, we find noteworthy increases in polarization related to the way individuals self-identify in ideological terms as liberal and conservative. Here, as shown in Figures 23A to 25B, we see how the public has moved further ideologically in the direction of elites--with liberals and conservatives diverging further from elites in their support for more expansive education, Social Security, and health care policies--which provides further evidence regarding two questions: the causal inference question as to whether elites lead or follow public opinion, and the questions of whether polarization has been occurring in public opinion toward domestic issues. The data support the conclusion that public opinion reacts to elite opinion and elite discourse, rather than the reverse (see Zaller, 1992; Heatherington, 2001; Layman and Carsey, 2002), and the data also show that ideological

polarization occurred from 1998 to 2004 on economic welfare issues. Not only does this suggest that there have been changes since Fiorina's (2005) analysis but that in the debate about partisan polarization regard social and moral values-related issues, we should not overlook the continued central important of economic welfare issues in American partisan politics (see also Bartels, 2005 and Ansolabehere et al., 2005).

(FIGURES 23A TO FIGURE 38 ABOUT HERE)

Returning to foreign policy and national security issues, we find increasing partisan differences in public opinion toward defense spending, foreign military aid gathering intelligence information about other countries (Figures 26-28). The partisan difference of 14 percent on defense spending in 1998 (41 percent of Republicans versus 27 percent of Democrats wanted "to expand" defense spending) increased to 24 percent in 2004 (44 percent vs. 20 percent). Close to the same percentages of Republicans and Democrats in 1998 wanted to expand foreign intelligence gathering (33 vs. 30 percent), but this small gap grew to 18 percent by 2004 (57 percent vs. 39 percent). In the case of foreign military aid partisan opinion diverged from 4 percent in 1998 to 14 percent in 2004 when 73 percent of Democrats wanted to "cut back" military aid compared to 59 percent of Republicans.

This ideological divergence also extended to perceptions of vital threats the nation. One particularly notable issue here is that of global warming (Figure 29), in which the percentage of conservatives who saw this as a critical threat in 1998, 38 percent, dropped to 22 percent in 2004, whereas a majority of liberals still perceived this as a critical threat in 2004.

There was also polarization among the public on the importance of particular foreign policy goals: strengthening the United Nations, combating international terrorism, and maintaining superior military power worldwide (Figures 30-32). On strengthening the U.N., the difference in the percentage of Democrats and Republicans responding that this is a “very important” policy goal increased from 11 percent in 1998 to 24 percent in 2004, when 49 percent of Democrats gave this response versus 25 percent of Republicans. In the case of combating terrorism, the increase in partisan differences from 4 to 14 percent from 1998 to 2004, still left a large percentage of both Republicans and Democrats, 84 percent and 70 percent, respectively, seeing this as a very important foreign policy goal. In contrast, the importance of maintaining the U.S.’s superior military power has been a more divisive issue. In 2004 the 23 percentage point difference between Republicans and Democrats (67 percent versus 44 percent) reporting this to be very important goal is much larger than the 6 percent difference (65 percent vs. 59 percent) in bipartisan majority opinion in 1998. This increasing partisan difference when it comes to maintaining superior military power reflects directly on the increasing polarization of elite opinion regarding this that we saw above.

The global environment has also been an issue on which there have been ideological divisions, as we saw above in the case of perceptions of the threat of global warming. From 1998 to 2004, the percent of conservatives who thought improving the global environment should be a very important goal of U.S. foreign policy dropped from 47 percent to 33 percent, while liberals held stably at 63 percent (Figure 33).

On the use of U.S. troops, the data suggest increasing ideological differences regarding the use of U.S. troops if Arab forces invade Israel (Figure 34). The 7 percent

difference in 1998 increased to 21 percent in 2004, with 56 percent of conservatives versus 35 percent of liberals supporting the use of American troops in this circumstance.

One important case in point is the increase in the partisan difference that we find concerned with measures to combat international terrorism -- specifically the toppling of unfriendly regimes that support terrorist groups (Figure 35). The widening gap among Republican and Democratic leaders is mimicked in public opinion, though in a muted form. In 2002 there was substantial agreement and only a 6 percent difference in the proportion of Republicans (79 Percent) and Democrats (73 percent) who favored such actions. Two year later in 2004, support among Republicans increased slightly, to 82 percent, but it declined by much more among Democrats, to 62 percent, a 20 percentage point partisan difference.

Three last examples are the increasing divisions for the feeling thermometer ratings of France, which failed the U.S. as an ally in Iraq and on other recent occasions, and for the ratings of the United Nations and international human rights groups, with whom neoconservatives and the Bush administration have often disagreed (Figures 36-38). From 2002 to 2004 the percentage of Republicans giving France a "cold" rating (below 50) increased from 34 percent to 61 percent--by 27 percent--whereas the increase for Democrats was about half of that, from 19 percent to 33 percent, which widened the Democratic-Republican gap in affect toward France. With regard to the U.N., the feelings of liberals did not change at all from 2002 to 2004 (with 13 to 15 percent feeling cold toward the U.N.), whereas the percentage of conservatives who reported cold ratings increased from 28 to 46 percent. And in the case of international human rights groups, we see a similar pattern but not as stark: the percentage of conservatives who gave these

groups cold ratings increased from 26 percent to 33 percent, whereas liberal moved by 3 points in the opposite direction, from 15 percent top 12 percent.

The findings for leaders and the public opinion can be summarized as follows: there is evidence for increasing partisan and ideological differences among both elites and the public. Partisan polarization has occurred more widely and sharply among elites. In contrast, polarization along liberal-conservative lines not necessarily tied to expressed Republican-Democratic partisanship is apparent for public opinion, at least during the short-term examined here. In the cases of policy issues, for which we have leader data to compare to public opinion, the ideological or partisan polarization in public opinion has been in the direction in which elites have long diverged. This is consistent with what we would expect given that conflict over policy issues occurs first at the level of leaders in the political arena. To the extent that members of the mass public have become attuned to this and enter the partisan and ideological fray, they have done so less immediately and less fully (see Carmines and Stimson, 1989; Zaller, 1992). The diverging opinions that we have found and described (as well as some of the opinion convergence that we have not discussed further here) suggest that leaders and the public to some extent have reacted at different times to different issues. However, the general nature and substance of the ideological polarization that is at work seem common to both groups.

Conclusion

The data we have reported show that both elite opinion and public attitudes and perceptions in the United States have indeed become more polarized in the area of

foreign policy. Such increasing divisiveness in leaders' opinions and the extent to which this occurs among the public more broadly may work against existing support in the United States for international cooperation and institutions. It is difficult to predict how this will play out further. On the one hand, George W. Bush's re-election as president, coupled with full Republican control of Congress and especially the Senate which has to ratify any new treaties, suggests that the Republicans have little short-term incentive to moderate their positions in both domestic and foreign affairs. At this writing (late November 2005), there is little indication that the ideological and partisan polarization we have described will abate. This clearly represents an enormous change in American politics that has not only become more divided in partisan terms on domestic social issues, but this divisiveness has appeared to penetrate the foreign policy arena. This raises the question of whether a strong posture toward foreign policy has become part of a more sweeping conservative Republican ideology that has been acknowledged in elite circles and may now be reaching the mass public (cf. Monten, 2005, for a recent broader discussion of this).

On the other hand, this kind of ideological divisiveness on foreign policy could be short-lived, even if polarization on domestic issues continues. Page and Shapiro (1992, Chapter 7) described how historically divergence in subgroups' opinion have often been short-lived, and the data reported in this paper do include a number of cases of opinion convergence. It is possible, however, that the kind of polarization we now see may be more sustainable than in the past. The partisan and ideological divide on new and old social issues, such as gay rights, abortion, and others may endure (cf. Evans, 2003). It is possible that findings we have reported on international security-related issues may be

specific to the current situation facing the United States in the post Cold War and post September 11th world, in which it emerged as the only superpower in a unipolar international political environment. And the partisan differences we find may just reflect partisan differences in support for the positions and policies of the Bush administration. The polarization in foreign policy could diminish as international tensions subside, and it could change with the election of a Democratic administration that might find a middle ground that reduces partisan disagreement. It took time for the current polarization on domestic social issues to show that it may persist, and we will know more as we see how political leaders stake out their positions along partisan lines in the 2006 congressional elections and especially the 2008 presidential election.

Nonetheless we are left with a set of finding showing that elite opinions have indeed become more polarized from in recent years, and there are indications that this has been occurring for the mass public as well, especially in ideological terms. Such increasing divisions in leaders' opinions on foreign policy issues, if it persists, and the extent to which similar divisions have become more pervasive among the public, would indicate that American partisan politics and the nature of public opinion has changed in profound ways over the last fifty years.

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