

8-1995

The racial gap in public opinion concerning the Persian Gulf War: a study of opinion leaders in Richmond, Virginia

Ryan Turner Riggs

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/masters-theses>



Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Riggs, Ryan Turner, "The racial gap in public opinion concerning the Persian Gulf War: a study of opinion leaders in Richmond, Virginia" (1995). *Master's Theses*. Paper 871.

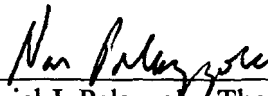
This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Research at UR Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of UR Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact scholarshipprepository@richmond.edu.

ABSTRACT

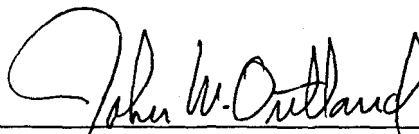
The proportion of black Americans serving in the United States military is much larger than their proportion among the general population. This issue came to the forefront during the Persian Gulf War of 1990-1991. While proud that many blacks were serving in uniform, and that the leader of the entire military, General Colin L. Powell, was black, many black Americans expressed dismay at the potential for high black casualty rates and questioned why the high numbers of blacks in the military even existed. In addition, public opinion polls showed that blacks were less supportive of the war than whites.

This thesis tests three hypotheses for explaining the racial gap in public opinion support for the Persian Gulf War, with a particular emphasis on public opinion among black opinion leaders in Richmond, Virginia. First, the carryover effect from the Vietnam experience that still causes many Americans unrest when debating sending troops overseas to fight a war is more pronounced among blacks than whites. Second, blacks have more to lose personally when the country goes to war because a disproportionate number of blacks serve in the military. Third, blacks believe that the government should focus more on social problems and civil rights at home than on military policy overseas. After reviewing the national public opinion polls about the Gulf War and the literature on public opinion, foreign policy, the Gulf War, and black social attitudes, this paper tests the three hypotheses using surveys and interviews with black and white public opinion leaders in the city of Richmond, Virginia. None of these three hypotheses alone fully explains why black support for the war remained lower than white support, but two of the reasons -- the carryover effect and concerns about misplaced priorities -- help to explain the racial gap.

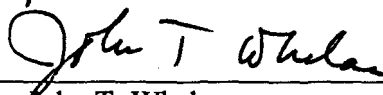
I certify that I have read this thesis and find that, in scope and quality, it satisfies the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



Dr. Daniel J. Palazzolo, Thesis Advisor



Dr. John W. Outland



Dr. John T. Whelan

THE RACIAL GAP IN PUBLIC OPINION CONCERNING
THE PERSIAN GULF WAR: A STUDY OF OPINION
LEADERS IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

By

Ryan Turner Riggs

B.A., University of Virginia, 1992

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the University of Richmond

in Candidacy

for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Political Science

August, 1995

Richmond, Virginia

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
VIRGINIA 23173

I. Introduction

War will remain a constant in American society. From a nation founded in war, to a nation haunted by images of wars past and future, the military is deeply embedded in the American mind. Whether in Korea, Panama, or Bosnia, during America's next war citizens will debate the role of the military and scrutinize its every decision. Who will fight America's battles also remains a question. Black Americans have played a vital and distinguished part in the United States military throughout history. The issue of black patriotism for America has almost never been questioned. From Crispus Attucks, the first man killed during the Revolution, to the Buffalo soldiers of the late 1800's, to the Tuskegee Airmen during World War Two, and the first black man to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin L. Powell, blacks have served valiantly.

However, many blacks are concerned that the percentage of blacks serving in the Armed Forces far exceeds the percentage of blacks in the general U.S. population. Recent statistics show that blacks make up about 12.1 % of the general population, but about 21% of all active duty troops in the United States Armed Forces.¹ Unless a drastic change occurs, the military will continue to consist of a disproportionate number of black Americans. The issues facing this minority in America include the burden of heavier military service to make up for lack of opportunity elsewhere. No doubt, then, that blacks will actively participate in any debate concerning the role of America's military.

¹ United States General Accounting Office, Operation Desert Storm: Race and Gender Comparison of Deployed Forces with All Active Duty Forces, GAO/NSIAD-92-111FS, (Washington, GAO, June 1992) pp. 13-16.

This thesis engages in part of that debate by exploring the question of racial differences on military policy during the Persian Gulf War. Instead of surveying mass opinion, this study focuses on the opinion of local elites who might serve as opinion leaders in the community. The ultimate aim is to determine if the views of the opinion leaders in Richmond are consistent with the expectations of blacks and whites in general. Did a racial difference between black and white leaders occur on military policy in the Gulf War? And, if so, was that difference a reflection of carryover effects from the Vietnam War, close relationships with those who serve in the military, or concerns about misplaced priorities, particularly an expensive foreign policy decision that seemed to take precedent over domestic problems that burden many blacks?

A qualitative assessment of the opinions of local elites in Richmond, Virginia shows that the Vietnam “carryover effect” and concerns about domestic problems offer the most compelling evidence for differences between whites and blacks opinions on the Persian Gulf War. Black elites were not as concerned as other blacks with the greater potential for the possibility of disproportionate losses of blacks in the war.

The study begins with a general overview of the black experience in the military and general trends in public opinion on military policy during the Gulf War. A literature review on the subject of racial differences in public opinion provides the basis for three working hypotheses for this study. The paper then discusses the sample and data collection methods. Finally, the paper presents the results of the survey of Richmond opinion leaders, and analyses this survey together with the three hypotheses.

II. The Black Experience in the Military and Public Opinion on the Persian Gulf War

Backers of the high proportions of blacks in the military point to the equal opportunity for all, regardless of color, to serve and advance, while the critics demonstrate that economic inequity and lack of opportunity in the private sector leads to the increased numbers. Charles Moskos, a military sociologist at Northwestern University, says, "It (the military) is the only place where a white will be bossed around by a black on a regular basis."² But, according to Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D. - Calif.), many blacks said during the buildup in Saudi Arabia, "It is not fair for me to maybe to have to volunteer for the military to be educated, to get trained, to have a job...Something's wrong in America that does not provide me an opportunity for a better quality of life."³ So while the military remains an opportunity for blacks for advancement and training during peacetime, during times of war it is a burden because of the potential for high black casualty rates. The problems of the potential benefits versus the potential burdens of military service for blacks weigh heavily on American society. As Martin Binkin puts it,

"When the benefits are seen to outweigh the burdens, as they are in peacetime, many believe that the overrepresentation of racial minorities can contribute to true social equity. When the burdens of enlistment are seen to outweigh the benefits, however, attention is focused on social and racial class distinctions, and any overrepresentation of disadvantaged minority groups is perceived as

² Isabel Wilkerson, "Blacks Wary of Their Big Role as Troops," New York Times, January 25, 1991, p. A1.

³ Lynne Duke, "Emerging Black Anti-War Movement Rooted in Domestic Issues," Washington Post, February 8, 1991, p. A27.

evidence of systemic inequity.”⁴

This argument is also transferrable to military spending. On one hand, military spending benefits blacks because of the large numbers of jobs it creates in both the military itself and in the private sector with defense contractors, builders, base personnel, and other military-industrial related jobs. On the other hand, high military spending hurts blacks, because the money going into defense could be spent elsewhere, especially to provide more educational or job opportunities to blacks.

Still another irony affecting black service concerns the downsizing of the military after the end of the cold war. On one hand, the downsizing potentially helps the black community by shifting funds normally used for the military establishment to urban development and community planning. The so called “peace dividend” is only one benefit of a smaller military budget. On the other hand, this dramatic downsizing harms the black community, especially black employment, by taking away military jobs that are usually open and accessible to black Americans. The cutbacks will hurt blacks more than whites because of blacks' high percentages in the military. “All of us would like to see more money spent on butter rather than guns, but black Americans to a large extent look to the military for jobs and training,” said John Johnson, director of military affairs for the NAACP. Coupled with the fact that blacks have a higher unemployment than whites (about 14% to 7% in 1992), the

⁴ Martin Binkin, “The New Face of the American Military,” The Brookings Review, Summer, 1991,

cutbacks in the military may hit blacks hard.⁵ No government policy, apart perhaps from one guaranteeing both increased military and domestic spending to keep unemployment low, will satisfy everyone.

Many black leaders see the irony in a military force that welcomes blacks with open arms, but a business environment that still remains closed to many. General Powell, in congressional testimony, said, "Much has been made of the minority issue. I wish that there were other activities in our society and in our nation that were as open as the military is to upward mobility, to achievement, to allowing them in." Later in the same testimony Powell said, "I wish corporate America, I wish the trade unions around the nation would show the same level of openness and opportunity to minorities the military has."⁶

Beginning with President Truman's 1948 Executive Order #9981, which barred discrimination in the armed forces, the military was officially integrated.⁷ It remains today one of the most integrated segments of American society. Unfortunately, the high levels of integration also apply to deaths during combat. As noted above, according to recent government statistics, 21%, or one in five active duty troops is black. This is the highest percentage to date. In 1981, when President Ronald Reagan announced a return to a larger standing military force, the armed forces were 19.8 % black. In 1968, during the Vietnam

⁵ James E. Ellis, "Where Troop Cuts Will Be Cruellest," Business Week, June 8, 1992, p. 72.

⁶ United States Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993 - H.R. 2100, hearing, 102nd Congress, 1st Session, February 7, 1991 (Washington, GPO, 1991) p. 76.

⁷ Bernard Nalty, Strength for the Fight, (New York, MacMillian, Inc., 1986), p. 242.

War, only 10.2% of all active duty troops were black.⁸ In looking at the Vietnam era, one finds that from 1961-1973, blacks made up approximately 11% of the total force in Vietnam, and about 12% of total combat deaths.⁹ For the entire force in the Persian Gulf War, 24% of deployed active duty troops were black, but only 20.1% of deployed active duty troops *in combat positions* were black. In the *Army* alone, 32.6%, or one in three, of deployed active duty enlisted troops were black.¹⁰

From the high proportions of blacks in the military, one might expect the percentages of deaths to mirror those high rates. However, they do not. In the Vietnam War, the final statistics for the Army (1961-1972) show that 13.1% of the troops killed were black. The percentages were higher in the early stages of the War, however. In 1965 and 1966, over 20% of American Army combat deaths in Vietnam were blacks. By the end of the war these numbers came down significantly.¹¹ In the Persian Gulf War, of the 182 total deaths, only 27 were black soldiers, 15% of all deaths.¹² The small number of deaths from the Gulf war directly results from the War's brief duration and reliance on high-tech air strikes to soften up the Iraqi front lines before the ground assault began. If the War had lasted longer,

⁸ Martin Binkin, et al., Blacks and the Military, (Washington, The Brookings Institution, 1982), p. 42, 76.

⁹ Lynne Duke, "For Many Blacks, Call to Duty Rings of Inequality," Washington Post, November 28, 1990, p. A1.

¹⁰ GAO, Operation Desert Storm, pp. 2 - 15.

¹¹ Binkin, et al., p. 76. This number is not widely known. Many Americans have a misconception about the number of blacks killed in Vietnam, and feel certain that the percentages were entirely disproportional and unfavorable to blacks. This "cannon fodder" myth remains fixed among many in American society.

¹² Lynne Duke, "U.S. War Toll Defies Racial Predictions," Washington Post, March 21, 1991, p. A28.

perhaps the percentages of deaths would have been more in line with the percentages of troops stationed in the Gulf. "If we had those big numbers (of deaths), then the law of averages would have come into effect. We could have expected 20, 25 percent of the casualties to have been black. It's just a very fortunate turn of events that there were very few coalition casualties," said Edwin Dorn, a military analyst at the Brookings Institution.¹³

Although the actual number of deaths for blacks in the Gulf did not mirror the proportion of black soldiers in the Gulf, concerns appeared almost daily in the media about the high numbers of blacks in the Gulf. Public opinion polls, conducted regularly by the press, consistently showed that black support for the war was lower than white support for the war. In some cases, not even a majority of blacks polled said that they were in favor of Bush's actions in the Gulf.¹⁴ A readers' poll in a traditionally Black-oriented magazine, Ebony, completed in January, reported that 66.9% of respondents did not support the President's position in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Other major newspapers and magazines reported similar black dissatisfaction. Usually, the major national newspapers teamed up with the major TV networks to conduct a poll. A sampling of polls in Table 1 shows this racial gap on public opinion about the war.¹⁵ The polls clearly show a significant difference

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ A New York Times/ CBS News poll taken January 17 - 20, 1991 just after the first air strikes, showed that only 47% of blacks thought that it was right to begin military action.

¹⁵ Gallup Organization question: In view of the developments since we first sent our troops to Saudi Arabia, do you think the US made a mistake in sending troops to Saudi Arabia, or not? (% agreeing with statement that sending troops to Saudi Arabia was not a mistake)

ABC News/Washington Post questions: #1 - Do you approve of President Bush's handling of the crisis with Iraq? (percent answering "yes") #2 - Should the United States take all actions necessary, including military

between races in support for the war.

TABLE ONE
Percentage of Americans supporting President Bush's Actions

Poll by:	WHITES	BLACKS
<u>Gallup Organization</u>		
November, 1990	65%	34%
January, 1991	80%	62%
<u>ABC News/Washington Post</u>		
November, 1990 (1)	62%	45%
November, 1990 (2)	69%	47%
<u>CBS News/New York Times</u>		
January 5, 1991	52%	23%
January 17, 1991	80%	47%
<u>NBC News/Wall Street Journal</u>		
December, 1990	60%	26%
January 25, 1991	81%	48%
January 25, 1991 (#2)	78%	52%
<u>CNN/Time</u>		
January 25, 1991	77%	49%

In the first days after the air war began, John Mueller's "rally-'round-the-flag" effect (the phenomenon that the public supports the President more directly following a major

force, to ensure Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait? (percent answering "yes")

CBS News/New York Times questions: January 5, 1991- Do you favor military action if Iraq is not out of Kuwait by January 15? (percent answering "yes") January 17, 1991 - Was the United States right to begin military action against Iraq? (percent answering "yes")

NBC News/Wall Street Journal questions: Do you approve of the job Mr. Bush is doing as President? (percent answering "yes") January 25, 1991 (#2) - Did President Bush wait long enough before using military force against Iraq? (percent answering "yes")

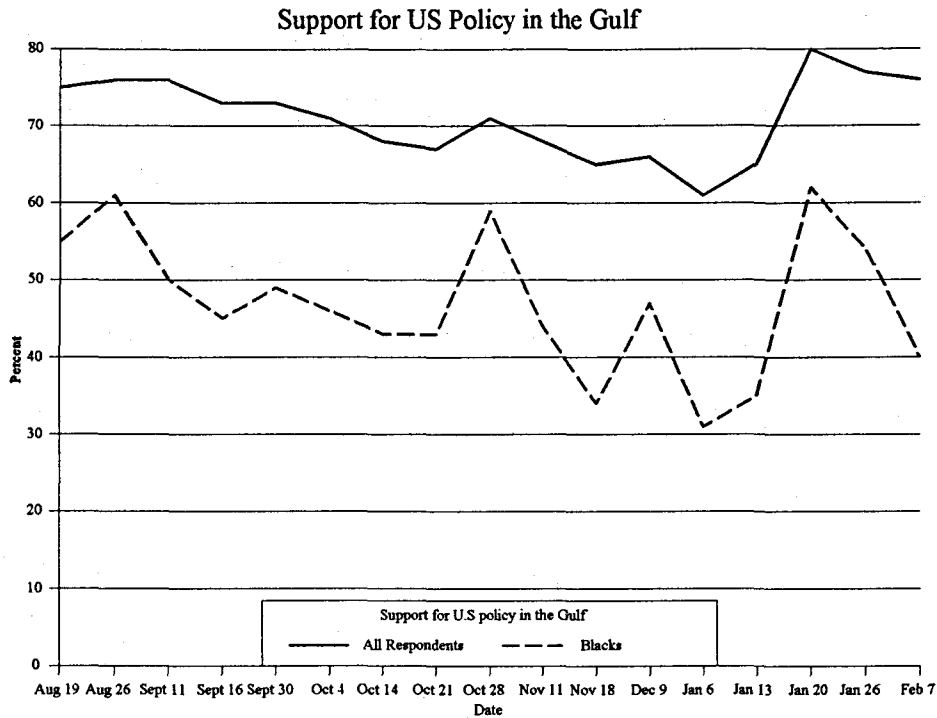
CNN/Time question: Do you think the United States was right to have become involved in this conflict with Iraq? (percent answering "yes")

international event) occurred, increasing both races' public support for the war¹⁶. But black support still lagged behind white support, with a 33% percent difference in a New York Times poll on January 17. Bruce Jentleson claims that the higher support seen immediately after the war began was more than just the standard "rally-'round-the-flag" effect, but instead denotes the "halo effect", in which the public supports military action after it has been proven successful.¹⁷ As seen in Graph #1, a compilation of polls in The American Enterprise shows that from August 16, 1990 to February 7, 1991, the average difference of support between blacks and whites for the war was 24.2%.¹⁸

¹⁶ John Mueller, Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War, (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994), p. 70.

¹⁷ Bruce Jentleson, "The Pretty Prudent Public: The Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force," International Studies Quarterly, 36, number 1, (March, 1992), p. 68.

¹⁸ This chart is a slightly modified version of one appearing American Enterprise, March/April 1991. It tracks surveys by the Gallup Organization in support for US policy in the Persian Gulf among blacks when compared to all respondents. The question read, "In view of the developments since we first sent our troops to Saudi Arabia, do you think the United States has made a mistake in sending troops to Saudi Arabia, or not?" So, on August 19, 75% of all respondents to the question felt that sending troops was not a mistake, while only 55% of blacks felt the same way.

GRAPH ONE

Journalists published many polls during the time of the war. According to one Gallup poll (see Graph One), black support reached its peak of 62% on January 20, 1991. These numbers are close to the actual support among blacks to concur, as the average black support for the war from August 19, 1990 to February 7, 1991 was 47.1% (see Graph One). For total support among both blacks and whites for the Gulf War, the highest level reached during that time was 86% on January 17, 1991.¹⁹ In another poll that came out during the war, many black respondents interviewed at the time said that the high numbers were a

¹⁹ Mueller, 1994, p. 193.

leading cause of the lower black support. Howard University's Ron Walters wrote about the “fear of high black casualties in the event of war,”²⁰ while Lynne Duke writes, “There is also bitterness about the circumstances that have resulted in a US military that is 20% black, an Army that is 30% black, and the prospect of a war that could produce black casualties in equally high numbers.”²¹ In another article, Duke says, “One of the central issues in the debate continues to be the disproportionate numbers of blacks in the armed forces, and thus the potential for heavy black casualties.”²² A Time poll and related article on February 4, 1991, after the initial air strikes but before the ground assault, discuss how only 49% of blacks support the war, and how 43% of blacks have a family member stationed in the Middle East.²³

Bruce Jentleson lays out three central variables in public opinion support for United States foreign policy. He identifies the *national interests* at stake, the *popularity of the President* to evoke support for his objectives, and the *risks involved* in achieving an objective, as the most important ideas shaping public opinion on foreign policy.²⁴ His ideas are applicable to this study, for blacks felt that their own interests were not at stake in the Persian Gulf War, but that the main fight was in America against racism. Also, President

²⁰ Ronald Walters, “Why Should Blacks Fight in the Gulf?” Washington Post, December 27, 1990, p. A17.

²¹ Duke, November 28, 1990, p. A1.

²² Duke, February 8, 1991, p. A27.

²³ Julie Johnson, “Blacks: Too Much of the Burden?” Time, February 4, 1993, p. 43.

²⁴ Jentleson, p. 50.

Bush had little popularity in the black community, partly because of his veto of the civil rights bill. Finally the risks for the black community were too high because of the high proportion of blacks in the military. These economic, personal, and political ideas were all expressed in Blacks' lower support for the war. Jentleson does not mention the effects of Vietnam, but he is not discussing specific foreign policy events, only events in general.

III. Explaining the Racial Gap: Three Hypotheses

One reason why black support for the war was lower may be because of the “carryover effect” from the Vietnam War. During that war, many blacks fought for respect and against racism at home as well as in Vietnam. Black support for Vietnam was lower than white support for Vietnam, and this trend continued on into the Persian Gulf War. The second reason why black support for the war was lower may involve the high numbers of blacks serving in the military. Blacks felt as if they had more to lose personally as a group if the war dragged on, so support was low out of personal vested interests and fear of large black casualty rates. The third reason why black support for the war was low may concern the feeling among many blacks that civil rights and equal opportunities for blacks have not yet been accomplished in America. These three factors combined may have led to lower black support for the war. While each one to some extent individually contributed, together they may have dominated the minds of many black Americans during that time.

Additional literature documents the lack of support among blacks for Vietnam. Mueller gives statistics that show just how low black support for Vietnam sank; in October,

1968 only 27% of blacks supported the Vietnam War, compared with 38% of whites.²⁵ Verba, et al. give explanations for this low support, saying that blacks must have felt alienated from mainstream American society, and therefore were unimpressed with the government's reasons for fighting in Southeast Asia. In addition, Verba says that blacks saw that the draft was taking a disproportionate number of black men, and that also led to low support for the war.²⁶ Finally, Holsti and Rosenau argue that critics of Vietnam are more likely than supporters to have lost faith in the United States government. Because blacks were more likely to have opposed the War in Vietnam, they are, according to Holsti and Rosenau, more likely to have lost faith in the US government, and thus by extension are more likely also to have opposed the Persian Gulf War.²⁷ According to them, "[T]hose who consistently favored withdrawal from Vietnam would be more inclined to focus on the negative domestic consequences of the war than those who supported a search for a military victory."²⁸ Since blacks consistently favored a withdrawal,²⁹ this long-term lost faith also applies to decisions about the Gulf war.

In looking at the first hypothesis, the "carryover effect" theory, several different

²⁵ John Mueller, War, Presidents, and Public Opinion. (New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1973) p. 143.

²⁶ Sydney Verba, et al. "Public Opinion and the War in Vietnam." American Political Science Review, Volume LXI, Number 2, June 1967, p. 331.

²⁷ Ole Holsti and James Rosenau, "Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders." World Politics, Volume 32, October, 1979, p. 31.

²⁸ Holsti and Rosenau, p. 30.

²⁹ Mueller, p. 148.

viewpoints attempt to explain it. Thomas Risse-Kappen makes the claim best. He directly states, "First, there is the legacy of Vietnam in American public opinion," then goes on to discuss how support for American military engagements decreases when casualty rates increase. This legacy is for all Americans, not just blacks or whites, and thus does not make any distinctions between races. He argues that the huge pre-war buildup, the massive air strikes, and the united ground attack were wise from both a military and public opinion standpoint, and Vietnam influenced all of them.³⁰

Edwin Dorn says that low black support "is a residue of the Vietnam experience. There's a widespread perception in the black community that blacks did more of their fair share of fighting and dying. That perception happens to be wrong, but it happens to be widespread, so it informs people's attitudes about the military."³¹ An official of the National Association for Black Veterans, Tom Wynn, said of the low black support that "the chickens (are) coming home to roost. It's an issue of the aftereffect of the Vietnam situation."³² There is little doubt that Vietnam still haunts Americans, especially black Americans, despite the length of time that has passed since then. Lack of faith in the government is one of these domestic consequences that remains today, and affected black support for the Persian Gulf War.

³⁰ Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Masses and Leaders: Public Opinion, Domestic Structures, and Foreign Policy." In David Deese, The New Politics of American Foreign Policy (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1994) p. 251.

³¹ Suzanne Alexander, et al., "Guns vs Butter: Many Blacks Oppose America's Role in Persian Gulf War, Citing Domestic Needs." Wall Street Journal, January 25, 1991, p. A1.

³² Duke, November 28, 1990, p. A1.

This “carryover effect” became more widespread as the media reports of another Vietnam War in the sands of Saudi Arabia hit American newspapers and televisions. This affected blacks' opinions on the Persian Gulf War because when the military began the buildup for war, the worst-case scenarios came out. Some forecasters predicted a long and drawn out war with high casualties, mainly because the Iraqis would fight a defensive battle, and were battle-hardened from their war with Iran.³³

The second reason why black Americans supported the Persian Gulf War less than white Americans concerns the higher numbers, in proportion to whites, that blacks have in the military. When Time asked the simple question: “Do you have a family member who is in the military forces stationed in the Middle East?”, 43% of blacks answered “yes”, compared to only 18% of whites.³⁴ When the realities of war hit the homefront - the churches, the schools, the families - support tends to drop. As one Richmond leader and veteran said about the personal side to war, “I hate it. It's terrible. People die, families are destroyed, fathers, mothers even, now, are kept away from their families for a lifetime.”³⁵ The literature also documents this theory that blacks supported the war less than whites because of the higher percentages of blacks serving. This reasoning extends back even to

³³ During debate in Congress over the war, Representative Kay Slaughter (D- New York) quoted several estimates of US dead that she had heard and wanted to pass along to the rest of the House: 5,000 dead in ten days from Newsweek, 10,000 dead in a 90-day campaign to take Baghdad from the Center for Defense Information, 30,000 dead in twenty days from journalist Jack Anderson, citing secret Pentagon sources. Congressional Record, January 12, 1991, p. H428.

³⁴ Johnson, p. 43.

³⁵ Mr. John Roush, personal interview with author, July 20, 1994.

the Vietnam War, and has been established in Binkin et al.,³⁶ and Verba, et al., who mention that blacks “may be aware of criticisms of the draft that suggest a disproportionate Negro contribution to the war effort.”³⁷

For the Persian Gulf War, the numbers did not change. In congressional debate about authorizing the use of force in the Gulf before the House, Representative Major Owens (D-New York) said, “Disproportionate numbers of those who will be slaughtered in the desert will be African-Americans. My district has the second-largest number of African-Americans. The time has come for every member of Congress to think in these personal terms. We have a personal responsibility.” He went on to name several soldiers individually from his district who were serving in the Gulf, and ended his speech by saying, “I am voting against a mandate to go to war, a mandate to attack, because I do not want to see the bravery, the loyalty, and the dedication of these soldiers trashed.”³⁸ When enlisted men and women are more than just names in the newspaper, the military takes on new meaning when the potential for service is death. Finally, Wilcox, et al., establish their theory that the high numbers of black troops in the Persian Gulf led to lower black support in their study of the polling data among different groups. Wilcox, et al., say, “First, many black political leaders argued before the conflict that disproportionate numbers of black soldiers would die in a

³⁶ Binkin, et al., p. 78.

³⁷ Verba, et al., p. 331.

³⁸ Congressional Record, 102nd Congress, 1st session, January 11, 1991, p. H254.

protracted war.”³⁹

Also well-documented are the many black leaders who spoke out during this time about the potential for black deaths in the Gulf, and attempted to remind Americans that war remains brutal and violent. Reverend Jesse Jackson and William Fauntroy both condemned the war. Jackson said, “If that war breaks out, our youth will burn first.”⁴⁰ Fauntroy said, “We (Blacks) do twice the dying and half the living.”⁴¹ Ronald Walters in the Washington Post also mentions the potential for high black casualties during the war.⁴²

The third hypothesis why blacks supported the Persian Gulf War less than whites concerns many blacks' arguments that more needs to be accomplished in the United States first in regards to civil rights, economic opportunities, and race relations before blacks Americans will fight in overseas wars. This is known as the “Fight at home First” theory, and is best exemplified in the words of Ralph Cooper, a black Vietnam veteran. Cooper said, “Black men and women have been in every war this country's ever fought. These young Americans come back and find out that they're still a nigger in America.”⁴³ This theory includes opposition to the war because of the increased military expenditures war

³⁹ Clyde Wilcox, et al., "Group Differences in Early Support for Military Action in the Gulf," American Politics Quarterly, Volume 21, Number 3, July, 1993, p. 346.

⁴⁰ Juan Williams, "Race and War in the Persian Gulf," Washington Post, January 20, 1991, p. B2.

⁴¹ Debbie Howlett and Judy Keen, "Role in Military Splits Minorities," USA Today, February 18, 1991, p. A2.

⁴² Walters, p. A17.

⁴³ Alexander, et al., p. A1.

takes away from the programs that could be spent to assist blacks. Throughout the United States' history, black soldiers have fought overseas for many of the rights that they were not granted back at home. For example, before President Truman integrated the military, many blacks served in segregated units liberating Europe, even though blacks had few freedoms at home in the United States.⁴⁴ One black Air Force veteran of World War II said that he remembered coming back to Richmond from Europe and having to sit on the back of the city bus to go to the store.⁴⁵ But these slights never deterred black Americans from serving in the military. The military has traditionally been seen as a way to improve position in society, to further education, and to gain training and experience, for both blacks and whites.

In initial reports about lower black support, and in more scholarly articles and books, this theory remains well-grounded. In the three weeks preceding the beginning of the ground assault by the allied troops, all four major newspapers in the U.S. carried articles about the high level of black soldiers in the Gulf, and why black support for the war was lower than white support. All four mention that many blacks feel that problems at home are more important than problems overseas.⁴⁶ Alexander, et al. write, "Both among Hispanics and blacks, the overwhelming reason for opposition to the war -- cited again and again in

⁴⁴ United States Department of Defense, Office of the Deputy Assistant of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy/Equal Opportunity, Black Americans in Defense of Our Nation, (Washington, US Government Printing Office, 1991), p. 73. For a brief history of blacks in the military, see John Sibley Butler, "Affirmative Action in the Military," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Volume 523, September, 1992, pp. 196 - 206. For a much more detailed history, see Nalty.

⁴⁵ Dr. John Howlette, personal interview with author, July 18, 1994.

⁴⁶ Alexander, et al., p. A1; Duke, 1991, p. A27; Fullwood, Sam III, "General Powell a Hero, Source of Controversy for Nation's Blacks," Los Angeles Times, February 7, 1991, p. A34; Wilkerson, p. A1.

interviews with Wall Street Journal reporters -- was the guns-and-butter issue.”⁴⁷

Both Wilcox, et al. and Lee mention the domestic concerns in their studies of public opinion and the war.⁴⁸ According to Wilcox, et al., “[M]any African-Americans might have seen the war as a potential competitor for funds needed for social programs.”⁴⁹ Henry J. Richardson and Sigelman and Welch discuss the current status of racism in America, one of the many reasons why blacks feel the need to “fight at home” first.⁵⁰ According to other literature, many blacks feel the need to combat this racism in America first before going off to fight in a war.⁵¹

President Bush's vetoing of the civil rights bill in October and the chaos in his administration over race-based college scholarships lowered black public opinion even further. According to Wilcox, et al., “Our tracking of the attitudes of blacks suggests that domestic policy attitudes may influence foreign policy positions, for black support of military action in the gulf diminished sharply at the time of Bush’s veto of the civil rights

⁴⁷ Alexander, et al., p. A7.

⁴⁸ Wilcox, et al., p. 346; Yueh Ting Lee, “Reactions of American Minority Students and Nonminority Students to the Persian Gulf War,” The Journal of Social Psychology, Volume 133, Number 5, October, 1993, p. 711.

⁴⁹ Wilcox, et al., p. 346.

⁵⁰ Henry J. Richardson, “The Gulf Crisis and African-American Interests under International Law,” The American Journal of International Law, 87 (1993): p. 53; Lee Sigelman and Susan Welch. Black Americans' Views of Racial Inequality. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1991.

⁵¹ Charisse Jones, “Blacks and the Army: Why Join?” Los Angeles Times, January 8, 1991, p. A1; Richardson, p. 53.

bill.”⁵² (See Graph One, the week of November 18, for an illustration of this trend.) Duke quotes NAACP leader Benjamin Hooks as saying, “It’s unconscionable to expect this large percentage of black troops to be over in the Persian Gulf fighting for freedom and yet when they come back they still will not be given the same privileges as their white counterparts.”⁵³

Blacks in America feel that civil rights issues have not yet been completely solved in America, nor have problems concerning economic and social opportunity. With black focus more on domestic problems than foreign ones, the hypothesis that black support trailed white support because of domestic reasons may prove sound.

IV. Methodology and Sample

The review of pertinent literature and national public opinion data helped to establish these hypotheses and to ground them in historical research. A quota sample, not a random one, was used to select opinion leaders. An interpretation of the survey results of black and white opinion leaders in the city of Richmond, Virginia will determine the validity of the hypotheses. Obviously, a sample of Richmond elites will not be transferable to the general population, but will provide an opinion sample that may be parallel to that of other medium-sized, racially balanced cities in America. In addition, by adding the element of race, this paper draws from other literature documenting the split among black elites themselves and between the black general public and black elites. This bifurcation of the black community

⁵² Wilcox, et al., p. 355.

⁵³ Duke, November 28, 1990, p. A1.

is a relatively new development, but was expressed fully during the Persian Gulf War.⁵⁴

Drawing from several sources about elite samples⁵⁵, I devised a list of elites in Richmond, Virginia to contact about opinion during the war. The precedent for using members of the clergy, local politicians, and other community leaders in the black Community to ascertain public opinion has been used before, and written about in Sterling Johnson's work, "International Activity of the Black Community." Johnson discusses the rise of international awareness in the black community and says, "Because the international activity of the black community crosses several sectors of international activity, e.g., religious, business, political, recreational, and cultural, there is a spillover effect of one sector on the other."⁵⁶ In identifying local Richmond elites to survey, I have drawn from these different categories that Johnson describes. These sources gave me the ideas for contacting city leaders in both elected and appointed capacities, as well as local group leaders influential in the city. This list developed first from a general knowledge of elites in the city, the members of the city government, the newspaper, and other prominent elected officials. A former city councilman, Ben Warthen, supplied several more names of black leaders in the city. Finally, through the opinion leaders themselves, I received names and

⁵⁴ Sigelman and Welch discuss the growing gap between economically well-off blacks and the economically impoverished in the black community. Although their study focuses only on perceptions of racial discrimination, one can infer that differences of opinion on other issues, such as foreign policy, exist between blacks who are of different socio-economic status. The black elites are ones who are better-off economically, and therefore may have differing viewpoints than the black masses.

⁵⁵ Gabriel Almond, The American People and Foreign Policy, (New York, Praeger, 1960); Holsti and Rosenau, 1979; Verba, et al., 1967.

⁵⁶ Sterling Johnson, "International Activity of the Black Community," Columbus in the World/The World in Columbus Project, directed by Chadwick Alger, September, 1974, p. 15.

referrals of other elites to contact.

Unfortunately, although the initial list of elites included over forty names, only twenty-two responded to my survey with interviews, making the sample small. Of this group of twenty-two, fifteen were black and seven were white. A list of those interviewed appears in Appendix A. This black oversample was incorporated for a more thorough review of black elite opinion. The questions asked about military service, both personal and among relatives or friends, opinion on both the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War, opinion on current military intervention, opinion on national black leaders, opinion on Civil Rights, and lastly a question allowing for the respondent's own theories about the lower black support for the Persian Gulf War. In addition, the elites filled out a form asking them to rate how concerned the United States should be with various foreign and domestic issues. The list of questions appears in Appendix B.

In interviewing both black and white elites, the study will provide an analysis of opinion in both communities during the war, and a look into any divergence from existing theory on elite opinion and black and white differences in public opinion, especially on foreign policy issues. Existing theory and research has shown that blacks tend to focus more on domestic, rather than foreign affairs, and to have differing viewpoints on foreign policy than whites. In his thorough study, Alfred Hero concludes that blacks in America are less interested in foreign affairs than whites, and have different priorities and attitudes in foreign

affairs than whites.⁵⁷ However, he ascribes part of this attitude to the lower education levels that blacks receive. With those levels becoming more equal in the present day, this study may be dated. Other newer authors, such as Milton Morris, however, have upheld this theory.⁵⁸ One elite interviewed even said, "When you think of African-American leaders you think of civil rights, you don't think a whole lot about international foreign policy." In addition, theory says that elites in general tend to lead opinion for the masses to follow and accept, rather than differ from the masses in opinion.⁵⁹

The interviews were conducted from July, 1994 to July, 1995 in the city of Richmond. During the interviews the respondents were asked to be as forthcoming as possible, and to expound on every answer. The goal was not a broad, wide-range survey of city opinion, but instead a focused, in-depth survey in which the respondents gave as much information as possible. In fact, the interviews often strayed from the specific subject matter, but the topics discussed during these asides related to the survey in general. Many of these extra comments allowed for a more personal understanding of the elites being interviewed, as they opened up and discussed the military and race relations in general.

⁵⁷ Alfred O. Hero, Jr., "American Negroes and U.S. Foreign Policy," Journal of Conflict Resolution, Volume 13, Number 3, June, 1969, p. 222.

⁵⁸ Milton D. Morris, "African-Americans and the New World Order," The Washington Quarterly, Volume 15, Number 4, Autumn, 1992, pp. 5-21.

⁵⁹ Almond, p. 88. Almond goes on to say, "The influential are the elite."

V. Richmond Elite Opinion Concerning the Persian Gulf War

The data gathered from the interviews with the public opinion leaders in Richmond generally coincide with mass opinion on the Persian Gulf War. The elite survey also basically mirrors polls taken during the war showing the lower black support and confirms some of the theoretical expectations about the lower black support. The small size of the sample here obviously precludes speculation on a wider scale, but for these purposes will suffice. In addition, only one respondent among the elites was female, which could also affect the results, as females tended to support the Gulf War less than males.⁶⁰ Among all twenty-two elites interviewed in Richmond, sixteen (73%) supported the war, while six (27%) opposed it. Among the fifteen black elites interviewed in Richmond, nine (60%) supported the war, six (40%) opposed it. No white elite interviewed opposed the Persian Gulf War.

Hypothesis one says that blacks supported the Persian Gulf War less than whites because of the lingering effects of the Vietnam War on the black consciousness. Many blacks opposed that war for a variety of reasons, as discussed previously. Mr. Chuck Richardson said that even though he fought in Vietnam, at the time many blacks did not see that war as vital to black interests at all. In fact, according to Richardson, many blacks saw that war as racist oppression of the Vietnamese by America.⁶¹ Indeed, twelve respondents said that their ideas on support or opposition for the Gulf War were influenced by the

⁶⁰ Mueller, 1994, pp. 42-43.

⁶¹ Mr. Henry W. (Chuck) Richardson, personal interview with author, July 19, 1995.

Vietnam War, but of the twelve who opposed the Vietnam War, only six also opposed the Persian Gulf War, possibly questioning the current status of Holsti and Rosenau's 1979 findings which discussed how critics of Vietnam lost faith in the government and its policies. However, Dr. Roy West, a former Richmond mayor, said that there is a strong mistrust of the federal government by blacks because of Vietnam. Two other opinion leaders also mentioned this as a possible reason why the masses of blacks showed less support for the war than whites. This indicates a strong possibility of a split between black elites and black masses over this issue of trusting the federal government.

When asked directly why black support for the war was lower than white support, the most common answer among both black and white Richmond opinion leaders was because of the effects of Vietnam on black America. "The Vietnam War was fought for the advantaged by the disadvantaged. And a lot of those disadvantaged men and women were black. There are some people who remember. I remember," said one respondent. As Martin Jewell, President of the Richmond Crusade for Voters, said, "Vietnam still remains a frame of reference for black America." He additionally discussed his own friends who had served in the war, saying that Vietnam still occupies a large place in their minds.⁶² Another leader, a Vietnam veteran, recalled Blacks' inability to advance in rank during the war, and theorized that the animosity against that institutionalized military racism led to low black support of the military. Another elite who was aware of the misconception of black casualty rates during Vietnam, said, "Blacks were fearful of a repetition of what they perceived to be the

⁶² Mr. Martin Jewell, personal interview with author. July 30, 1994.

Vietnam statistics that more blacks were killed proportionately than whites.” However, a split between black and white elites occurs over support for the Vietnam War. Only two of the fifteen blacks expressed any support for the war, while six of the seven whites interviewed said that they supported the war. No two elites better express those differences than Reverend Rodger Reed and Mr. Ben Warthen. Reed said that Vietnam was “naked aggression” of the United States, while Warthen said, “I supported it largely because of who was opposed to it.”⁶³

Press coverage that ran beside the polls in newspapers and magazines at the time of the Persian Gulf War also no doubt had an effect on black Americans. Journalists made analogies comparing the Persian Gulf to Vietnam, and the public braced itself for the horrors of war. “The deserts of Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia will become quicksand, just as the jungles of Southeast Asia became a quagmire,” wrote retired Colonel David Hackworth. “US battlefield casualties would be more than 50,000, mostly young men and women, within the first few days of a war that would be over within four weeks.”⁶⁴ U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Boxer, citing Israeli intelligence sources, said, “[W]e would have about 15,000 American casualties, about 3,000 or 4,000 dead, the rest wounded. And that is the best-case scenario.”⁶⁵ Apparently few, including Ms. Boxer, paid attention to House

⁶³ Reverend Rodger Reed, personal interview with author, July 27, 1995; Mr Ben P.A. Warthen, personal interview with author, July 21, 1994.

⁶⁴ David Hackworth, "Before Storming Iraq, Remember Vietnam." Newsday, November 13, 1990, p. 65.

⁶⁵ Congressional Record, January 10, 1991, p. H124.

Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin, who predicted that the war would be short and relatively painless, with only 500 to 1000 United States deaths.⁶⁶

Few also probably read Alvin Schnexnider and Edwin Dorn's article, which noted that "blacks were noticeably underrepresented in the 82nd Airborne Division, which is the kind of unit that might be deployed to fight limited conflicts in areas such as the Persian Gulf or Central America."⁶⁷ Many blacks, in fact, serve in combat support roles rather than in direct combat roles. Among enlisted ranks, 24% of those in functional support and administration (general administration, clerical, personnel, data processing, and information specialists, and supply, transportation, and flight operations specialists) are black, and 16% of those in electrical/mechanical equipment repair are black.⁶⁸ If the war had indeed become an extended war, and even though many blacks function in combat support roles, blacks would likely have become a higher percentage of the casualties because of their higher proportions in the general infantry. In 1991, the army infantry was 23.9% black. The marine corp infantry was 23.4% black.⁶⁹ For both the black elites and black masses, the images of the early black casualty rates in Vietnam, the lack of black support for that war,

⁶⁶ Molly Moore, "Aspin: War Would Start with Air Strikes, Escalate to Ground Battles." Washington Post, January 9, 1991, p.A15. Cited in John Mueller, Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁶⁷ Alvin Schnexnider and Edwin Dorn, "Statistical Trends." In Edwin Dorn, Who Defends America? Race, Sex and Class in the Armed Forces. (Washington, Joint Center for Political Studies Press, 1989) pp. 49-50.

⁶⁸ United States General Accounting Office, Defense Force Management: Occupation Distribution and Composition, GAO/NSIAD-92-85 (Washington, GAO, 1992), pp. 4 -5.

⁶⁹ United States Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management and Personnel, Population Representation in the Military Services, (Washington, US Government Printing Office, 1992), p. B-42.

and the comparisons of the two wars would not leave their minds, and this led to the lower support for the Persian Gulf War. This analysis holds true for the white elites as well. Four of the seven whites said that the legacy of Vietnam was a major reason why blacks supported the Persian Gulf War less than whites.

Hypothesis two says that black support was lower because of the numbers of black soldiers serving in the Gulf. The high numbers in turn meant that higher proportions of blacks back home in the U.S. would have friends or family serving overseas who might die in a war, and therefore would support war less because of personal reasons. As seen earlier, the public opinion polls support this hypothesis. Several elites commented on the issue of friends and family serving in war. One elite who opposed the war and said that the high proportions of blacks serving led to the lower support, said, "You had more black mothers and fathers with sons and daughters over there, and that's going to have an effect (on black support)." Another said, "If your brothers or sisters or cousins or fathers are going over there you have more of a vested interest in opposing it (war), because they're the ones whose butts are on the line." Finally, Reverend Rodger Reed, whose daughter served in Saudi Arabia during the war, expressed his dismay against American soldiers travelling overseas to solve other countries' problems. "America is the dirty cop of the world, but it's the only cop we got,"⁷⁰ he said. Reverend Reed opposed the war even though his daughter was fighting in it.

However, these opinions were rare among the elites, as only three mentioned family

⁷⁰ Reed, personal interview with author, July 27, 1995.

issues as a reason for the lower black support. Many black opinion leaders voiced support for the Gulf War, citing foreign policy as a major reason to back Bush's actions. Seeing little comparison to Vietnam, one black leader said, "During the Vietnam war, we had a cloudy concept of purpose; the reasons we were there were vague. But in the Gulf our purpose was clear. We had to help the underdog (Kuwait)."⁷¹ This position was common among Richmond elites, as thirteen of the sixteen (81%) who had a personal reason to support or oppose the war supported it. More specifically, of the ten blacks who said that they had family or friends in the war, eight (80%) supported it.

In sum, although the polls at the time and the literature provided enough to formulate the theory that the high numbers of black troops fighting led to lower black public opinion support because more black families and friends, proportionately, would have relatives or colleagues who might die in the war, the elite sample responses seem to oppose that theory.

The final hypothesis why black support was lower than white support concerns the struggle for equality back home in the United States. The "fight-at-home-first" theory says that blacks did not support the war as much as whites because of the social inequities still found in America, and because the war was a financial drain on the social programs designed to benefit the black community. The elite survey supports this hypothesis.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, the phrase "peace dividend" entered the American vocabulary. The peace dividend was leftover money that the government had spent on military weapons to counter the Russians before the end of the cold war. Because

⁷¹ Richardson, personal interview with author, July 19, 1995.

the Defense Department no longer needed this money in their budget, the government could now spend it on domestic programs in the United States. The peace dividend was especially needed in the black community, as many social programs had been underfunded for years. However, with the military expenditures needed for the Gulf War, blacks felt like the money promised them was now disappearing. Richardson says:

“The war was held responsible for the disappearance of the 'peace dividend,' which could have been spent on affordable housing and other social programs. Black soldiers would return to the United States to find resources shifted from their interests, the Civil Rights Bill vetoed, and their college scholarships threatened. The billion-dollar-per-day cost of the war could have been spent to alleviate desperate social needs.”⁷²

The elites in Richmond expressed that funds and economics were reasons that blacks did not lend full support to the war. Eleven (50%) said that a reason for the lower support dealt with economics or spending the money more wisely in the USA. Of the six who opposed the Gulf War, one came out directly and said that the money spent in the Gulf could have been spent much better here in America. He said that he asked himself during the war, “As bad as things are here for blacks, we're going all the way to the Persian Gulf to help these wealthy sheiks out?” Mr. Anthony Manning, himself a former Marine Corp Lieutenant Colonel, and now a Vice President at Virginia Union University, said that blacks saw no economic self-interest in the war, and therefore showed little support.⁷³

The elites also mentioned frequently the second part of this theory, the social inequity

⁷² Richardson, Henry J., p. 53.

⁷³ Mr. Anthony Manning, personal interview with author, August 1, 1994.

that still exists between the white and black communities, as a reason why the support was lower. Many echoed the themes that resound among black leaders that blacks continue to prove their merit, but still do not reap the rewards. "Why should black men continue to die for a country that is not willing to totally give acceptance and all due rights and freedoms and opportunities?" said one. "On a number of issues, significant African-American leaders believe that we ought to tend to our knitting at home and solve our own problems first," said one elite. Colonel Manning summed up the black experience in the military as this: "What has been our return for our work in the military and fighting in wars and losing lives? We have gotten less than other groups have gotten when the United States has passed out the goodies." Even a white opinion leader, Ben Warthen, said, "Philosophically there is the question that blacks ask of why are we defending people overseas when we are not being treated right at home?"⁷⁴ However, all twenty-two respondents said that a black man or woman should volunteer to join the military today, with many voicing the ideals of service, commitment, sacrifice, and patriotism as still important for all to learn. "The military has been a shining beacon of progress in Civil Rights," said Dr. Eugene Trani, President of Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond's largest urban university. Warthen as well said that the military was the first great equalizer in America, and "is an incubator for civil rights."

Other black elites voiced similar concerns regarding the unequal situations of blacks and whites in America during the war. An example of this was demonstrated in the House

⁷⁴ Warthen, personal interview with author, July 21, 1994.

of Representatives when on January 12, 1991 every black Democrat present voted against House Joint Resolution #77, the bill authorizing the use of force against Iraq. The total vote in the House was 250 for, 183 against, and 2 abstentions. The vote among blacks was 1 for, 23 against, and 1 abstention. The one abstention among blacks, Mervyn Dymally (D.-Calif.) said that he would have voted “no” if he had been present. The one black to vote “yes” on the bill was Gary Franks (R.- Conn.), the only black Republican in the House at the time.⁷⁵ As seen in quotes from several black congressmen and congresswomen above during the debate over the bill, black social issues were a main reason for the lopsided vote. This vote among blacks in Congress does not reflect public sentiment about the war at all, and especially does not correlate to black elite opinion in Richmond. This vote more adequately reflects Mueller’s and Wilcox’s comments about party differences in support for the war, with Republicans voting for it and Democrats voting against it.

One major split among the elites concerned the question of civil rights. Several white opinion leaders said that civil rights issues in America had been solved, while none of the black opinion leaders said this. A majority of the blacks said that America had made progress on the civil rights front, but much more was still needed. Mr. Oliver W. Hill, a noted attorney for the NAACP, remembered that when he joined the army during World War II, blacks were still in segregated units, and although he had obtained his law degree, he could not become an officer because he was black. Obviously, this would not happen today. State Senator Henry Marsh, also an attorney in the same law firm as Mr. Hill, and a former

⁷⁵ Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, January 19, 1991, pp. 190-192.

Richmond city council member and mayor, said, "Civil rights issues in the country have not been resolved and they are still extremely critical and important to the future of the nation."⁷⁶

Richmond Commonwealth's Attorney David Hicks discussed the problem of civil rights today. He said, "You can have all the policy and all the laws that you want, but if you don't implement them it doesn't do any good. If you go to the library tomorrow and check out the greatest books they have, and do nothing more than carry them around with you, and just leave them on your shelf, then the only use you've gotten from them is whatever physical use you get from carrying around heavy books."⁷⁷

The elite survey seems to uphold the third hypothesis concerning the "fight-at-home-first" theory as a possible reason why blacks supported the Persian Gulf War less than whites.

VI. Conclusion

This paper generated three hypotheses from the literature on black opinion about military policy and from the national polling data that concerned the war. The first hypothesis said that blacks supported the Persian Gulf war less than whites because of the carryover effect from the Vietnam War. The second said that blacks have more to lose personally in a war because of the proportions of blacks serving in the military. The third said that blacks feel that taxpayer money is better spent on solving problems at home than overseas. This paper then tested these hypotheses by using surveys with public opinion

⁷⁶ Senator Henry Marsh, personal interview with author, August 2, 1995.

⁷⁷ Mr. David Hicks, personal interview with author, July 20, 1994.

leaders in Richmond, Virginia to see if their opinions substantiated the hypotheses.

The survey of Richmond public opinion leaders supported the first hypothesis. Black elites did not back the Persian Gulf war as much as whites partly because of the carryover effect from the Vietnam War. The analysis does not support the second hypothesis. In the survey of leaders, the higher numbers of blacks serving in the war was a reason for supporting it, not for protesting against it. Based on the comments of black elites in Richmond, one reason for the split between mass opinion and elite opinion is that elites may be more inclined to weigh the potential loss of blacks in a war against the broader foreign policy considerations. Non-elites may focus less on the general national interest or the causes of the military's role and purpose, and instead focus more on their son or daughter's personal well-being. But especially since black elected officials in Washington were closer to mass opinion, this hypothesis would require further study. Finally, with respect to the third hypothesis, many Richmond leaders voiced concerns that money was not being spent wisely in times of war or peace, and could be spent better to address social problems. Nevertheless, the elite survey supported the third hypothesis.

A study this limited in scope cannot determine how black opinion leaders nationwide reacted to the Persian Gulf War. Nor does the study examine the extent to which even local opinion leaders shaped the public opinion in Richmond. Yet to the extent that people understand and agree with local leaders, the carryover effect of the Vietnam War and the priorities of national defense verses domestic programs were at work in the formation of public opinion in the Persian Gulf War in Richmond, Virginia.

APPENDIX A**ELITES INTERVIEWED**

Dr. John Howlette, prominent local physician, July 18, 1994
Mr. Robert Holland, Richmond Times Dispatch, July 19, 1994
Mr. Terry Haskins, Vietnam Veterans of America, July 19, 1994
Mr. David Hicks, Richmond Commonwealth's Attorney, July 20, 1994
Dr. John Roush, University of Richmond, July 20, 1994
Mr. Ben Warthen, Richmond City Council, July 21, 1994
Mr. John Thompson, Richmond City Council, July 22, 1994
Dr. Eugene Trani, Virginia Commonwealth University, July 25, 1994
Mr. Michael Paul Williams, Richmond Times Dispatch, July 25, 1994
Dr. Alvin Schnexnider, Virginia Commonwealth University, July 26, 1994
Dr. Benjamin Lambert, Virginia State Senator, July 26, 1994
Mr. Donald McEachin, Richmond Crusade for Voters, July 27, 1994
Mrs. Panny Rhodes, Virginia State Representative, July 28, 1994
Dr. Avon Drake, Virginia Commonwealth University, July 29, 1994
Mr. Martin Jewell, Richmond Crusade for Voters, July 30, 1994
Mr. Anthony Manning, Virginia Union University, August 1, 1994
Dr. Roy West, Richmond City Council, August 1, 1994
Mr. Robert Bobb, Richmond City Manager, August 4, 1994
Mr. Oliver W. Hill, NAACP Attorney, July 19, 1995
Mr. Henry W. Richardson, Richmond City Council, July 19, 1995
Reverend Rodger Reed, 3rd Street Bethel A.M.E. Church, July 27, 1995
Senator Henry Marsh, Virginia State Senator, 16th District, August 2, 1995

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name, Race
2. Have you ever served in the United States military, including the Reserves or the National Guard?
3. Has a member of your family ever served in the US military?
4. Have any of your friends or neighbors ever served in the US military?
5. Did any of your family or friends serve in the Vietnam War?
6. Did any of your family or friends serve in the Persian Gulf War?
7. To what extent did you support the Vietnam War?
8. Why or why not?
9. To what extent did you support the Persian Gulf War?
10. Why or why not?
11. To what extent did your opinion of the Vietnam War affect your decision about sending troops to and fighting in the Persian Gulf War?
12. Which news sources do you rely on most for your information on US foreign policy?
13. Which national African-American leader do you agree with the most in regards to US foreign policy issues?
14. Do you think that the US should intervene militarily in Bosnia? In Haiti?
15. To what extent have Civil Rights issues in this country been solved?
16. Should an African-American man or woman volunteer to serve in today's US military? Why?
17. Can you think of any other reasons why on the average black Americans supported the Persian Gulf War less than white Americans?
18. How concerned should the United States be about the following issues?
Please rate from 1 to 5, with 1 being much less concerned than it is now, 5 being much more concerned than it is now, and 3 being about the same as it is now.

	much less concerned	less concerned	same	more concerned	much more concerned
Urban development:	1	2	3	4	5
Education:	1	2	3	4	5
Trade with Japan:	1	2	3	4	5
Access to oil reserves:	1	2	3	4	5
Violent crime:	1	2	3	4	5
Drug abuse:	1	2	3	4	5
Civil war in Africa:	1	2	3	4	5
Cuts in Defense spending:	1	2	3	4	5
Immigration from Haiti:	1	2	3	4	5
Civil Rights:	1	2	3	4	5

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, Suzanne, and Alex Kotlowitz, Michel McQueen, Sonia Nazario, Pauline Yoshihashi, and Glenn Ruffenach. "Guns vs. Butter: Many Blacks Oppose American Role in War, Citing Domestic Needs." Wall Street Journal, January 25, 1991, p. A1.
- Almond, Gabriel. The American People and Foreign Policy. New York: Praeger, 1960.
- Binkin, Martin. "The New Face of the American Military." The Brookings Review. Summer, 1991.
- Binkin, Martin, Mark Eitelberg, Alvin Schnexnider, and Marvin Smith. Blacks and the Military. Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1982.
- Butler, John Sibley. "Affirmative Action in the Military." Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. 523 (September, 1992).
- Congressional Quarterly, January 19, 1991.
- Congressional Record. 102nd Congress, 1st Session, 1991. January 10, 1991.
- Congressional Record. 102nd Congress, 1st Session, 1991. January 11, 1991.
- Congressional Record. 102nd Congress, 1st Session, 1991. January 12, 1991.
- Duke, Lynne. "For Many Blacks, Call to Duty Rings of Inequality." Washington Post, November 28, 1990, p. A1.
- Duke, Lynne. "Emerging Black War Rooted in Domestic Issues." Washington Post, February 8, 1991, p. A27.
- Duke, Lynne. "U.S. War Toll Defies Racial Predictions." Washington Post, March 21, 1991, p. A28.
- Ellis, James E. "Where Troop Cuts Will Be Cruelist." Business Week, June 8, 1992.
- Fullwood, Sam III. "General Powell a Hero, Source of Controversy for Nation's Blacks," Los Angeles Times, February 7, 1991, p. A34.

- Hackworth, David. "Before Storming Iraq, Remember Vietnam." Newsday, November 13, 1990.
- Hero, Alfred O., Jr. "American Negroes and U.S. Foreign Policy," Journal of Conflict Resolution, Volume 13, Number 3 (June, 1969).
- Holsti, Oli, and James Rosenau. "Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders." World Politics 32 (October, 1979).
- Howlett, Debbie and Judy Keen. "Role in Military Splits Minorities." USA Today, February 18, 1991, p. A2.
- Jentleson, Bruce. "The Pretty Prudent Public: The Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force." International Studies Quarterly 36 (March, 1992).
- Johnson, Julie. "Blacks: Too Much of the Burden?" Time, February 4, 1991.
- Johnson, Sterling. "International Activity of the Black Community." Columbus in the World/The World in Columbus Project. Directed by Chadwick Alger. September, 1974.
- Jones, Charisse. "Blacks and the Army: Why Join?" Los Angeles Times, January 8, 1991, p. A1.
- Lee, Yueh Ting. "Reactions of American Minority Students and Nonminority Students to the Persian Gulf War," The Journal of Social Psychology, Volume 133, October, 1993.
- Moore, Molly. "Aspin: War Would Start with Air Strikes, Escalate to Ground Battles." Washington Post. January 9, 1991, p. A15.
- Morris, Milton D. "African-Americans and the New World Order," The Washington Quarterly, Volume 15, Number 4 (Autumn, 1992).
- Mueller, John. Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Mueller, John. War, Presidents, and Public Opinion. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973.
- Nalty, Bernard. Strength for the Fight. New York: MacMillan, Inc., 1986.

- Richardson, Henry J. "The Gulf Crisis and African American Interests under International Law." The American Journal of International Law. 87 (1993): p. 53.
- Risse-Kappen, Thomas. "Masses and Leaders: Public Opinion, Domestic Structures, and Foreign Policy." In David Deese, ed., The New Politics of American Foreign Policy. New York: St.Martin's Press, 1994.
- Schnexnider, Alvin and Edwin Dorn. "Statistical Trends." In Edwin Dorn, ed., Who Defends America? Race, Sex, and Class in the Armed Forces. Washington: Joint Center for Political Studies Press, 1989.
- Sigelman, Lee, and Susan Welch. Black Americans' Views of Racial Inequality. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- The American Enterprise (March/April 1991).
- United States Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993 - HR 2100. Hearing. 102nd Congress, 1st Session. February 7, 1991. Washington, GPO, 1991.
- United States Department of Defense. Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy/Equal Opportunity. Black Americans in Defense of Our Nation. Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991.
- United States Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management and Personnel. Population Representation in the Military Services, Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992.
- United States General Accounting Office. Defense Force Management: Occupation Distribution and Composition. GAO/NSIAD-92-85 Washington: GAO, March, 1992.
- United States General Accounting Office. Operation Desert Storm: Race and Gender Comparison of Deployed Forces with All Active Duty Forces. GAO/NSIAD-92-111FS. Washington: GAO, June, 1992.
- Verba, Sydney, and Richard Brody, Edwin Parker, Norman Nie, Nelson Polsby, Paul Ekman, and Gordon Black. "Public Opinion and the War in Vietnam." The American Political Science Review. LXI, Number 2 (June 1967).

Walters, Ronald. "Why Should Blacks Fight in the Gulf?" Washington Post, December 27, 1990, p. A17.

Wilcox, Clyde, Joseph Ferrara, and Dee Alsop. "Group Differences for Early Support for Military Action in the Gulf." American Politics Quarterly 21 (July, 1993).

Wilkerson, Isabel. "Blacks Wary of Their Big Role as Troops." New York Times, January 25, 1991, p. A1.

Williams, Juan. "Race and War in the Persian Gulf." Washington Post. January 20, 1991, p. B2.

Ryan Turner Riggs graduated from the University of Virginia in 1992 with a degree in Foreign Affairs. After two years in graduate school at the University of Richmond, he moved to Jacksonville, Florida where he teaches history at the Episcopal School of Jacksonville. He is also a member of the Concord Coalition, an organization fighting to reduce the national debt.