



Bookshelf

1995

Cooperation under Fire: Anglo- German Restraint During World War II

Jeffrey W. Legro

University of Richmond, jlegro@richmond.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/bookshelf>



Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Legro, Jeffrey W. *Cooperation under Fire: Anglo-German Restraint During World War II*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995.

NOTE: This PDF preview of *Cooperation under Fire: Anglo- German Restraint During World War II* includes only the preface and/or introduction. To purchase the full text, please click [here](#).

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by UR Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bookshelf by an authorized administrator of UR Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact scholarshiprepository@richmond.edu.

D
757
.L39
1995


Cooperation under Fire

ANGLO-GERMAN RESTRAINT
DURING WORLD WAR II

JEFFREY W. LEGRO

Cornell University Press

ITHACA AND LONDON

 LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
VIRGINIA 23173

Preface

Why do nations cooperate, even as they try to destroy each other? I address this question in the context of the Second World War, where states attempted to sustain agreements limiting the use of force in three forms of combat considered heinous and unthinkable—commerce raiding by submarines, strategic bombing of civilian targets, and chemical warfare. In some instances, cooperation endured, yet in others it failed. Why this was so, is important for two reasons. First, understanding past attempts can make future efforts to limit warfare more effective. Second, determining why collaboration succeeded or failed in such extreme circumstances can provide a range of insights into the general phenomenon of international cooperation.

Collaboration among enemies in war may seem a curious subject, but, in fact, classic analyses of cooperation—including Thomas Schelling's *Strategy of Conflict*, Robert Jervis's "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," and Robert Axelrod's *Evolution of Cooperation*—have considered exactly that combination. As with most other work in international relations, these studies focus on the interaction between parties to account for cooperation. In this book, however, I emphasize the importance of the *preference formation*—that is, what nations seek and why they seek it—that undergirds interaction. I compare three broad approaches—realism, institutionalism, and organizational culture. These perspectives differ on what forces will be most important in shaping the perceptions, analysis, planning, and actions of nations. All offer a priori explanations of restraint in war. And it should not be surprising to learn that all capture some part of what occurred in World War II. I want to determine which of the three provides the best

overall account and in what ways that perspective might be joined with the stronger aspects of the other two.

In broad terms, I argue that organizational culture—the beliefs and customs that dominated the military services of states—determined when cooperation succeeded or failed. The organizational-culture perspective details how informal beliefs interact with formal bureaucratic structure to shape the identity and cognition of groups. Furthermore, I explain why some bureaucracies matter more than others, or even political leaders, in national choices. In World War II, the various military services favored some modes of warfare over others, evaluated the strategic environment and enemy activity, and developed plans and capabilities to meet anticipated threats according to their various cultural predispositions. Thus, directly and indirectly, the organizational cultures of these militaries shaped the preferences and actions of states in ways that often defied both balance-of-power considerations and international norms.

This book makes several contributions to the literature on international relations. First, it illustrates the significant role that preference formation and change play in international cooperation. This influence has been overlooked by the dominant paradigms of international relations, which take state interests as fixed (and therefore analytically uninteresting). Second, it argues that preferences are formed at the domestic level. Domestic explanations, particularly sociological ones based on collective beliefs and customs, have been relatively neglected in the study of international cooperation, particularly in security affairs. Third, it illustrates the power and utility of cultural analysis in politics and suggests ways culture can illuminate other problems in international relations. The findings also have implications for practical statecraft, suggesting the need for new strategies in the contemporary management of conflict and cooperation.

Finally, this study is the first systematic comparison of the three central means of warfare states attempted to control in World War II. In search of answers to my questions, I dug in the archives of several nations to find documents that shed light on American, British, German, and even Soviet decisions. I hope that the results add to our understanding of the monumental events leading to and culminating in the Second World War.

In writing this book, I was under, and on, fire at many times. Fortunately, mentors, colleagues, friends, and supporters were always there to silence the guns and douse the flames. My largest intellectual debt

Preface

is to Arthur Stein and Richard Rosecrance. They have been unfailingly encouraging, always on call, and unnervingly incisive in their criticism and suggestions. Whether as scholars, teachers, or advisers, Stein and Rosecrance represent the best of academia.

This project had its origins in the hallways of Harvard's Center for Science and International Affairs, then under Joseph Nye's leadership. William Jarosz initially piqued my curiosity about restraint in war by pointing out the anomaly of the refusal to use gas in World War II. Kurt Campbell was quick to encourage me to pursue the topic. Along the way many have contributed, and I am indebted to Deborah Avant, Douglas Blum, Horst Boog, Scott Bruckner, Robert Dallek, David D'Lugo, Peter Feaver, Karen Gohdes, Donna Gold, Arnold Horelick, Iain Johnston, Peter Katzenstein, Elizabeth Kier, Janet M. Manson, Lisa Martin, Stephen Meyer, John Ellis van Courtland Moon, Williamson Murray, Richard Price, Lars Skalmes, and Adam Stulberg. At the University of Minnesota, my colleagues have offered help whenever it was needed, and I am grateful to Lawrence Jacobs, Daniel Kelliher, Ido Oren, Diana Richards, Kathryn Sikkink, and particularly Raymond Duvall and John Freeman. Robert Jarvis deserves special mention for reading two entire drafts and providing a gold mine of helpful suggestions. On the editing and publishing end, Andrew Lewis, Roger Haydon, and Elizabeth Holmes provided excellent guidance on the final product. Many of the arguments on inadvertent escalation first appeared in "Military Culture and Inadvertent Escalation in World War II," *International Security* 18 (spring 1994): 108-42.

The extensive research needed for this study was possible only thanks to generous funding from the Ford Foundation, the Rand-UCLA Center for Soviet Studies, Harvard's Center for Science and International Affairs, a Peace Scholar Award from the Jennings Randolph Program for International Peace of the United States Institute of Peace, the Institute for the Study of World Politics, the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, UCLA's Graham Fellowship, and the Department of Political Science at the University of Minnesota. I have also benefited enormously from the expertise of the specialists who guided my pursuit of history at the National Archives, the Naval Historical Center, the Library of Congress, the Public Record Office, the Admiralty Naval Historical Branch, and the Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv. While I visited some of those places, friends such as Joe Higdon and Ellen Sudow, Shawn and Janice Smeallie, Tom Powers, and Adam Elstein offered lodging and much more.

Finally, I thank the one other person who has lived this book from

Preface

beginning to end and in doing so made the largest contribution—the Reverend Janet Hatfield Legro, extraordinary minister, counselor, friend, spouse, and new parent.

JEFFREY W. LEGRO

Minneapolis, Minnesota