

**A Farewell to Argument?**  
**The Development of Elite Consensus on National Security Policy**

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## Abstract

Since the attacks of 9/11, numerous states have moved toward national security policies that are costlier, more interventionary, and more intrusive than in the past. To a considerable degree, these changes have been relatively uncontroversial among political elites, particularly members of parliament who approved the relevant legislation (for example, the PATRIOT Act passed the Senate 98-1, and the French National Assembly voted to extend the country's state of emergency by 551-6). However, since previous threats to national security, while also met with strong responses, were somewhat less consensual (in 1947, for example, Truman Doctrine aid to Greece and Turkey passed the Senate 67-23, and the National Service Act was approved in the UK House of Commons by 232-44), one can ask whether recent threats evoke more of an elite consensus than past ones. To answer this question, which recalls Harold Lasswell's work on the "garrison state," we examine parliamentary debates on national security issues in four countries over 60 years. Specifically, we look not at roll call votes, since those often fail to reflect substantial agreement on the nature of international threats and the appropriate national responses; instead, we code speeches for policy reasoning (e.g., "because of situation X we must take action Y") and look for overlaps in reasoning even among legislators who vote in opposite ways. Preliminary analysis suggests that there has been a general move toward consensus: in each country, more recent national security legislation is notably less controversial than analogous legislation was some decades past.

In the three years since Edward Snowden’s revelations about the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA), it has become clear in one country after another that such surveillance is carried out by each country’s own agencies, that the surveillance has been going on for some time, and that it is on a wider scale than had previously been suspected.\* In spite of this realization, the majority reaction among political elites has been that although some correctives may be needed, the world is simply too dangerous to forgo these tools. Thus, two years after Snowden thrust the NSA into the news, a mild reform of the agency—which nonetheless continued, directly or indirectly, its data collection programs—passed the Congress overwhelmingly and was signed immediately into law.<sup>1</sup> In France, a bill expanding surveillance powers was approved a good 4 months before the attacks in Paris; after the attacks, a state of emergency, which involved further expansion of surveillance powers, was declared, then extended several times. Similar legislation has either already been enacted or is in the process of being approved by the parliaments of other countries, with even the Swiss doing the same.<sup>2</sup> In sum, while Snowden’s documents may well have sparked a focus on

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<sup>1</sup> The reaction by the former head of the NSA to the congressional vote was “If somebody would come up to me and say ‘Look, Hayden, here’s the thing: This Snowden thing is going to be a nightmare for you guys for about two years. And when we get all done with it, what you’re going to be required to do is that little 215 program about American telephony metadata — and by the way, you can still have access to it, but you got to go to the court and get access to it from the companies, rather than keep it to yourself” — I go: ‘And this is it after two years? Cool!’”

<https://firstlook.org/theintercept/2015/06/17/hayden-mocks-extent-post-snowden-surveillance-reform-2-years-cool/>

<sup>2</sup> For example, the UK parliament expanded surveillance in 2014 (<http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/07/14/uk-emergency-surveillance-law-blow-privacy>) and was described as “likely to be satisfied” if future legislation were to embody the recommendations of a new watchdog report: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/11/uk-intelligence-agencies-should-keep-mass-surveillance-powers-report-gchq>. In fact, a bill now wending its way through Parliament has been revised to give the police even greater powers: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/mar/01/snoopers-charter-to-extend-police-access-to-phone-and-internet-data>. On its third and final reading in the House of Commons, the bill was passed 444-69, with the Labour Party spokesman, Keir Starmer, praising the bill in terms identical to the government (“Safety and security matter. The current threat level for terrorism is severe, which as we all know, means that an attack is highly likely. We all remember and are deeply conscious of the attacks in Paris and Brussels in the not too distant past, as well as other attacks”: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-06->

surveillance, they have not led to significant restrictions on the agencies engaging in those activities more broadly but have instead provoked explicit approval of them by national legislatures.

Moreover, in spite of the numerous controversies raised about the NSA's activities in other countries, cooperation between the agency and its foreign counterparts has ended up being either resumed or strengthened. That cooperation was extensive, covering some 38 states with whom the NSA had ongoing relationships. Although comparable data for the present day are of course unavailable, country-specific news stories suggest that the political fracas did not seriously interrupt either bilateral or multilateral forms of signals intelligence cooperation.<sup>3</sup> Of course, this persistence of cooperation in the face of condemnation—to be specific, the apparent surprise at the extent of surveillance, the carefully worded condemnations, the eventual return to the status quo ante, and the legislative thumbs-up to even more extensive and intrusive actions—extends well beyond surveillance to myriad forms of security-related activities. Take for example the issue of drone

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[06/debates/1606061300001/InvestigatoryPowersBill](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/05/france-passes-new-surveillance-law-in-wake-of-charlie-hebdo-attack). In France, both houses of parliament passed versions of a new law expanding surveillance: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/05/france-passes-new-surveillance-law-in-wake-of-charlie-hebdo-attack> and <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Passcode/2015/0609/France-moves-closer-to-adopting-expansive-surveillance-law>; the bill was then approved two months later by the Constitutional Council: <http://www.theverge.com/2015/7/24/9030851/france-surveillance-law-charlie-hebdo-constitutional-court>. The state of emergency extended further the state's powers to search computer data: <https://www.justsecurity.org/27812/emergency-powers-accumulate/>, powers which were maintained in the extension. Following the July 2016 act of terrorism in Nice, the fourth extension of the state of emergency, which gave the police additional powers, passed the National Assembly by 489-26, with even the Communist opponents of the bill conceding the "intensity of the threat" (André Chassaigne, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/cr/2015-2016-extra/20161015.asp>). In Switzerland, a bill expanding surveillance was approved by the lower house of parliament in the spring ([http://www.letemps.ch/Page/Uuid/37d03a12-cc8f-11e4-ab43-77e6948b78b0/Loi\\_sur\\_le\\_Renseignement\\_la\\_gauche\\_ne\\_parvient\\_pas\\_%C3%A0\\_la\\_corriger](http://www.letemps.ch/Page/Uuid/37d03a12-cc8f-11e4-ab43-77e6948b78b0/Loi_sur_le_Renseignement_la_gauche_ne_parvient_pas_%C3%A0_la_corriger)) and, with language somewhat more favorable still to the intelligence services, by the upper house: <http://www.tdg.ch/suisse/autorite-independante-doit-surveiller-services-secrets/story/12889918>; the bill was passed in September 2015, though a referendum will take place before it goes into effect: [http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/privacy-and-surveillance\\_new-intelligence-law-likely-to-face-referendum/41675844](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/privacy-and-surveillance_new-intelligence-law-likely-to-face-referendum/41675844); advocates of the bill, proclaiming their concern to protect civil liberties, have defended the bill on the grounds that "the frontier between military or civilian, domestic or foreign threat, no longer is meaningful" and that to ignore this is to "blind" the state: <https://www.letemps.ch/opinions/2016/08/26/craignez-letat-fouineur-crains-letat-aveugle>. In Germany, notwithstanding politicians' condemnation of data retention laws, a bill permitting law enforcement agencies to access metadata for phone calls and internet connections was passed in October 2015: <https://lawfareblog.com/german-bundestag-passes-new-data-retention-law>. Following additional attacks, a new bill was introduced in August 2016, with the Social Democrats supporting many of its provisions on the grounds that terrorism had become a reality for much of the public: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/12/world/europe/germany-antiterrorism-measures.html>. Even in Japan, a country neither involved militarily in the Middle East nor seen as having a potentially suspect domestic minority, legislation was passed reinforcing surveillance regulations: <https://giswatch.org/en/country-report/communications-surveillance/japan>.

<sup>3</sup> A good summary of the situation as of 2013 is a March 2015 roundup piece by a surveillance blog: <http://electrospace.blogspot.ch/2014/09/nsas-foreign-partnerships.html>; examples of continuing or renewed signals intelligence cooperation include Germany: <http://www.dw.com/en/germany-restarts-joint-intelligence-surveillance-with-us/a-18968519>; the UK: <https://www.justsecurity.org/29203/british-searches-america-tremendous-opportunity/>; France: <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/630024/us-france-to-strengthen-intelligence-sharing>; and, in spite of its own NSA spying scandal (<http://thediplomat.com/2015/08/nsa-spying-on-japan-the-fallout/>), Japan: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/09/12/national/japan-u-s-enhance-maritime-surveillance-space/#.Vtr2fpMrKys>.

strikes by the U.S. against targets in Pakistan and Yemen. These strikes, which became far more frequent under the Obama Administration than its predecessor, have been widely condemned, so much so that two years ago, only France and the UK stood with the U.S. on the issue, while Germany, the host to an airbase from which almost every strike is coordinated, said it was unaware that the base was being used for that purpose. But Germany did nothing to end the strikes, with a high-ranking prosecutor concluding that they were not in fact illegal; and another U.S. ally, Italy, in spite of concern over the death of one of its own nationals in a strike, refused to condemn the operation. Some months later, Italy ended up agreeing to the use of its own territory for drone strikes in Libya.<sup>4</sup>

The short-lived controversies over surveillance and drone strikes suggest two things: that security-related activities of this sort are becoming increasingly ubiquitous by states acting both unilaterally and multilaterally; and that those activities are strongly backed by the majority of legislative elites in the countries carrying them out. Indeed, there is a close tie between these two points since it is the support of those elites which makes it possible for legislation to be passed, budgets to grow, and controversies to be avoided or short-circuited. Thus, counterterrorism budgets in Western countries have increased massively over the past 15 years (EPRS 2015) with very little political opposition, and even earlier domestic security agency scandals such as the discovery of COINTELPRO (the FBI), the Finucane affair (MI5), and the *Canard Enchaîné* bugging (DST) have failed to stop the upward trajectory in funding and activity. Arguably, there is a long-term trend toward larger and more active national security apparatuses in a number of democratic countries, with this trend being enabled and strengthened by a growing consensus among legislative elites. This claim is the starting point for this paper and the research project on which it serves as a progress report.

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<sup>4</sup> See: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/only-us-uk-and-france-vote-against-the-unhcr-resolution-to-probe-legality-of-drone-strikes/5377753>; <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/ramstein-base-in-germany-a-key-center-in-us-drone-war-a-1029279.html>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-us-drones-idUSBRE94U0WV20130531>; <https://www.justsecurity.org/24440/germans-highest-ranking-prosecutor-legality-drone-strikes/>; <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/04/24/italians-grieve-over-hostage-killed-in-drone-strike.html>; <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/feb/22/italy-us-military-drones-isis-libya-sicily-base>.

It might be argued that there is nothing new here, and that elite consensus waxes and wanes with the level of perceived threat. Thus, the United States might be seen as having gone through waves of fear about various threats: anarchism and Bolshevism from mid-World War I to the early 1920s, communism in the 1940s and 1950s, and Islamic radicalism in the 2000s, to cite the most standard examples. We address this argument at some length below and indeed, assess it directly in the design of the research project, but to anticipate, there are both theoretical reasons and empirical evidence to reject it: the growth in consensus is not cyclical but secular.

The structure of the paper is as follows. We begin with a discussion of the central claim, situating the part of that claim about a long-term trend within the scholarly literature, articulating mechanisms which conduce to the trend, and elaborating its theoretical and substantive significance. We then turn to the second half of the claim (about growing legislative elite consensus in democratic countries), discussing not only its theoretical import but the way in which it points to a concrete research design through which the trend part of the claim can be assessed. The remaining sections of the paper concern a specific methodological issue: how to use speeches in parliamentary debates as indicators of elite consensus. Speeches are arguments of various sorts, and so we address in detail how speeches can be coded in order to abduce those arguments. We then briefly discuss the issue of analyzing arguments in order to determine consensus, and conclude with some preliminary results from earlier debates.

The principal focus of this paper is methodological: how to study the development of legislative elite consensus on national security. As we will discuss, the process of coding speeches is a lengthy one, and the research project we are carrying out is still at a relatively early stage.<sup>5</sup> For this reason, we do not yet have systematic over-time results to present and so the preliminary results should be seen as primarily illustrative.

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<sup>5</sup> To be specific, the project involves coding two parliamentary debates (one on national security-related issues and one on foreign policy issues not connected with national security; debates are chosen for large numbers of speakers and high degrees of contestation) per time period (with between 20 and 60 speeches per debate), for three time periods, for seven countries. At the date of writing, we have elaborated a methodology and are about a quarter of the way done with the coding; as the process has to be done by hand (see the discussion in Sylvan and Thornton 2016b), we are currently turning to crowdsourcing as a way to handle several debates.

## 1. National security and the garrison state

There are several scholarly literatures arguing that there is likely to be a long-term trend toward significant expansion of state capabilities connected with national security.<sup>6</sup> The oldest of these literatures—although there has been a revival of work in just the last few years (e.g., Engel 2011; Morgan 2004; Friedberg 2000)—stems from the evocative argument by the political scientist Harold Lasswell about the “garrison state” (Lasswell 1937, 1941, 1950, 1962; earlier revivals are, e.g., Aron 1979; Fitch 1985). Lasswell’s original focus, and that of most scholars who have used his ideas, was on a structural tendency in democratic countries for “specialists on violence” to play an ever greater political role. That “developmental construct,” as Lasswell termed the tendency, goes along with a second strand of literature, this on institutional political development (Katznelson and Shefter 2002: pt. 4; Sparrow 2011; Thorpe 2014). The argument here is that, at least for the USA, state building dynamics in the mid-20th century were particularly concentrated in agencies having to do with issues of national security. These political science arguments are buttressed by additional work by legal scholars and diplomatic historians (Hogan 1998; Stuart 2008; Ackerman 2010) on the emergence and development of the “national security state,” with a focus on standard political economy phenomena of lobbying and interest aggregation in the executive and the legislature, spurred by current and past state officials who interact closely with the private sector. Complementary arguments can be found in a final body of literature, this one in the field of international relations, on “securitization” (Buzan, Waeber, and de Wilde 1998; Balzacq 2005; Vuori 2008; Donnelly 2013), the process whereby, because of mobilization motives and media reflexes, phenomena get reconstituted as security-related and, by implication, fall within the purview of state capabilities connected with national security.

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<sup>6</sup> See below for a discussion about the distinction between debates over “national security” issues and over other issue domains. There is not a hard and fast dividing line, which is why we refer to “state capabilities connected with national security”; we have in mind at least the military; intelligence and counterintelligence agencies, including covert operations capabilities; and bureaucracies charged with preventing or defending against terrorism.

Strictly speaking, none of these literatures makes the exact claim as the first part of the one articulated above, namely that there is a *long-term* tendency toward larger and more active national security apparatuses in democracies. In part, this is because some authors concentrate on the initial establishment of those apparatuses, more or less bracketing subsequent decades or treating them as more of the same. Other authors, notably Lasswell, are far more either-or, seeing democracies at some point as transforming into garrison states and at that point falling outside of their substantive concerns. For us, by contrast, democracies can at the very least find themselves with a significant national security sector that escapes democratic control; at the other extreme, democracies can gradually be colonized by their national security apparatuses even while maintaining formally democratic status. To anticipate a point argued below, in these situations, entire realms of policy making are largely uncontested; whether this is outbalanced sufficiently by contestation in other domains to still deserve the label “democratic” is to some degree a definitional issue.

There are two principal factors that conduce to the long-term growth of national security apparatuses.<sup>7</sup> First is fear. In his celebrated 1941 essay, Lasswell explicitly discussed what he called “the socialization of danger” as a hallmark of modern aerial warfare, pointing out that with civilians being threatened, “the nation becomes one unified technical enterprise” (459). Numerous authors have pointed out how fear dominated the politics of the United States not only after the USSR’s acquisition of nuclear weapons (e.g., Hogan 1998) but during World War II, because of concerns over fifth columns and, more generally, domestic groups deemed potentially subversive (e.g., Katznelson 2013: ch. 9).<sup>8</sup> Fear is an equally important factor in other states, as incidents of domestic terrorism clearly show; note that this can be traced back at least as far as Lasswell’s first garrison state, i.e., Japan in the 1930s (Shillony 2000; Gordon 2003: chs. 10, 11).

The other principal factor is organizational inertia. Bureaucracies can be established for any number of reasons but, once set up, they tend to persist even after the initial reasons are seen to be

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<sup>7</sup> There are also secondary factors; see Sylvan and Thornton 2016a for a discussion.

<sup>8</sup> Katznelson and Schurmann before him (1974: ch. 1) argue that abiding fears over physical security were twinned with worries over economic security (thus the UN Security Council was first envisaged under the same administration that pushed Congress to pass the Social Security Act).

no longer applicable. In part this is because of vested economic interests, interacting with lobbyists and policy intellectuals; it is also because the organization's existence, with its capabilities for carrying out particular activities, provides a ready-to-hand tool that can be used to address—though not necessarily successfully—any number of policy problems (Sylvan and Majeski 2009). For example, even in the 1990s, when the Cold War had ended and the war on terror had not yet begun, U.S. foreign intelligence spending declined only slightly, remaining at a level 80 percent higher than in 1980; in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the CIA, which hardly had distinguished itself in the preceding several years, was assigned by Bush the task of “hunting, capturing, imprisoning, and interrogating suspects around the world” (Weiner 2007: 481).<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Democracy and legislative elite consensus on national security

Both the garrison state concept and the trend argument above pertain to democracies. This may seem one-sided, given that the dominance of “specialists on violence” would presumably be characteristic of nondemocratic states. However, Lasswell's original claim and the phenomena that seem to point to a general garrison state trend have to do with countries with large numbers of heterogeneous interest groups; high levels of literacy, political involvement, and technical expertise; and clear historical limits on the use of violence and the role of security-related agencies. It is in such countries that fear by elites and the mass public can serve as an impetus to the construction and growth of national security apparatuses, and it is also in such countries that interest intermediation and technical expertise are most likely to lead not only to organizational budget growth but to increased numbers of off-the-shelf activity capabilities within those organizations. By contrast,

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<sup>9</sup> Budgetary data from: <https://fas.org/irp/budget/>. As for Bush's 17 September 2001 “finding” on interrogation, Mayer (2008: 38-41) points out that the document was in fact drafted by the head of the CIA's Counterterrorist Center. A related example of organizational “at-hand-edness” is the way in which the current Liberal government in Canada, though opposed to drone strikes, has nonetheless not eliminated the country's air force from a precision weapons capability in the drones it is planning on buying: <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/trudeau-government-quietly-shopping-for-military-drones-in-the-midst-of-pressure-to-arm-them>. More generally, one can argue that when organizations are created, even demobilization after a crisis leaves the shell of the organization; this may account for the ratchet effect remarked on in U.S. military spending after the War of 1812 and the Spanish-American War, as well as after World War II (cf. Rockoff 1998).

countries in which specialists on violence already dominate politics have tended to be significantly less sensitive to fear (except, of course, that of losing power) and to be marked more by bureaucratic immobility than by increases in organizational capabilities. Thus, although military-dominated regimes certainly have allied themselves with democratic states for decades, particularly in the context of the Cold War or the post-9/11 anti-terrorist campaigns, they otherwise lack some of the key characteristics that would conduce to long-term garrison-state-style trends and so we will leave their study for a later project.

What is significant in the claim about democracies—specifically, representative democracies—is that the trends in question are largely self-inflicted. Since 1945, not a single democracy has been conquered or occupied by foreign invaders; all have functioning legislatures, reasonably free and contested elections, and an active news media. The construction of national security apparatuses was carried out by elected governments and it was those governments, with routine legislative approval year after year, which increased the size and scope of those apparatuses. Many, if not most, of the politicians who pushed through or voted for these various legislative measures did so in full knowledge that oversight would become difficult if not impossible and thus that their power over the bureaucracy would diminish (exactly the opposite situation in certain types of nondemocratic states); but they were convinced that security was at stake and that a current, or perhaps a future threat, mandated such action on their part. Even the political payoffs of their actions could hardly have been the principal motivation for most of the legislative votes since many of the activities in question were secret, with legislators being sworn to silence about their knowledge (which often was not very great) of those activities and even simple budget votes were dissimulated among dozens of fictitious accounts. This is not to deny phenomena such as red-baiting, khaki elections, and wrapping oneself in the flag, but although appeals to the mass public are certainly an element in the construction and expansion of national security apparatuses, the critical feature of democracy for our purposes is its representative quality.

This point about the role of legislative elites in the long-term security apparatus trend not only is a theoretical argument in itself but provides a potentially useful means of assessing the validity of the claim about that trend. The problem is that there is no direct way of evaluating the claim systematically. Although data are certainly available on the size of countries' armed forces and on the money spent for those forces, analogous data for intelligence, counterintelligence, and counterterrorism spending are usually secret or only episodically released. The same goes for national security-related activities, many of which are only found out about years later, if at all. This means that cross-national over-time direct measures of the growth of national security apparatuses is not possible.

However, the role of legislative elites provides an indirect measure. Insofar as such elites increasingly agree on national security issues, they are likely to support funding for apparatuses charged with those issues; indeed, long-term growth in the size and activities of the apparatuses can only occur if there is an accompanying increase in elite agreement.<sup>10</sup> That agreement is not only functional from a budgetary and legislative point of view but also serves as a cue to the mass media that particular policies or agencies play a key role in protecting national security, both because of what is said in speeches (see below) and because of what is not said in oversight hearings.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, there is no reason to expect that such increasing agreement among legislative elites will apply to other issue domains, and this offers a ready-made research design for assessing our thesis. If there is indeed long-term growth in the size and activities of national security apparatuses, with this trend being enabled and strengthened by legislative elites, then we should expect that over the decades, those elites will exhibit increasing agreement on national security issues as compared with

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<sup>10</sup> We stress increased agreement among representative legislative elites, not simply continuation of a majority in favor of funding national security apparatuses and activities. Unless one cohesive political party completely dominates a country's politics from the end of World War II to the present, there will be alternation of power and thus an opportunity for those who had been on the losing side to shift funding to other issue domains.

<sup>11</sup> For example, it is striking how rarely one finds significant oversight, much less challenges, to covert activities by even legislatures with considerable institutional power. Consider the oft-quoted response of Senator John Stennis, when asked by then-CIA director James Schlesinger if he wanted to be briefed on an upcoming operation: "No, no, my boy, don't tell me. Just go ahead and do it, but I don't want to know" (Johnson 2012: 151). See also Wetzling (2010) for predictable, but still striking, findings about the lack of oversight in Germany and the UK.

other issues. In practice, this implies a within-country over-time assessment of elite agreement in different issue domains.

When we use the terms “agreement” and “consensus,” we do not mean unanimity. The point rather is that although elites may hold differing views on what to do in particular circumstances such as whether to commit troops in a given conflict, to fund a particular weapons program, or to authorize the collection of communications metadata, they see eye to eye on a number of issues surrounding those questions: what happened in the past, what is likely to happen in the future, what situations are good, or worrisome, or terrifying, and so forth. If, for example, legislative elites feel that certain leaders are “bad guys”—that therefore they pose a threat, that certain paramilitary programs have the potential to stop them, and that the officials running such programs are competent and well-meaning—then whatever their views on a particular legislative proposal, they are likely to fund those paramilitary programs and support their expansion in the face of new threats.

This part of our thesis implies that legislative elite consensus on national security issues grows significantly after World War II, plateauing at high levels near the end of the Cold War, or perhaps in the post-9/11 era. Such an inference may appear to run counter to a significant literature on elite polarization with respect to foreign policy issues, at least in the United States (e.g., McCormick and Wittkopf 1990; Meernik 1993; Prins and Marshall 2001; Souva and Rohde 2007; Beinart 2008). That literature, though, is not fundamentally at odds with our claim. The concept of consensus used here has to do with accord on world views, i.e., on deep assumptions about various phenomena such as foreign threats and the role played by various states. What happens, then, is that the range of agreement (including, crucially, on funding for and the activities of the national security apparatus) expands even as legislative elites vigorously disagree on certain policy alternatives. In this regard, standard means of determining polarization on contested issues, such as survey data or roll call votes, are mostly beside the point as regards deep assumptions on which legislative elites agree.

An informal example of growing consensus among legislative elites, and the way in which it can be used as an indicator of increasing size and activity of national security apparatuses, comes from earlier work we have done on the United States in the 1890s, the 1930s, the 1960s, the 1990s, and the early 2000s (Sylvan, Thornton, and Majeski 2014; Sylvan and Thornton 2015; Thornton and Sylvan 2015, 2016). In 1898–99, U.S. legislative elites were in major disagreement on the annexation of the Philippines and, more generally, on the U.S. role in the world. Although the annexationists won out, they did not win over their opponents, and over the next several decades disagreements arose on multiple occasions. As late as November 1939, when Congress finally agreed to repeal the Neutrality Act, isolationists denied that Hitler was a significant threat to the United States or that the U.S. had any interest in supporting Great Britain. Even after the war, during the debate over aid to Greece and Turkey, both left and right were deeply suspicious about the rationale for aid. Over the next two decades, this disagreement began to diminish and so, when the Gulf of Tonkin resolution was debated in 1964, its (two) opponents shared some premises with supporters about the U.S. role, even as they castigated both South Vietnam and the U.S. military. Thirty years later, in debates over the bombing of Kosovo and the authorization for invading Iraq, a genuine consensus had emerged, with both sides agreeing on the moral turpitude of Slobodan Milosevic and Saddam Hussein and of the importance of at least isolating, if not fighting against, them. Of course, this quick walk-through does not capture most of the details of the debates and the specific agreements or disagreements, nor does it say anything about the level of (dis)agreement on non-national security issues, but it does at least start to suggest that earlier efforts at building up national security apparatuses would have plateaued and that it was not until after World War II that our hypothesized long-term trend in fact began.<sup>12</sup> This is exactly what happened, and while this in itself does not prove anything, it does indicate that growing legislative elite consensus on national

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<sup>12</sup> The institutionalist arguments discussed in the first section point to the Spanish-American War as the moment when, organizationally, important capabilities were put in place (e.g., a modernized army and navy, Marines constabulary training, Wall Street oversight of customs collections in client states) and new doctrines elaborated (via the so-called Insular Cases). However, ideological consensus lagged behind, arguably because there was no abiding sense of fear (principal U.S. enemies through the end of the 1920s were Nicaragua and Germany for a few years, Russia after World War I, and, for a quarter of a century, Mexico).

security, as opposed to other issues, can indeed be used as an indicator of a long-term trend toward larger and more active national security apparatuses.

Although we do not yet have systematic results to communicate, similar stories can be told about other countries being studied in our research project. Thus, at the time of the debate in West Germany over the European Defence Community (1952), many opponents flatly contested the claim that the Soviet Union posed a threat to the Federal Republic; by the time of the debate over the first Gulf War, in 1991, opponents agreed that Iraq posed a threat to its neighbors, though not one that justified military action. Much the same tendency can be seen in Japan between the ratification of the peace treaty and the security treaty with the United States (1951) and the debate in 1990 over Japanese involvement in the Gulf War. The same can be said of the United Kingdom from the time of the reestablishment of conscription (1947; discussed at length below) and the debate about the launching of the Gulf War (1991). Conversely, in each of these cases, proponents of the legislative action were themselves more divided in the first period than in the second; this is another reason why roll-call analysis is problematic as a means of capturing trends in ideological consensus.

By arguing that long-term growth of national security apparatuses has been enabled and strengthened by consensus among legislative elites, we not only point to an indicator by which comparative research can be carried out but we also help address additional theoretical and substantive issues. One such issue is particularly worth highlighting, having to do with war and democracy. The extensive literature on the “democratic peace” carves out a partial exception to the correlation when it comes to covert interventions (e.g., Downes and Lilly 2010; Poznansky 2016), but fails to grapple with the larger issue raised by our thesis: that an extensive and growing array of activity have largely been removed from public debate. For example, the drone strikes referred to at the start of this paper, although discussed at some length in certain press outlets, have not been the object of sustained debate in Congress—not least because most documents and testimony are

classified<sup>13</sup>—and, as a result, have largely escaped becoming an issue in election campaigns (Horton 2015: ch. 8; Woods 2015: chs. 9, 12; Savage 2015: ch. 6). This raises questions about our knowledge of war-like activities (including the validity of standard conflict databases), about the scope conditions on theoretical claims about constraints on the executive, and, more fundamentally, about whether entire realms of policy making can be qualified as democratic in the first place. Ironically, Lasswell (1950) raised the possibility that the garrison state might be marked by a plebiscitary executive; what he did not perhaps reckon on is the possibility that consensus would be so strong among legislative elites as to obviate the need for even plebiscitary rituals.

### 3. Speeches as arguments

How can we study the presence, absence, or growth of legislative consensus on national security issues? Our proposal, as hinted at above, is to study legislative debates, specifically speeches made in the course of those debates, looking for agreement or disagreement on world views. As we indicated above, roll call votes tell us little about world views; speeches, on the other hand, give legislators' views, usually in their own words, and can be analyzed systematically to see the ways in which they overlap or differ. Below we will discuss our proposal to code speeches in terms of the arguments made in them, contrasting that approach with alternative ways of analyzing speeches. But before we address that issue, we need to put to rest one of the long-standing shibboleths in social science: that speeches are only “cheap talk” and thus can be discounted or even ignored.

In game theory, the reason that some kinds of talk are considered to be cheap is that engaging in them is not costly for those speaking or otherwise transmitting the message. This is the antithesis of what happens in legislative speeches, as they are one of the few means by which

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<sup>13</sup> “‘The collateral damage has been extraordinarily low,’ says Sen. Dianne Feinstein, the ranking member of the Senate’s Intelligence Committee. ‘That really is a fact. I only wish I could tell you what it was. That is the irony here. This is all classified.’” This and similar statements from Republicans, including presidential candidates, and even from liberal Democrats, are perfect examples of the blank zones on both war and democracy referred to above (<http://www.defenseone.com/politics/2015/04/congress-drone-strikes-are-here-stay/111067/>).

legislators' positions can be determined. Moreover, what matters both to legislators' supporters and opponents is not only their eventual vote on a bill (if there is indeed a bill that is voted on) but the words they use in announcing their vote: if a member of parliament says she is in favor of a resolution because other alternatives are worse, it is a very different message than praising the resolution as moral, or as leading to good consequences.

Another cheap talk criticism is that speeches simply fail to reflect what legislators actually think. This argument, too, fails to hold water. Legislators do not, in fact, evince significantly different beliefs in public than in private; their credibility as deal-makers is undermined if they articulate different beliefs from one day to the next. The fact that they carefully choose their words does not mean that they hold a different, "true," set of beliefs which could be articulated in some nonlinguistic fashion and, even if they were to display a high level of cynicism about their floor speeches (a phenomenon which actually is extremely rare among legislators), the fact that they have to ally with some members of parliament, oppose others, and stand for reelection, all on the basis of what they say (and, of course, how they vote), means that their speeches, and not some other, nonexpressed, set of views, are what matters. Note that the need for allies and opponents suggests that instead of analyzing isolated speeches (say the kind given late at night, when there is no floor debate), we should focus on speeches made in the course of debates on pending legislation.

There are a number of ways in which speeches can be analyzed. One can, for example, study them as expressing belief systems linked by logical entailment relations; as manifestations of underlying positions on multiple scales or "sentiments" on particular subjects; as focusing on particular "topics"; as a series of discursively connected utterances; or as an exercise in framing (Roseman 1994; Lowe et al. 2011; Thomas, Pang, and Lee 2006; Roberts, Stewart, and Airoidi 2016; Cabrio, Tonelli, and Villata 2013; Chong and Druckman 2010). Our approach, instead, focuses on speeches as arguments, i.e., as a series of reasons advanced for taking a position, such as voting in favor of or against a particular legislative proposal. We hasten to add immediately that the arguments made by legislators may be logical or shot full of circularities and contradictions; solidly

grounded in history or scientific studies or, on the contrary, based on a combination of fantasy, ignorance, or deliberate lies; positive or normative; high-minded or filled with ad hominem attacks and personal slurs. But whatever the specific points made, every speech is an argument of sorts, and our proposal is to characterize each argument so as to determine what it shares with other arguments put forward in the same legislative context, i.e., the debate in which the speech is made. If, as we will discuss below, the zone of agreement for particular issue areas expands over time, we can say that there is a move in the direction of consensus.

Here is some terminology. An *argument* is any verbal construction of the sort A because of B. The various types of “because” (e.g., causal, legal, and so forth) will be discussed below; but the important thing is that an argument links two points. As we are concerned with legislation being debated in parliaments, the A point is a *claim*: a speaker’s position on the pending vote.<sup>14</sup> A *reason* is a point made in support, whether directly or indirectly, of a claim. A reason that supports a claim directly (so that we could represent the role of reason X in the speech, say, as “vote for the bill because of X”) is a *core reason*; a reason that supports a core reason (hence, for reason Y, “vote for the bill because of X, and X is the case because of Y”) is a *secondary reason*. There can be multiple core reasons in a speech and also multiple secondary reasons in support of a given core reason; there can also be a secondary reason in support of another secondary reason, with the latter in support of a core reason. In some cases, a reason that is used as a secondary reason in one speech may be used as a core reason in another (indeed, this may even occur in different paragraphs within a single speech). A *reasoning chain* is a claim supported by a core reason which in turn is supported by at least one secondary reason and, recursively, any secondary reasons in support of the latter. At the minimum, then, reasoning chains are composed of three connected elements, a claim, a core reason, and a secondary reason; but if the latter is in turn supported by one or more secondary

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<sup>14</sup> As noted above, legislators can and do announce their positions on issues which are not the subject of pending votes, but although some parliaments set aside time for members to make speeches of that sort, this is not universal. Hence we have opted for speeches on pending measures, even if the measure may not yet have been introduced formally or if, on the contrary, it ends up being withdrawn for redrafting or in the face of opposition. Similarly, for reasons of tractability, we ignore speeches on amendments unless the amendment is in effect a proposal to kill the bill (“strike the rest of the text”) or if it sparks a major debate on its own.

reasons, the reasoning chain may be composed of four, five, or more connected elements, though these latter possibilities are relatively rare. As we will discuss below, two chains in a speech may start out with the same core reason in support of the claim and the same immediately supporting secondary reason in support of the core, then, further down, as it were, diverge into different supporting secondary reasons. Such *compound* chains may, for purposes of pairwise similarity assessment, be treated as composed of multiple individual chains.<sup>15</sup> Not all core reasons are part of chains: quite often, speakers put forward a core reason unsupported by a secondary reason<sup>16</sup> because it seems obvious or because, at that moment, they are engaged in constructing a different argument; we call these unsupported core reasons *isolated reasons*. Finally, the *justification* made in a speech is the combination of the claim and all the reasoning chains and isolated reasons supporting it.<sup>17</sup>

Below, we will discuss the coding process of abducing reasons from speeches. But one point is helpful to anticipate: that not all the points (whether chains, isolated reasons, or other sorts of statements) made by a speaker are necessarily part of the justification. Sometimes a speaker spends relatively little time on the claim and relatively more time on other issues: skirmishing with a long-time adversary, warning about he or she will do after the vote (e.g., ask for more money or propose follow-up legislation), giving a history lesson, or enunciating a statement of general grievances. Such remarks are not, in essence, part of the debate, and we find that they are particularly likely to

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<sup>15</sup> Chains may be interconnected not only because they all lead to the same claim (this is trivially the normal case, although there are speeches in which more than one claim is made [e.g., to vote in favor of something and also to be wary of something else in the future]), but because they may be so-called “divergent structures” (Freeman 1991) in which a given secondary reason is used in support of more than one “higher” reason. We do not discuss such chains here because they pose no particular issues for coding or similarity assessment, though, interestingly, they are not permitted in many kinds of argument mapping software (since they are not, mathematically speaking, trees).

<sup>16</sup> Note that the reverse cannot be true: a secondary reason must by definition support a core reason, and thus be part of a reasoning chain. However, as we will discuss below, our coding procedure does not actually identify secondary reasons directly from summarized speeches. Instead, we code summaries as a set of candidate core reasons, then, among the latter, identify some as supporting others, i.e., as secondary reasons. Any core reasons left unsupported by secondary reasons after this step are precisely the isolated reasons referred to above. The rationale behind this procedure is discussed below.

<sup>17</sup> Terminological notes. The phrase “reasoning chain,” as we use it, overlaps to some degree with its use in political science and in computational linguistics (e.g., Sniderman et al. 1986; Sizov and Öztürk 2013). Our concept of “argument” is similar, though not identical, to the first two meanings discussed by Hornikx and Hahn (2012); it is definitely not as differentiated in its notion of “support” as Toulmin’s (1958) canonical model or as limited to direct responses as Rescher’s (1978) notion of a back and forth between two different persons.

be made by speakers from marginal parties or factions. In fact, codes of NA are often useful indicators that certain speakers are peripheral not only to the debate but more generally.

It is important to keep in mind that the reasoning chains for a particular speech may not be consistent, at least in the eyes of many observers. A justification may include chains that not only differ in their content but appear contradictory: for example, “vote against the resolution because the Soviets are aggressive; they are aggressive because Stalin made a speech calling for supporting revolutions” and also “vote against the resolution because the Soviets are trying to lull us to sleep; they are trying to lull us to sleep because Stalin made a speech calling for peace and negotiations with us.” A justification can thus be composed of chains that are mutually inconsistent; on the other hand, a particular chain will display some consistency, via the type of connection (as discussed below), even if the individual reasons may appear ludicrous to observers.

Consider now the connections by which reasons are linked into chains. We said above that each reason is connected to other reasons, or to the claim, by a “because.” These *connectors*, as we call them, are subdivided by type: 1) L: legal or conceptual/definitional (e.g., “we can’t do X because it would be unconstitutional”); 2) H: historical (e.g., “we should do it because we’ve done it before”); 3) C: consequential (including slippery slope arguments) of the sort X occurs, triggering Y (e.g., “if we do X, it will put the budget into deficit”); 4) N: normative (e.g., “we can’t do X because it’s immoral to treat people in that way”); 5) A: anthropological (e.g., “we should do X because it’s the only kind of language people like Y understand”); 6) I: identity/who we are or are not (e.g., “we shouldn’t do X because we’re a democracy, not a dictatorship”; “do X because advocates of X [like me and my allies] are certain kinds of people”); 7) O: opponents (e.g., “do X because opponents of X are reprobates”); and 8) E: even though (e.g., “do X even though Y is the case”).<sup>18</sup> Note that ad hominem arguments (connection type O), pleas of good faith or being on the

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<sup>18</sup> This list of connectors was put together after provisionally coding a number of speeches in the U.S. Senate debate over Philippines annexation (Thornton and Sylvan 2015), as amended after coding speeches in the research project. From a technical point of view, the connectors are similar to certain standard argument schemes (Walton, Reed, and Macagno 2008) or to components of particular such schemes (e.g., concessions in Toulmin’s [1958] model).

side of the angels (connection type I) and "notwithstanding" arguments (connection type E) can be categorized using these connectors.

Below, we will discuss the procedure for coming up with connectors, including a consistency criterion that constrains the variety of connectors in a given chain. For now, just note that representing speeches as justifications along the lines proposed above offers a tractable and systematic way of seeing just how much agreement in reasoning there is across speeches. For example, consider the quotations on waterboarding drawn from different political elites in the United States and displayed in Appendix 1.<sup>19</sup> An informal look at the quotations suggests that Bush's reasoning is similar to that of his vice president, Cheney; that McCain and Clinton agree in some respects; and that Trump partly tracks Bush and Cheney while going further in other regards. These intuitions can be checked through coding the statements as arguments, using the methodology laid out below. Appendix 2 lists all the reasons used in the statements, as well as the reasoning chains which connect them in the arguments; the chains should be read across in this fashion: S-3-5 means support the claim because of reason 3 and support reason 3 because of reason 5.<sup>20</sup>

Thus our proposal is to analyze speeches as arguments, to code those arguments into their component reasoning chains, to assess the agreement between the arguments in a given debate, and then to see whether, over time, national security debates show significantly greater increases in agreement than do debates on other issues. We now turn to a discussion of our methodology for coding speeches into arguments, and, after that, of the means for assessing agreement between arguments in a debate.

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<sup>19</sup> Note that only one of the statements (Cheney's) was part of a speech, although another one—the McCain press release—reflected what he said on the Senate floor. Bush's statement was drawn from his memoirs, which were presumably drafted with some concern for consistency. It should also be noted that Clinton's statement to some degree contradicted another statement made years before when she was still in the Senate: <http://www.democraticunderground.com/1251711013>.

<sup>20</sup> If the claim were to be opposed, the string would begin with O. For reasons of legibility, in this example we have omitted the types of connections discussed above.

#### 4. Coding speeches into arguments

##### *a. General considerations: granularity*

In coding a speech, it is necessary to identify which reasons are being used in support of the claim. Here, it is important to avoid two obvious extremes. It obviously would add very little if the reasons being abduced are too general: vote for the resolution because good things will happen, or because it is the right thing to do, or because the opponents are incorrect. Just as obviously, one should avoid abducing hyper-specific reasons: vote against the bill because its provision for sending troops for 4 months violates Title 14 of Public Law 882, as per the Constitutional Court’s ruling in 1973. Within these extremes, there is a broad range of alternatives, and it is impossible to say a priori how abstract or granular reasons should be; instead, the degree depends on the distinctions made by the speaker in developing his/her argument. For example, in the House of Commons debate of 1947 about reinstating military conscription in the UK, one speaker (Yates) made this particular complaint partway through his speech:

This then is our problem. Here we have these huge Forces and we have a policy of peacetime secretiveness. We do not know where the Forces are or how many there are, for they are stationed all over the world. I understood in my early days in the Labour movement that we did not believe in secret diplomacy, or in secrecy at all. I do not see any reason for approving this Measure. Even the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Woodford (Mr. Churchill) was asking for information which is, of course, absolutely essential if the House is to make a sound decision on a matter of this kind.

The coding procedure we followed (see below) led us to code this passage as a single reason:

“Government hasn’t given us the info we need to decide on conscription.” The claim about what Labour used to believe, or the reference to Churchill, are not in this particular case indicative of a finer-grained distinction.

On the other hand, the government minister (Isaacs) who began the debate by introducing the bill made a point of distinguishing between, on the one hand, deferment of service because of employment or educational training, and, on the other hand, reinstatement in a pre-conscription job following military service. We could have coded both these points as a single reason—for example, “not harm conscripts’ civilian employment”—but, because the speaker insisted on the difference as

a way, *inter alia*, of arguing for the legislation on grounds of both flexibility and equity, we instead coded two reasons: “Some valid deferments/postponements of service will be permitted” and “Reinstatement rights will continue to apply, with some caveats.” (As there were several other specific but related distinctions made by Isaacs, we then added an additional, more overarching reason, one used with some frequency by other speakers: “Conscription will not interfere with young men’s futures.”)

This emphasis on the speaker’s *legislative intentions* (whether any particular point is a justification of her/his position on the legislation, as contrasted with other things s/he may also be doing in the speech, such as demonstrating *bona fides*, settling scores, or announcing future struggles) implies that the reasons used in any one speech may be heterogeneous in their degree of granularity; taking the collection of reasons across all speeches in a given debate, we would expect high levels of heterogeneity. Consequently, standard top-down approaches to coding speeches will be problematic, except of course as a starting point (Grimmer and Stewart 2013; D’Orazio et al. 2014; cf. Bunea and Ibenskas 2015). On the other hand, so-called bottom-up approaches, such as that employed in topic modeling methods (Quinn et al. 2010; Lucas et al. 2015; Törnberg and Törnberg 2016) or in Wordfish (Slapin and Proksch 2008, 2014) are also problematic not only because of the sheer size of the corpora needed to discover co-occurrence patterns but, above all, because of the idea that particular phrases are determinately mappable onto reasons irrespective of the speakers’ legislative intentions.<sup>21</sup> Instead, the implication of using legislative intentions as a guide to coding reasons is that the coding procedure is very much an exercise in “grounded theory” (Glaser and Straus 1967): an iterative process in which an initial set of reasons is added to with successive speeches, some reasons being complemented by new ones, others being merged, and still others split up into multiple reasons. As the number of coded speeches increases, the general tendency is that each additional speech adds fewer new reasons and changes few existing ones

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<sup>21</sup> As we will see below, some distinctions (e.g., between “dictators” and “thugs”) may be irrelevant pragmatically, whereas others (e.g., between “we will be able to act” and “we may be able to act”) may be relevant. More importantly, some reasons are inferrable even without explicit words: for example, in the Yates quotation above, there is nowhere a sentence stating explicitly that the government has not in fact given the information; rather, it is an inference that most competent English speakers would routinely and unproblematically make.

(though there are some flagrant exceptions to this, typically involving marginal or independent legislators; see below).

*b. General considerations: speeches and reasons*

How are individual speeches related to each other, and to reasons? To start with, we know that regardless of how striking or idiosyncratic a given legislator's language may be, it must be (and almost always is) understood by others. Although some of this understanding may well be due to the speaker's past performances and to listeners' expectations, the words actually uttered must be sufficiently comprehensible that, at a minimum, the speaker's claim must be clear, and most likely the justification as well.<sup>22</sup> This places a severe limit on the extent to which not only words can be used nonstandardly by any individual speaker, but also the extent to which the reasons advanced through certain words are different than those of any other legislator.

In addition, we know (and the various speeches we have studied demonstrate clearly) that speakers often aim at making points similar to those of other speakers. This can happen because a legislator approves what his/her peers have said, or deliberately echoes their speeches, or is repeating "talking points" distributed by party whips or floor leaders. We thus should expect that certain reasons will be advanced over and over in the course of a debate, so much so that later speakers may well fall into a sort of shorthand, condensing details or referring to reasons by exophora (e.g., "Mr. Smith's [or: "my distinguished colleague's"] argument").

It follows, then, that the same reason can be advanced by more than one speaker and thus that, for two or more reasons, the same reasoning chain can also be advanced in different speeches. This implies that speeches are sequentially structured in a way that reasoning chains are not. Although many speeches are highly repetitive—we are continually struck by how often speakers make the same point over and over, often in immediate succession—or, conversely, are in essence long lists of reasons, the speeches are sequentially organized at least insofar as they have to start

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<sup>22</sup> Evidence for this is abundant, from characterizations of speakers by other speakers (then, or afterward) to press accounts of speeches.

and to end; moreover, sequential order also comes out because if a reason is indeed advanced repeatedly, its prior invocation will often be acknowledged. Reasoning chains, however, do not exist in any kind of sequential order. The fact that a chain may involve historical or consequential connections does not mean that the linked reasons of that chain are temporally ordered, much less that such chains must precede or follow certain other chains. Speeches put forward reasoning chains relevant to a position on legislation, but the speeches are not the chains themselves. As mentioned above, speakers may well be using their speeches for multiple purposes, of which justifying a claim is only one. Even if the latter is the only point of the speech, the fact that there is not a one-to-one relation between particular phrases of a speech and particular reasoning chains (there are many combinations of words by which speakers can put forward the same reason; some reasoning chains are only implied by the words rather than stated explicitly; and the same exact words, in different contexts, can put forward different reasons) means that automated coding procedures, involving precisely a determinate mapping of words onto reasons, are likely to be of limited use (see below).

However, the fact that reasoning chains are put forward in speeches but are not the same as speeches does not mean that there is a pre-set collection of reasoning chains for any particular debate and that speakers, say, choose among that collection to construct their own speeches. Certainly speakers have in mind that they wish to make a particular point but they cannot do so without words, and it is exactly their choice of words that not only instantiates reasoning chains, but also modifies them. A speaker may want to emphasize a hitherto neglected point, or to modify someone else's argument, and so even if debates were not joined—e.g., if speakers did not try to rebut their opponents—they would still progress, because later speakers will necessarily make slightly different points than earlier ones. (Imagine that you are the 30th speaker in a debate. Even if you only say, “I agree with everyone else on my side of the issue,” the fact of saying that adds a reason: “Those on my side are correct.”)

### *c. Coding preliminaries*

Speakers' legislative intentions—whether any particular point is a justification of their position on the legislation, as contrasted with other things they may also be doing in the speech, such as demonstrating bona fides, or settling scores, or announcing future struggles—can be used as a filter in coding speeches as reasons and, by comparing those reasons to other speakers', in giving an informal sense of how central or peripheral individual speeches are relative to the others on the same side.

i. Pre-processing. We take a debate and reduce it in size by eliminating procedural preliminaries (unless they raise substantive points) as well as end-game skirmishes; we also eliminate many lower-level debates on amendments, though some of the latter are kept because they raise general questions. By the same token, we eliminate many colloquies, whether insulting or friendly, unless they involve reasons advanced in support of the proposed legislation. Speeches that are interrupted by questions are stitched together. The end result of the pre-processing is that debates are cast as a collection of pro- and anti- speeches. The number of such speeches varies, depending on country and time period, from 20 to 60; those speeches are usually clustered in a handful of days, often nonconsecutive. Depending on the country, the collection of speeches may only include those made in the lower house.

ii. Paraphrasing. We operate on transcripts that are divided into paragraphs, even if paragraphing conventions vary considerably from one language and indeed one parliament to another. Each paragraph in a speech is paraphrased in English (obviously for speeches in other languages, this adds considerable time), sentence by sentence. The paraphrasing aims to simplify sentence structure (in some cases, sentences have to be broken into parts to produce readable English), eliminate quotations and presentation of numbers, clarify obscure references, standardize courtesies, and in various ways to produce texts that can be read as stand-alone documents by other researchers. Paraphrasing is carried out by individual researchers, who subsequently distribute their paraphrases to other researchers and answer questions about confusing or perhaps repetitive points. Often, those question-and-answer sessions involve the paraphraser going back over the original

text; it is the first in a series of reliability checks (not ideal, as we would like to have at least a second researcher paraphrasing the same texts, but given resource constraints, it is unavoidable).

iii. Summarizing. After a speech is paraphrased, each paraphrased paragraph is summarized, the idea being to focus on the main point(s) of the speaker in that paragraph. (The main point may be and often is tacit.) Sentence structure is further simplified, repetitions are (usually) eliminated, and tacit points are interpolated or added. Often, the summarizing will be abstract and written in a form quite different in tonality or word choice than the paraphrase. Summaries are produced by the same researcher who did the paraphrasing; as with the latter, summaries are presented to other researchers for discussion and amendment as a reliability check.

*d. Coding reasoning*

i. Reasons. Summaries are coded as collections of reasons. In principle, each phrase, or at least clause, of each sentence in a summary is coded as one or more reasons. Many times, the reason borrows some of the same terminology as the phrase, but at other times, if the reason was already put forward by another speaker in a previous speech, there will be a slight difference in terminology. Tacit points, whether complementary to a particular explicit reason or implicit in a set of explicit reasons, will also be coded as reasons, though we signal this to ourselves by putting them in square brackets. To capture the speaker's legislative intentions, researchers are instructed to use argument-related formulas such as "vote for the bill because of X," where X is the candidate reason. As indicated above, if for a given summary paragraph there are no arguments that are part of the justification, then instead of the paragraph being coded as one or more reasons, it is coded as NA. Reasons are initially coded, after the summaries of all speeches in the debate have been done, by the same researcher who produced the paraphrases and summaries for that debate. As with the preceding steps, reasons are checked by other researchers.

As speeches are coded, researchers construct, draw upon, add to, and at times revise the wording, of a master list of reasons. That list can be quite lengthy: for each of the debates we are currently coding, it appears that there will end up being between 250 and 300 reasons. For retrieval

and simplicity purposes, reasons are assigned a number and arranged in the master list either numerically or, in some cases, crudely, by topic (e.g., cost of the bill, motivations of supporters). Although our focus is not on individual reasons, impressionistically, it appears that debates in different parliaments at roughly the same time period overlap at least to some degree on the type of reason: for example, and unsurprisingly, speakers in the debates in the UK on conscription (1947), in the US on aid to Greece and Turkey (1947), in Japan on the Peace and Security Treaties (1951), in Germany on the EDC (1952), and in Switzerland on the purchase of jet fighters (1947) all advance reasons having to do with the cold war, in particular with the Soviet Union as a threat.

ii. Reasoning chains. After each summary paragraph has been assigned reasons, researchers make another pass through the summaries and, for each paragraph, code the reasons into chains. Researchers are instructed to use the same sort of argumentative formula as for the abducing of reasons “vote for the bill because of X, and X because of Y.” Not all reasons can be formed into chains; some are isolated. In linking reasons into chains, some standard political science ways of producing arguments, notably causality (A leads to B, which leads to C, etc.) have to be modified: if situation A leads to situation B, then the reasons referring to those situations may have to be reversed: vote for the bill because situation B will occur (which is a good thing), and situation B will occur because of situation A. Again, reasoning chains are checked by other researchers.

In forming reasoning chains, it is necessary to specify the kind of connection (see above), for each chain, between core reasons and claims, between secondary reasons and core reasons, and between secondary reasons advanced in support of core reasons and secondary reasons advanced in support of other secondary reasons. We have found that for any given chain, each connection must be of the same type: if there is a single lowest connector of type A, the second-to-lowest connector and all higher ones for that chain must also be A; if there is a compound chain with two lowest connectors, one of type A and the other of type H, the second-to-lowest connector must be either A or H and, whichever it is, all higher connectors must be the same, i.e., all A or all H. Violation of

this criterion is indicative of either a missing reason (see below) or a miscoded one.<sup>23</sup> We have found, in particular, that knotty issues of directionality (for a posited chain involving reasons A and B, does A support B or vice-versa?) can be resolved using the homogeneous connector criterion. For example, the West German EDC debate of 1952 contains considerable invective directed by Christian Democrats at the Communists and vice-versa. One frequently finds pairs of reasons characterizing 1) the actions of the other side and 2) the personal qualities of its speakers. Using the homogeneous connector criterion, we can decide if the chain should go from claim to reason 1 to reason 2 (if the connector is type O, i.e., about the opponent) or from claim to reason 2 to reason 1 (if the connector is type L, i.e., about the definition of the policy). The criterion can also be used to evaluate reasoning "algebra," for example, if one has chains 1-2 and 2-3, one can merge them into 1-2-3 if each chain has the same connectors.

iii. Filtering. In order to avoid overemphasizing particular reasons and to capture the main points of a speech, after the reasoning chains are coded, researchers make a final pass and classify as nonretained all reasons that are only used once in that speech.<sup>24</sup> If a reason is nonretained, then the chain in which it may be included will also be nonretained. The result is a datum for each speech consisting, first, of a claim, second, of a filtered set of chains and of isolated reasons, and third, of nonretained chains and isolated reasons.

iv. Example. To get an idea of how this procedure works in practice, consider an example. Partway through the UK conscription debate (1 April 1947), a Conservative MP, Oliver Stanley, spoke. Appendix 3 presents his speech, complete with interruptions. Pre-processing of the speech led to elimination of interruptions and of numerous details, as can be seen in the paraphrase (interspersed with italicized summaries) in Appendix 4. The summaries further reduced the amount of detail, while adding (signaled by square brackets) a number of points that seemed to be made,

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<sup>23</sup> To be clear, we are not saying that reasons have to be linked into chains by strict logical consistency but simply that the form of reasoning in a chain is locally homogeneous: speakers may and often do contradict themselves, but if a particular bit of reasoning is heterogeneous, it is not usually grasped by listeners as a single argument.

<sup>24</sup> We distinguish between retained and nonretained reasons and chains as a way of capturing the main point of each paragraph, but because it is possible for multiple speakers to put forward the same reason and for at least one of those speakers to put it forward only once (and thus to have some degree of overlap in reasoning), we enter nonretained reasons and nonretained chains in the database along with retained ones.

though not explicitly, in the paragraphs (see, for example, paragraphs 4, 10, and 14). Note that when the summarizing was complete, what had begun as a 7-page transcript of a 35-minute speech was reduced to just over a page of summary.

The summary was then coded for reasons and reasoning chains. This is shown in Appendix 5, with each summarized paragraph being followed by reasons (numbered by their order in the master list) and reasoning chains. It will be noted that some reasons were isolated because we could not see any links between them and other reasons. Some reasons are in square brackets because they are implied, though not stated explicitly, or because they have been interpolated from another part of the speech. Still other reasons, and all chains including them, are lined through because they did not pass the “used more than once” filtering test. Finally, some paragraphs are marked N/A because they do not contain any reasons relevant to the claim. In the end, Stanley’s speech is coded as using two nonretained isolated reasons, four nonretained chains, three retained isolated reasons, and (drumroll) a single reasoning chain (used twice): the bill should be supported because opponents (Liberals and left-wing Labour Party MPs) are playing politics; and they are playing politics because, contrary to their claims, conscription is not a fundamentally Conservative Party idea.

#### 5. Computing consensus: determining agreement between arguments

Once speeches have been coded as arguments, we can compare arguments to see just how much agreement there is between them and in that way ascertain whether, over time, a particular country displays a growth in the extent of agreement for national security debates. Our proposal is to aggregate over agreement in pairs of speeches, both on opposing sides of a debate and on the same side. Both types of agreement are important as a way of measuring consensus: if those in favor of a legislative proposal agree to some degree with those against, they are closer to consensus than if there is no agreement in their justifications. But by the same token, if those on the same side

of a legislative proposal advance widely different arguments, it is hard to say that their world view is really the same. Thus, we need a method for capturing both types of agreement.

For any two speeches, there are several levels of agreement. The lowest is when the justifications of each speech contain nothing in common: no shared chains and no shared reasons, whether the latter are part of chains or isolated. At the other end of the scale, the highest level of agreement is when, for both retained and nonretained reasons and chains, the chains of the first speech's justification are the same as the chains of the second and the isolated reasons of the first the same as those of the second. Between these two extremes, we can rank agreement as follows: low agreement (1): one or more *nonretained* isolated reasons or chains in the first justification are the same as one or more *nonretained* isolated reasons or chains in the second; moderate agreement (2): one or more *nonretained* isolated reasons or chains in the first (second) justification are the same as one or more *retained* isolated reasons or chains in the second (first) justification; high agreement (3): one or more *retained* isolated reasons or chains in the first justification are the same as one or more *retained* isolated reasons or chains in the second justification.

To determine whether two isolated reasons are the same is straightforward, as is determining whether an isolated reason in one justification is part of a chain in another justification. However, to assess the similarity of chains is more complicated. Our current approach is to borrow from sequence analytical methods in sociology and count the number of "edits" that are required to turn one chain into another (e.g., Abbott 1990). Adding a reason is an edit; so too is deleting a reason; and so too is moving a reason from one place in the chain (say primary) to another place (say secondary). We then scale the number of edits, with low numbers showing high similarity and vice-versa.

For any two justifications, we do a series of pairwise matches for every element (isolated reasons or chains) in each justification; this gives either a 0 or a 1 for each pair involving an isolated reason, and a 0, 1, or 2 for each pair involving two chains. Pairwise matches are weighted 1 if the match in question is low, as per the ranking scheme two paragraphs above; 2 if the match in

question is moderate; 3 if the match in question is high. (If two speeches had precisely the same justifications, element for element, then we would weight them as 4; we do not expect this ever to be the case.) We then add the weighted matches together to come up with an agreement score for a pair of speeches and normalize that score by dividing it by the maximum possible score for that number of justifications. Two mean agreement scores are then calculated: one for across-side pairs of speeches and one for within-side pairs.<sup>25</sup> We do this for each debate on national security and on non-national security-related foreign policy, and calculate the two scores over time, for each country, to see if agreement grows on national security debates but not on the other category of debates.

Unfortunately, the coded speeches have just started to be entered in machine-readable form, so we do not as yet have any scores to report. However, it is already clear that the first time period (the early cold war) not only, as touched on above, shows little agreement between the two sides in each of the countries for which we have coded debates (the debate in Germany seems to have a bit more agreement—mostly coming from the SPD—than the debates in the other countries), but also shows significant splits within each side (e.g., the SPD vs. the KPD in Germany; the Conservatives vs. the pro-government portion of Labour in the UK). We will see if systematic analysis bears out these preliminary impressions and if there is indeed a growth in elite consensus on national security.

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<sup>25</sup> Note that, unlike within-side pairs, across-side pairs will almost surely not contain common chains. We do expect that isolated reasons for one side may be found in the other side, but at least one of the sides will be putting them forward only with an E connector.

## Appendix 1

### Statements on waterboarding

#### 1. Cheney (2008)

“The military has interrogated terrorists held at Guantanamo Bay. And in addition, a small number of terrorists, high-value targets, held overseas have gone through an interrogation program run by the CIA. It’s a tougher program, for tougher customers. These include Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of 9/11. He and others were questioned at a time when another attack on this country was believed to be imminent. It’s a good thing we had them in custody, and it’s a good thing we found out what they knew.

“The procedures of the CIA program are designed to be safe, and they are in full compliance with the nation’s laws and treaty obligations. They’ve been carefully reviewed by the Department of Justice, and very carefully monitored. The program is run by highly trained professionals who understand their obligations under the law. And the program has uncovered a wealth of information that has foiled attacks against the United States; information that has saved thousands of lives.

“The United States is a country that takes human rights seriously. We do not torture—it’s against our laws and against our values. We’re proud of our country and what it stands for. We expect all of those who serve America to conduct themselves with honor. And we enforce those rules. Some years ago, when abuses were committed at Abu Ghraib prison, a facility that had nothing to do with the CIA program, the abuses that came to light were, in fact, investigated, and those responsible were prosecuted. ...”

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/cheney-defends-us-use-of-waterboarding/>

#### 2. Bush (2010)

“CIA experts drew up a list of interrogation techniques. ... At my direction, Department of Justice and CIA lawyers conducted a careful legal review. The enhanced interrogation program complied with the Constitution and all applicable laws, including those that ban torture.

“There were two that I felt went too far, even if they were legal. I directed the CIA not to use them. Another technique was waterboarding, a process of simulated drowning. No doubt the procedure was tough, but medical experts assured the CIA that it did no lasting harm.”

Though Bush confirms that he knew the use of waterboarding would one day become public, and acknowledges that it is “sensitive and controversial,” he asserts that “the choice between security and values was real,” and expresses firm confidence in his decision. “Had I not authorized waterboarding on senior al Qaeda leaders, I would have had to accept a greater risk that the country would be attacked. In the wake of 9/11, that was a risk I was unwilling to take,” he writes.

Bush further declares that the new techniques proved effective, yielding information on al Qaeda’s structure and operations, and leading to the capture of Ramzi bin al Shibh, the logistical planner of the 9/11 attacks who was captured on the first anniversary of 9/11.

And if there were any lingering doubts or conflict about the use of waterboarding, Bush discloses that he received reassurance from an unlikely source: terror suspect Abu Zubaydah.

The former president writes, “His understanding of Islam was that he had to resist interrogation

only up to a certain point. Waterboarding was the technique that allowed him to reach that threshold, fulfill his religious duty, and then cooperate.” Bush elaborates that Zubaydah gave him a direct instruction, ““You must do this for all the brothers.””

Intelligence gleaned from interrogations of Abu Zubaydah and other suspects led to the capture of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Bush writes. During a raid on Mohammed’s compound, agents discovered more plans for terrorist attacks on U.S. soil.

Prompted by the discoveries, Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet asked if he had permission to use enhanced interrogation techniques including waterboarding on Mohammed.

Bush exposes his inner thoughts on what led him to reach this decision: “I thought about my meeting with Danny Pearl’s widow, who was pregnant with his son when he was murdered. I thought about the 2,971 people stolen from their families by al Qaeda on 9/11. And I thought about my duty to protect my country from another act of terror.

‘Damn right,’ I said.”

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/POLITICS/11/05/bush.book/>

### 3. McCain (2016)

“Given the loose talk on the campaign trail about reviving waterboarding and other inhumane interrogation techniques, it is important to remember the facts: that these forms of torture not only failed their purpose to secure actionable intelligence to prevent further attacks on the U.S. and our allies, but compromised our values, stained our national honor, and did little practical good. It is also important to remember that our nation has tried, convicted, and executed foreign combatants who employed methods of torture, including waterboarding, against American prisoners of war. As I have said before, our nation should never have employed such practices in the past, and we should never permit them in the future.

“There is broad, bipartisan agreement on this fundamental question. Last year, the United States Senate passed in an overwhelming vote of 91–3 the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, legislation that took a historic step forward to ban torture once and for all by limiting U.S. Government interrogation techniques to those in the Army Field Manual. The Manual embodies the values Americans have embraced for generations—preserving the ability of our interrogators to extract critical intelligence from our adversaries while recognizing that torture and cruel treatment are ineffective interrogation methods. Some of the nation’s most respected leaders from the U.S. military, CIA, FBI, as well as faith communities and human rights organizations, have expressed their support for this legislation.

“As Americans of conscience we must remember that in the war on terrorism, we are fighting not only to defend our security, but for an idea that all men are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights. How much safer the world would be if all nations believed the same. How much more dangerous it can become when we forget it ourselves even momentarily, as we learned in the aftermath of Abu Ghraib. Our nation needs a Commander-in-Chief who will make clear to those that fight on our behalf that they are defending this sacred ideal, and that sacrificing our respect for human dignity will make it harder, not easier, to prevail in this war.”

<http://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=6044CE90-20F1-4823-A126-C03D5F770565>

#### 4. Clinton (2014)

“Today we can say again in a loud and clear voice, the United States should never condone or practice torture anywhere in the world,” Clinton said.

The former secretary of state, accepting an award from the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights, acknowledged that Americans are frustrated by the country’s “division and polarization” that often seems to block progress.

“That should be absolutely clear as a matter of both policy and law, including our international treaty obligations, and if that requires new legislation, then Congress should work with President Obama to quickly enact it and it shouldn’t be an issue of partisan politics,” Clinton said of eliminating the use of torture techniques.

“America is at our best when our actions match our values,” she said.

Clinton said she was “proud” to be part of the Obama administration noting brutal interrogation tactics such as waterboarding were banned with a 2009 executive order.

“Yes, the threat of terrorism is real and urgent, scores of children were just murdered in Pakistan, beheadings in the Middle East, a siege in Sydney, these tragedies not only break hearts but should steel our resolve and underscore that our values are what set us apart from our adversaries,” Clinton said.

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/hillary-clinton-speaks-us-torture/story?id=27654296>

#### 5. Trump (2015)

“Would I approve waterboarding? You bet your ass I would—in a heartbeat,” Trump said to loud cheers during a rally at a convention center here Monday night that attracted thousands. “And I would approve more than that. Don’t kid yourself, folks. It works, okay? It works. Only a stupid person would say it doesn’t work.”

Trump said such techniques are needed to confront terrorists who “chop off our young people’s heads” and “build these iron cages, and they’ll put 20 people in them and they drop them in the ocean for 15 minutes and pull them up 15 minutes later.”

“It works,” Trump said over and over again. “Believe me, it works. And you know what? If it doesn’t work, they deserve it anyway, for what they’re doing. It works.”

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/11/23/donald-trump-on-waterboarding-if-it-doesnt-work-they-deserve-it-anyway/>

**Appendix 2**

## Reasoning chains for waterboarding

Claim: Blanket prohibition on waterboarding

Reasons

- 01 Waterboarding is good
- 02 Prisoners talk
- 03 Waterboarding is not torture
- 04 Waterboarding is safe
- 05 Prisoners deserve to be waterboarded
- 06 Waterboarding is torture
- 07 Waterboarding is bad
- 08 Prisoners lie
- 09 Waterboarding stains our reputation
- 10 Waterboarding is contrary to our values
- 11 US should never condone waterboarding
- 12 US follows international law

Reasoning chains

Cheney

O-1-2

O-3-4

Bush

O-1-2

O-3-4

McCain

S-7-8

S-9-10

Clinton

S-11-12

S-9-10

Trump

O-1-2

O-5-6

### Appendix 3

#### Speech in a debate

**Oliver Stanley (Bristol, West)** The House has listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. Member for West Leeds (Mr. Stamford) who has explained to us with great clarity the reasons why he is unable to take a stand either for or against the Bill. I think that probably most people in this House approach the decision to be taken tonight, with a certain amount of difficulty and hesitation. I exempt from that, of course, the right hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. C. Davies) and his followers. He has told us that the whole of his band in this House are united in the stand they are taking, and definite in their views. If he has had no difficulty among the Liberal Party in the House of Commons, he cannot say there is the same unity of belief in the Liberal Party throughout the country. If he were to say that, he would show that he had not done, what every good Liberal ought to do every morning, and that is to read the "News Chronicle." If he had read the "News Chronicle" this morning, he would have noticed a leader which stated that: "It is apparent, for instance, that within the Liberal Party all do not think alike on this issue. Parliamentary Liberals are to oppose outright the Government's Conscription Bill. Yet the recent draft statement of Liberal policy, which is to be submitted to the Party Assembly, while regarding conscription as undesirable as a permanent institution goes on to say that, 'the existing situation clearly makes a continuation of the war-time Measure obligatory.'" We, no doubt, on our side of the House, could, if we liked, have also made our decision an easy one. I noticed that my Sunday paper, last Sunday, was full of the events of what was described as the biggest sporting day of the year. The semifinals of the Cup, the Grand National, the Boat Race, and a speech by the Attorney-General. This speech was full of bitter complaint against the Tory Party. [Interruption.] Hon. Members opposite, surely, have learned by now never to applaud any statement by the Attorney-General, without waiting, not only for the end of the speech, but for the apology that comes after it. He accuses us of putting party advantage before national interest, and of being prepared to exploit the country's difficulties in order to inconvenience the Socialist Government. It is fair to say that he did not only deal in generalities. He cited a grave charge in support of his views. He said that we have encouraged people to grumble against the blessings which that benevolent bunch on the Front Bench opposite are continually bestowing upon us. If that were true, it would be a grave charge, but, of course, like most of the Attorney-General's charges, it is untrue.

If it were true and if, in fact, we thought nothing but of our party advantage and if we were prepared to subordinate the national interests to them, what a glorious opportunity we should be having this evening. If we chose to oppose this Bill tonight we should not be causing the party opposite only some petty annoyance. We should be inflicting upon it a first-class Parliamentary defeat, and as I speak from this Box we would be looking on many of the faces opposite for the last time—an aesthetic loss but one that could be fully compensated for by the political advantages. No doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer as he goes into the Lobby tonight will do so with a song in his heart, and as he looks on his followers so soon to be reduced the song may well prove to be, "Will ye no' come back again?" But what the Attorney-General said about this party on Saturday is going to be proved wrong on Tuesday. That is unusually quick, even to disprove a statement by the Attorney-General, and I hope, therefore, that tonight when he and I go through the same Lobby—because we shall be tonight what I think is technically called "fellow travelers"—he will favour us with one of those felicitous apologies for which, if for nothing else, he has during the last year gained such reputation.

We are going to take on this occasion what is, politically at any rate, the hard course. We are

going to divide on this Bill as we think it to be in the national interest and not to our party advantage, and we or at any rate the great majority of us intend to support the Bill. It is not a very pleasant decision for anyone to have to take. There cannot be anybody in any party on any side of the House who likes conscription in peacetime or the consequences that it entails. At the best, it is as was described by an hon. Member opposite in the Debate yesterday a reluctant necessity.

I was very interested yesterday in the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Dudley (Colonel Wigg). I listened to the whole of it, I read it again this morning and I hope I am not doing the hon. Member an injustice if I say he spoke in favour of the Bill, but curiously enough most of his speech was devoted to a condemnation of my hon. Friends on this side of the House for supporting the Bill, and what remained was a condemnation of the Liberal Party for opposing it. The hon. and gallant Member's chief reason against us was he said that we had been in favour of conscription for 40 years. Even if he is right, I do not see why that would make it wrong for us to vote in favour of it tonight. There is nothing fundamentally wrong in sticking to an opinion for a long time. However, the hon. and gallant Member has only been in the House a short time and he may have been misled by his experiences. I can assure him that only recently has it been considered shameful to maintain after the Election the same themes as one propounded before it. There are many earlier and most respectable precedents in favour of saying the same thing, both before and after appealing to the electors.

As a matter of fact, the hon. and gallant Member was wrong. Conscription has not been a part of the Conservative policy for 40 years. It has never figured in our programme. With regard to the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Montgomery that if it was not in our programme or speeches or policy it was in our heart of hearts, I would reply: Is not that rather a dangerous argument to put forward? It is, of course, an easy line to take. If one's opponent does not say things to prove one's case it is open to one to say that a certain view is still held by him in his heart of hearts. It is, of course, an argument that several people can use. It would be quite possible, although I would not dream of saying so, to say that "in their heart of hearts" the Liberal Party really believe that conscription is necessary. I should have just as much evidence to give in support of that, as there is in support of the charge which the right hon. and learned Gentleman has brought against us. But it has not been our programme for 40 years. It is not something which we have looked forward to, something we have worked for, or something that we welcome.

We recognise just as well as anybody in this House the hardship and the losses which a policy of this kind is bound to entail. We see the results upon the individual, and we see the results upon the economy of the State. We wish that we could go back to the days in which the Liberal Party was triumphant—and in which to a large extent they still live—when it was unnecessary to bring forward a Measure of this kind. I certainly do not think that a period of service in the Armed Forces is something that is bound to do irreparable harm to a young man who has to undergo it. I think it is an experience from which, as all Members of the House who served in the Armed Forces would agree, a great amount of good can be drawn by an individual. But it would be equally foolish to argue that there is some full educational recompense to counterbalance the disadvantages to the individual in the Service. Therefore, if we support this Bill tonight it is for no love of the Measure itself. It is because we fully admit that though grave difficulties, loss and injuries will be brought about by it, there are still graver consequences on the other side.

During this Debate the opposition to this Measure has been fully expressed. Hon. Members

have supported it from many different angles, but in the end all roads seem to lead to the "No" Lobby. I am not going to deal with some of the more exotic criticisms of this Measure. An hon. Lady who spoke yesterday objected to the Bill because it did not extend to women. She said that it was placing women, most unfairly, amongst the unprivileged. I am sympathetic with feminism, but I really think there is a point when feminism, merges into folly. But there have been certain broad principles of objection to this Bill on which I wish to say a few words. In the first place, there are those who are genuine objectors to compulsory military service on conscientious grounds. They have opposed conscription in peace and war. They have opposed conscription, whether it has been brought in by a Tory Government or a Labour Government; they have opposed it whether their position was popular or unpopular; and they have been prepared, in some cases, to pay heavily, politically speaking, for their opposition. For those people, I and I think everyone in the House has very sincere respect even if we cannot agree with their judgment. To them, I only say this that to my mind the only reason why they are still able to urge in this House views of that kind is because on two occasions the majority of the people of this country have taken a different view.

I understand their point of view, but I cannot understand those people who, while prepared to admit that compulsory service may be morally right in wartime, are also prepared to insist that it is morally wrong in peace. I can see the difference between conscription in peace and conscription in war. I can see the difference in the weight of the argument and I can see the argument that the burden is far more onerous in peace while the reasons for it are less obvious and that the alternative course appears more promising and more possible. But I cannot see the difference between the two on the question of ethics. I cannot see that it is right to do it, as long as it may be too late and wrong to do it if it is done in time to avert danger or disaster.

There was another group who did not object to conscription in itself, but as we were told objected to conscription in support of a foreign policy with which they did not agree. The most prominent exponent of that particular theory was the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. Zilliagus). I noticed one hon. Member opposite in a speech yesterday tried to dissuade the hon. Member from his course by the threat that, if and when the hon. Member for Gateshead became Foreign Secretary, he might be reminded of the attitude he was now taking. That was ineffective, largely, I think, because the hon. Member for Gateshead realises that under any Government of which he is likely to be a member, the opportunities for reminding Ministers of previous inconvenient statements will be limited and the results will be discouraging—painfully so. I regard the doctrine advanced by the hon. Member as a most dangerous doctrine. If you are to oppose conscription because you disagree with the foreign policy of the Government, why stop there? Why not oppose all armed forces of any kind? Indeed, such a policy would be much more logical and it would be no more dangerous, because to my mind there is only one thing worse than a bad foreign policy which is strongly supported and that is a bad foreign policy which is weakly supported. The first may possibly lead to war; the second will lead inevitably to defeat. I will say no more upon that particular branch of the objectors because it has been dealt with very effectively by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Coventry (Mr. Crossman). His reproof must have been felt far more strongly by the hon. Member for Gateshead and his friends than anything I could say. He and the hon. Member for East Coventry were, so recently, in close juxtaposition, both politically and, indeed, in those days, physically. Both literally and figuratively it appears to us, looking from this side of the House, that during the last few months the hon. Member for East Coventry has made a considerable movement to the Right.

Now I come to that third class of opponents of this Bill who I think have been much the most

formidable in this Debate, and for whom I myself have most sympathy. They are the people who, however much they may dislike a measure of conscription, are prepared to accept it, if they are convinced that it is necessary and practicable, and if they are shown, as they are entitled to be shown, that the objects for which this Measure is asked are reasonable, and that this is the only practicable way of obtaining the numbers that are required. That group—which, I think, includes most of us in this House—want and are entitled to have an answer to certain very important questions. We are entitled to know in some detail what are the strategic requirements of this country during the period to be covered by this Bill. We are entitled to know how those requirements are affected in terms of manpower, weapons and tactics by the latest developments in the science of war. We are entitled to know whether all other means of meeting these necessities has been fully exploited, and whether conscription will give us not only the numbers that are required but the type and composition of the forces that are necessary.

Those are formidable questions, and in a Debate of this kind they deserve a detailed answer. It is our complaint that the Debate has been so arranged that no attempt has been made or will be made to answer those questions until the eleventh hour tonight. This Debate was opened by the Minister of Labour. He gave an admirable exposition of the contents of this Bill. By the way, I disagree with an hon. Friend of mine who charged the Minister of Labour with reading. On several occasions I noticed him lifting his head and taking his eyes off the script, and I must warn him that if he goes on like that, he will run a very great risk of being regarded as a “scab” by his more conventional colleagues.

I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will not pretend that he attempted during his speech to deal with the kind of questions to which I have been referring, and which, incidentally, have entered into nine-tenths of all the speeches delivered up to now. His contribution was clearly one that had to be made, and he explained with great clarity important points in the Bill. He dealt with the position of conscientious objectors, claims for reinstatement, and the machinery for postponement, but it is not on questions of that kind that support of or opposition to the Second reading of this Bill will be built. By and large, I think most people, if they were convinced of the necessity of the Measure at all, are prepared to accept a Bill of this kind, and what the House really needs is some authoritative statement upon the real questions which are agitating it. So far the only contribution we have had on questions of higher strategic importance has been a discussion between the hon. Member for Aston (Mr. Wyatt) and Captain Liddell Hart, appearing by kind permission of the hon. Member for Rushcliffe (Mrs. Paton). It was a plucky bout, in which the hon. Member for Aston fought himself to a standstill, but it is no substitute for the kind of argument to which this House is entitled.

I wish the Minister of Defence had found it possible to open the Debate. Not so long ago, I heard him speaking on the subject of finance. I thought then that he had better stick to defence. I regret that through illness I was unable to listen to the speech he made last week on defence, but I read it all through and I began to think that I was wrong. But at any rate the right hon. Gentleman could have given us some lead. He could have obtained from the same organisation that on the other occasion, supplied him with his roneoed impromptus about the Tory Party some considered judgment on the military future. To this side, at any rate, it would have been comparatively new. I realise that he has been making the same speech at gatherings on many occasions, but he must remember that though the reports of those gatherings are as accurate as and much more prompt than the OFFICIAL REPORT, they are not nearly so detailed, and much of what he had to say would have been of novelty and interest to us.

But even if the Minister of Defence was unable to open the Debate—if he feels that, like modern generals, he must lead his troops from the rear—would it not have been possible for one of the Defence Ministers, at any rate, to have taken part earlier? They have from time to time been in the House—at any rate we have seen enough of them to convince us that they are at least in London. Yet not one of those whom, I am afraid, the irreverent describe as “Alexander’s Ragtime Band”, has spoken. There is one point upon which the Secretary of State for Air could have spoken with great authority. A great deal of genuine apprehension has been expressed in the House as to the compatibility of this Measure with our obligations and objects under the United Nations organisation. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for Air is a great expert on world organisation. He was an expert on the League of Nations, and he is already a great expert on the United Nations; and it would have been an authoritative pronouncement coming from him had he been able to indicate that support of this Bill was in no way inconsistent with support of the United Nations.

We might have had the Secretary of State for War—a more recent convert to the doctrine of conscription. As such, an account of his process of conversion would have been acceptable to the House. He could have told us—and it would have had a very great effect upon us all—what hard facts and what inescapable arguments changed the Bourbon of Blackpool into the Moltke of Whitehall.

[The Secretary of State for War \(Mr. Bellenger\)](#) The right hon. Gentleman has made that allegation against me before. I do not know whether he has an official copy of what I said at Blackpool, but if he has, and will do me the honour of reading it, he will find that I have been most consistent in this matter. Indeed, I said at Blackpool that a new National Service Act would be necessary after the war, and the Foreign Secretary referred to that in his reply at Blackpool.

[Mr. Stanley](#) I must accept the right hon. Gentleman’s statement and apologise to the House that I have been misled by what I believed to be a perfect extract from the speech he made. As soon as I get back I will look up the whole speech. This extract reads as follows: “Are we going to have a continuation of compulsory military conscription? I say that if that is the policy the Labour Party, and especially the trade unions, will never tolerate it. It will result in the lowering of wage standards and labour conditions in industry.”

[Mr. Bellenger](#) Perhaps the right hon Gentleman will allow me to give a somewhat fuller extract? This is what I said: “Are we going to have a continuation of compulsory military conscription? I hope that Mr. Bevin will give an indication of our long term policy on this issue. Although we recognise that the short term policy will necessitate some continuation of national service for a limited period”—” for which this Bill provides—

[Mr. James Hudson \(Ealing, West\)](#) No.

[Mr. Bellenger](#) The quotation continues: “—”are we going to have compulsion in our national affairs ostensibly to achieve a national aim?”

[Mr. Stanley](#) I am perfectly prepared to leave that explanation to the House. I certainly thought that the temporary extension was the extension that the Government already had, and prolonging it for the period of this Bill did certainly appear to me to be some change of policy. Apparently, however, I am wrong and this is exactly the policy which was put to the Conference at Blackpool and accepted by the Labour Party. I, therefore, apologise unreservedly to the right hon. Gentleman.

I want to put to the right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Defence certain specific questions, in the hope that he will answer them when he winds up the Debate. The first is in regard to the strategic commitments of this country, and the requirements in personnel which will be necessary to carry them out. In ordinary circumstances, I should have had little doubt that the numbers asked for and the numbers procured by this Measure will be fully justified by the obvious commitments. But there is a doubt which, I think, is in the minds of many hon. Members, and that is about the effect of new weapons upon all that the ordinary man thinks and knows about strategic requirements and the necessities of defence. We are told, in many quarters, that the Services which we have long considered essential are now as inadequate and as useless as the archers, pikemen and charioteers of the past. That is a point on which we are surely entitled to some more definite pronouncement by the Government. My belief is that the effect of new weapons is not to abolish all the old methods and requirements of defence. I remember being told in the old days, before the last war, that the advent of air power had made the Army useless, and that the advent of armoured fighting vehicles had made infantry superfluous. Neither of these statements proved to be correct. I still think that it does not mean the abolition of all their functions, although it does mean their roles are altered and their emphasis changed.

That, surely, is something which Members cannot be asked to decide themselves on the very scanty information which they can obtain. It should be a subject on which the Government are prepared to give the frankest and fullest information. We see, of course, the necessity for some restraint in this matter, but there is a danger of too great an insistence on secrecy, which leaves an impression, not that there is a plan which must not be disclosed, but that all the secrecy conceals is a failure to think out the implications of the new weapons.

I agree with many hon. Members on the other side who have given reasons why they believe it is possible, if we accept these numbers, to attain them by voluntary means. We are told, "Increase the attractions," but those who put forward this policy have never told us to what extent we have to increase them before they have the result we desire. To expect any services, in the order of the magnitude contemplated under the Government's policy to be attained by voluntary recruitment, is wishful thinking. We are very concerned, granted that this policy of conscription will give the numbers that are required, whether it will give us exactly what we want for defence. Mere numbers do not, in themselves, constitute a satisfactory defence.

The main object, I take it, of this conscription policy is to provide us in the future with adequate reserves. I was at the War Office in the early days of the war, and without any running down of an admirable Service which performed great work, I agree with those who say that under conditions of modern warfare and the difficulty of its technique, the prewar Territorial training is not sufficient and cannot be sufficient to provide fully trained reserves at the outbreak of war. I am not saying it may not be possible in certain directions, but speaking generally, of the Territorial Army as a whole, the amount of time men could afford to take from their ordinary civilian occupations, did not give them a real chance to learn the intricacies of the modern technique. For that reason, I agree that something has to be found to supplement the prewar Territorial Army system.

**Wing-Commander Millington** Would the right hon. Gentleman say, from his experience, that the conduct of the Territorial soldier in France at the beginning of the war was as good as, or better, or worse than the conduct of the militia, which, I believe, behaved badly?

**Mr. Stanley** I would not for one moment start to draw comparisons about anyone's behaviour. In any case, it is quite irrelevant, because the militia was started two months before the beginning of the war, and no one considered it was possible by the time the war came, that they could be trained. What I am discussing is whether a force which has been in

existence for many years, the members of which have given themselves wholeheartedly to their training, could, in fact, have been fully trained, or could have been capable of acting as a fully trained force when the war started. As I say, some new system has to be found to supplement the Territorial system. The advantage of the system put forward is obvious. If a man has had a year and a half of continuous training, then the ordinary Territorial training imposed on that, will keep him up to date, and will make him a fully trained reserve. But that depends on one thing. It depends on the basic training of one and a half years and the subsequent training in the Territorial reserve being in the same arm of the Service. Can we be assured that that is going to happen? Take the case of anti-aircraft defence, on which great importance is placed. Are the people in the reserve as anti-aircraft gunners, who are expected to play an important role on the immediate outbreak of war, the same people who have spent one and a half years of their training in the Army in anti-aircraft gunnery? Unless they are, it is clear that this proposal has little if any advantage over the old Territorial system.

Finally, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to give us the assurance which has been asked for from all sides, that proper use is now being made of the manpower the Services already have. Unless we are certain of that, we are reluctant to give them more in the future. There cannot be any Member of this House who has not heard, in his constituency or elsewhere, stories which seem to point to a considerable waste of time among those now included in the Services. Rightly or wrongly, these stories have raised general disquiet, and I suggest that that disquiet must be allayed. My right hon. Friend the Member for Woodford (Mr. Churchill), speaking yesterday, suggested one way. He suggested the possibility of some kind of Parliamentary committee. What does the right hon. Gentleman think about that? If, for some reason or other, he thinks that that is not a course which he can accept, what alternative has he to offer, because I am certain that this widespread disquiet has got to be allayed? During the Committee stage we shall, of course, deal with many details in the Bill—the choice of Services which will be open to the men called up, whether the conscientious objector gets an advantage over the man who is called up, and so on. We shall want to know whether it may not be necessary to have some tapering-off at the end, just as there is a tapering-off of the pre-Bill conscription in order to get fairness all round. Finally, we shall want to know what opportunities will be given during the one and a half years' service for men to qualify for commissions subsequently in the Reserve. These, and other similar questions, have been put by hon. Members on all sides of the House during the whole of this Debate, and we are, I think, entitled to expect answers to them tonight. Perhaps "expect" is the wrong word, because it indicates a certain amount of confidence, but at all events we hope to get answers tonight.

I think we are entitled to have the information. We are prepared to support this Bill, but we feel that we ought to have the full material upon which the Government which have proposed it have come to their conclusions. These matters are so important that they ought not to be decided merely on Ministerial command, or indeed on personal investigation by private Members. We ought to have the fullest information on which to make up our minds, and I therefore hope that the Minister of Defence this evening will break his usual policy of wordy silence, and give us the whole of the facts, so that we may go into the Lobby tonight not only believing, but knowing, that we are right.

## Appendix 4

### Paraphrasing and summarizing

39 Mr. Oliver Stanley (Conservative; pro; 35)

1 The house listened with great interest to Stamford's speech, who explained clearly why he can't stand either against or for this bill. I think most people approach this decision with difficulty and hesitation. Except for Mr. Davies and his followers. He has said they are united and definite in their views. If he had no difficulty among the Liberals in the House, he can't say there's such unity among Liberals through the country. If he said that, he would show he hadn't read the "News Chronicle." If he had read it today, he'd have seen the headline that said not all Liberals think alike on this issue. We conservatives could have also made our decision an easy one. I noticed last Sunday's paper was full of major sporting events and a speech by the Attorney General. This speech was full of bitter complaints against the Tories. Those opposite must have learned never to applaud a speech for the AG without waiting for the apology that will follow it. He accused us of putting the party's interests before the nation's and of exploiting the country's difficulties to inconvenience the Socialist government. He dealt in more than generalities. He cited a grave charge to support his views. He said we have encouraged the people to grumble against the blessings which the benevolent Socialists have bestowed upon us. If that were true, it would be very grave, but like most of the things the AG says, it's not.

*No political party in this country is fully unified in its position on this difficult bill [and Labour and the Liberals are misrepresenting how difficult this is by claiming each party is totally unified against conscription]. [The Tory Party is not the evil boogeyman Labour's Attorney General claims it is].*

2 If we were to think only of our party's interest, what an amazing opportunity tonight would be for us. If we chose to oppose this bill we wouldn't simply be causing some petty annoyance to the party opposite. It would be a "first-class parliamentary defeat," and I'd be seeing a lot of my colleagues in this House for the last time. No doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer will go to the Lobby tonight with a song in his heart, but as he looks at his followers who will soon be no more, the song might be "will you not come back again?" What the AG has said about us is going to be proven wrong on Tuesday. That is very quick to disprove a statement by the AG, and I hope when I see him tonight at the Lobby, he will favour us with a felicitous apology, which he has become so known for.

*If the Conservative Party was going to act only in its interest, it would happily vote down this bill.*

3 We're going to take, politically, the hard course tonight. We will divide on this bill because we think it's in the country's interest, and most of us will support it. This isn't a pleasant decision for anyone. No one from any party can like conscription in peacetime or its consequences. At best, it has been described by a Labour MP as a reluctant necessity.

*As Conservatives, we're not taking the easy political road: we'll vote on this issue and most will support conscription because we believe it's in the country's interest.*

4 I was very interested in Mr. Wigg's speech. I listened to it and then read it, and though he supported the bill, most of his speech was a condemnation of Conservatives for supporting it and Liberals for opposing it. His primary complaint was that he says we've favored conscription for 40 years. Even if that's right, I don't see why that makes it wrong for us to vote for it. There's nothing wrong with sticking to an opinion. But Mr. Wigg has only been here for a short time and he may have been misled by his experiences. It has only recently been shameful to maintain one's pre-election positions post-election. There are many respectable precedents of doing the same thing pre- and post-election.

*The Conservative Party has not supported conscription for 40 years, and those who claim this are painting a biased picture. [There's nothing wrong with sticking to your principles, unlike some Labour MPs, like Mr. Wigg].*

5 As a matter of fact, Mr. Wigg was wrong. Conscription has not been a Conservative policy for 40 years and it has never figured in our program. Regarding the argument made by the Member for Montgomery that if it wasn't in our policies it was in our hearts, I'd say that was a dangerous argument. It's easy to make. If your opponent doesn't say what you want, you can always say he believes it in his heart of hearts. Several people can use this argument. Even though I'd never dream of doing this, it's possible to say the Liberal Party really believes conscription is necessary. I have just as much evidence for that as what Mr. Wigg charged us with. But it hasn't been in our program for 40 years. It's not something we have looked forward to, worked for, or welcome.

*The Conservative Party has not supported conscription for 40 years, and those who claim this are trying to make us look like villains.*

6 We recognize the hardships a policy like this will entail. We see the individual impacts, and the economic ones. We wish we could return to the time when the Liberal Party reigned—a time in which they still live—when this type of measure was unnecessary. I don't think a period of military service will do irreparable harm to a young man. It's an experience from which, as anyone here who has served knows, one can greatly benefit from. It's equally foolish to argue that there is full educational recompense for individuals in the service. Thus we support this measure tonight but we don't love it. Even though this measure will have grave consequences, the consequences of not doing it are greater still.

*This policy will have individual and economic ramifications that we regret but we still need it [so I will support it]. Military service won't harm young men and might even do them some good.*

7 The opposition to this bill has been fully expressed during this debate. Support has come from many different angles, but they all seem to lead to "No". I wish to say a few words on the broad principles of objection to this bill. There are those who are genuine conscientious objectors to compulsory military service. They oppose conscription in peace and war. They oppose conscription whether instituted by a Tory or Labour government; whether their position was popular or unpopular; and they have been prepared to pay a heavy political price for their opposition. We all must respect these people, even if we don't agree. I think they can only have this view because on two occasions, the majority of people in this country have taken a different view.

*Even if we don't agree with them, we must respect those MPs who oppose conscription no matter the situation or electoral consequences; these are genuine conscientious objectors.*

8 I understand their view, but not those who think compulsory service is morally right in war but morally wrong in peace. I can see the difference between these two. I can see that the burden is far more onerous during peace and the reasons for it less obvious, and the alternative course seems more possible and promising. But I cannot see the ethical difference between the two. I can't see how it's right to do it if it's too late [to avoid war] and wrong to do it if it's done in time to avert war.

*I do not support the view that conscription is morally right in war but morally wrong in peace; there is no discernible ethical difference.*

9 Another group objects to conscription because they do not wish to support a foreign policy they disagree with. Mr. Zilliacus is the most prominent holder of this view. One member tried to dissuade him from this view by noting that if [Mr. Zilliacus] became foreign secretary, he might be reminded of his current attitude. That was a largely ineffective argument because he knows that opportunities of reminding Ministers of past inconvenient statements are limited and the results discouraging. I regard his doctrine as dangerous. If you oppose conscription because you disagree

with the government's foreign policy, why stop there? Why not oppose all armed forces? Such a policy would be more logical and no more dangerous because there's only one thing worse than a bad foreign policy and that's a bad foreign policy that's weakly supported. The first could lead to war; the second surely to defeat. I will say no more about this type of objector. Mr. Crossman criticized them enough. Mr. Zilliacus and the Member for East Coventry have recently been very politically close. It seems to us that the Member for East Coventry [Crossman] has recently moved sharply rightward.

*I also do not agree with those who refuse to support this bill because they dislike the government's foreign policy. It's dangerous to have a bad foreign policy with a weak army as this will lead to defeat in any conflict.*

10 Now I come to the third class of opponents, for whom I have much sympathy. They are prepared to accept it—even if they don't like it—if they think it's necessary, and if they are shown the reasons for it are reasonable, and that this is the only way to get the numbers required. This group, which is most of us, are entitled to answers to some important questions. We are entitled to know the strategic requirements of this country. We are entitled to know how manpower, weapons, and the latest technological advances affect those requirements. We are entitled to know whether other means to get the troops have been fully exploited, and whether conscription will give us the numbers and type of force we need.

*I do agree with those that will support this bill if they think it necessary, even if they don't like it. We are entitled to answers to some important questions that will help them decide if it's necessary [and the government hasn't been forthcoming with these answers].*

11 Those are important questions that deserve a detailed answer. We complain that this debate has been structured so we won't get these answers until the 11th hour tonight. Mr. Isaacs opened this debate and he admirably explained the bill. I disagree with my friend who said Mr. Isaacs was reading his speech. On several occasions he lifted his head, and I must warn him that if he keeps doing this, many of his conventional colleagues will view him as a "scab."

*The government has purposefully made it difficult for us to get answers to these critical questions.*

12 I'm sure Mr. Isaacs won't pretend that he dealt with these questions during his speech, and which have been asked in 9/10ths of the speeches made. His contribution had to be made, and he clearly explained some important points. He addressed conscientious objectors, claims for reinstatement, and the procedures for postponement, but our support/opposition to this bill doesn't rest on these types of questions. Most, if they're convinced by the necessity for this bill, could accept a bill like this; what is really needed is an authoritative statement on the questions which are agitating the House. Only a few people have discussed the bill's higher strategic importance. It was a plucky exchange, but no substitute for the type of argument this House is entitled to.

*The government has not provided us with the answers to the questions that are agitating this House, particularly about its strategic importance.*

13 I wish the MOD had opened the debate. Recently, I heard him speaking about finance, and thought he should stick to defense. Because I was sick, I couldn't listen to his speech last week on defense but I read it and now think I was wrong [he's not good on defense either]. He could've given us some lead. He could've gotten from the same organization a judgment on our military future. To this side, this would've been new. He's been making the same speech and though reports of these gatherings are as accurate and more prompt than the Official Record, they are not as detailed, and much of what he said would've been interesting to us.

*Again, the government has not provided us with the answers to the questions that are agitating this House.*

14 But even if the MOD couldn't open this debate—if he feels he must lead his troops from the rear—couldn't a defense minister have participated earlier? They have occasionally been in the House. Yet not one of "Alexander's Ragtime Band" has spoken. There is one point on which one, the Secretary of State for Air, could've spoken authoritatively. Much apprehension has been expressed over the compatibility of conscription with our UN obligations. This person is a great expert on the UN. He was an expert of the League too, and already on the UN; it would have been an authoritative pronouncement had he said supporting this bill wasn't inconsistent with support of the UN.

*Important Labour Ministers have ducked their responsibility to speak to us and give us important information [Labour MPs are shirking their responsibilities and not discussing critical questions, like whether this bill is contrary to our UN obligations].*

15 We might've had the Secretary of State for War, who is a recent conscription supporter. An account of his conversion process would've been acceptable to the House. He could've told us what hard facts changed his opinion [changed him from Bourbon of Blackpool to Moltke of Whitehall]. Interruption. I accept what you say and apologize to the House for being misled by a perfect extract of his speech. He basically said the Labour Party and trade unions would never accept the continuation of conscription because it lowers wages and labor conditions. Interruption. I let the House decide. I thought the government already had a temporary extension, and that prolonging it for this bill wasn't a change of policy. Apparently I'm wrong and this was the policy put forth and accepted by Labour at the Conference at Blackpool. Thus I apologize unreservedly to you.

*Some Labour MPs now support conscription but won't share with us the reasons why [the Labour Party is being cagey about the reasons we need conscription]. [Some Labour MPs are flip-floppers].*

16 I want to ask the MOD some specific questions, hoping he answers them when he closes the debate. The first is on our strategic commitments and how many troops we need for them.

Normally, I wouldn't doubt the numbers would be justified by our commitments. But me and many others question the effect of new weapons on our defense requirements. We've been told that our current services are as inadequate as the archers and pikemen of the past. We are entitled to more information about this from the Government. I believe that new weapons do not abolish old requirements for defense. I was told, before the last war, that air power made the army useless, and that armored vehicles eliminated the need for infantry. Neither were true. It just means their roles are altered.

*The government has not told us how new military technology changes our defense/troop needs [the Labour government isn't giving us all the information we need to make an informed decision]. [The government's argument that our current military isn't adequate isn't credible].*

17 Members can't be asked to decide this for themselves on the scanty information they can get. The government should be prepared to give the frankest information on this subject. We see the necessity for some restraint on this issue, but there is a danger of too much secrecy, which leaves an impression not that there is a plan that must be kept secret, but "a failure to think out the implications of the new weapons."

*Again, the Labour government is withholding important information we need to make the right decision.*

18 I agree with many Members from the other side that it is possible we can get these numbers [troops] voluntarily. It has been said we should make the army more attractive, but not how much more attractive we must make it before we get the desired results. To expect we can get the numbers the Government says are required voluntarily is wishful thinking. We're very concerned that though conscription might give us the numbers we need, it might not give us "exactly what we want for defense." Mere numbers are not a satisfactory defense.

*Again, the Labour government is withholding important information we need to make the right decision. [We need more than just more troops to guarantee a strong defense].*

19 The main object of this policy is to get adequate future reserves. I was in the War Office in the early days of WWII and agree that, under the conditions of modern warfare, our prewar Territorial training isn't enough to get fully trained reserves. I'm not saying it's impossible for all tasks, but the amount of time men can take from their occupations doesn't give them a chance to learn the "intricacies of modern technique." Thus we must supplement the prewar Territorial Army.  
*We need conscription so that we can get adequately trained reserves.*

20 Interruption. I won't compare our soldiers to French ones. This is irrelevant anyway because the militia was only started 2 months before the war began. What I'm discussing is whether a committed force that existed for many years could've been ready for the outbreak of war. As I said, a new system must be found to supplement the Territorial Army. The advantages of the proposed system are obvious. With 1.5 years of training and then upkeep training after that, he will be a fully trained reservist. But this depends on whether the basic and upkeep training are in the same arm of the service. Can we be assured this? Take the case of anti-aircraft defense. Are the anti-aircraft gunners in the reserve the same people who trained in the army for 1.5 years in anti-aircraft gunnery? Unless they are, this proposed system has few advantages.  
*Conscription will get us the reservists we need, but we still have some important questions about training that need answering [and the government hasn't yet answered them].*

21 I would ask the right Hon. Gentleman [MOD] to give us an assurance that proper use is being made of the manpower we have. Unless they are, we're reluctant to give them more in future. We have all heard stories of wasted time by those currently in the services. Right or wrong, these stories have raised concern and this concern must be put to rest. Yesterday Mr. Churchill suggested one way. He suggested a parliamentary committee. What do you think about that? If he doesn't think he can accept this, what alternative can he offer?  
*The government must confirm we're using our existing manpower as effectively as possible, otherwise we won't vote for you in future. [I'm not convinced Labour is running the military correctly].*

22 During the committee stage, we'll deal with many details of this bill. We will want to know whether we'll need some "tapering off" at the end, just as there is for pre-bill conscription, to get fairness. Finally, we'll also want to know about the opportunities men will have to qualify for commissions once they're in the reserve. These and other questions have already been raised by members on both sides during this debate and we're entitled to expect answers. Expect perhaps is wrong word as it implies confidence; we hope to get answers.  
*Critical questions about this bill have been raised and we're entitled to answers [which the government hasn't yet given].*

23 I think we're entitled to have the information. We're prepared to support this bill, but we need all the information the Government used to come to its conclusions. These matters are too important to be decided by Ministerial command, or by personal investigation by members. We must have the fullest information and thus I hope the MOD will break his policy of "wordy silence" and give us all the facts so we can go into the Lobby knowing we are right.  
*Conservatives are prepared to support this bill but we need more information from the Labour government [which the government hasn't yet given].*

## Appendix 5

### Reasons and reasoning chains

Stanley (Conservative)

Claim: support the bill

Par 01 No political party in this country is fully unified in its position on this difficult bill [and Labour and the Liberals are misrepresenting how difficult this is by claiming each party is totally unified against conscription]. [The Tory Party is not the evil boogeyman Labour's Attorney General claims it is].

[Reason 105: Conscription is NOT a fundamentally Conservative idea]

Reason 121: Opponents are playing politics

Reason 14: Conservatives are not bad guys

Chain: 121-105

Par 02 If the Conservative Party was going to act only in its interest, it would happily vote down this bill.

Reason 14: Conservatives are not bad guys

Par 03 As Conservatives, we're not taking the easy political road: we'll vote on this issue and most will support conscription because we believe it's in the country's interest.

Reason 14: Conservatives are not bad guys

~~Reason 84: Good for the nation~~

Reason 4: Conscription is a military necessity now

Par 04 The Conservative Party has not supported conscription for 40 years, and those who claim this are painting a biased picture. [There's nothing wrong with sticking to your principles, unlike some Labour MPs, like Mr. Wigg].

Reason 105: Conscription is NOT a fundamentally Conservative idea

Par 05 The Conservative Party has not supported conscription for 40 years, and those who claim this are trying to make us look like villains.

Reason 105: Conscription is NOT a fundamentally Conservative idea

Reason 14: Conservatives are not bad guys

Reason 121: Opponents are playing politics

Chain: 121-105

Par 06 This policy will have individual and economic ramifications that we regret but we still need it [so I will support it]. Military service won't harm young men and might even do them some good.

~~Reason 260: Even though this bill will have negative repercussions, we still need it~~

Reason 4: Conscription is a military necessity now

~~Reason 114: The military life will be good for men~~

Chain: 260-4

Par 07 Even if we don't agree with them, we must respect those MPs who oppose conscription no matter the situation or electoral consequences; these are genuine conscientious objectors.

~~Reason 106: I respect conscientious objectors~~

Par 08 I do not support the view that conscription is morally right in war but morally wrong in peace; there is no discernible ethical difference.

N/A

Par 09 I also do not agree with those who refuse to support this bill because they dislike the government's foreign policy. It's dangerous to have a bad foreign policy with a weak army as this will lead to defeat in any conflict.

~~Reason 202: Opposing conscription because you don't like the government's foreign policy is invalid~~

[Reason 67: We need well-trained army and reserves]

Reason 4: Conscription is a military necessity now

~~Chain: 202-4-67~~

Par 10 I do agree with those that will support this bill if they think it necessary, even if they don't like it. We are entitled to answers to some important questions that will help them decide if it's necessary [and the government hasn't been forthcoming with these answers].

N/A

Par 11 The government has purposefully made it difficult for us to get answers to these critical questions.

N/A

Par 12 The government has not provided us with the answers to the questions that are agitating this House, particularly about its strategic importance.

N/A

Par 13 Again, the government has not provided us with the answers to the questions that are agitating this House.

N/A

Par 14 Important Labour Ministers have ducked their responsibility to speak to us and give us important information [Labour MPs are shirking their responsibilities and not discussing critical questions, like whether this bill is contrary to our UN obligations].

N/A

Par 15 Some Labour MPs now support conscription but won't share with us the reasons why [the Labour Party is being cagey about the reasons we need conscription]. [Some Labour MPs are flip-flopers].

N/A

Par 16 The government has not told us how new military technology changes our defense/troop needs [the Labour government isn't giving us all the information we need to make an informed decision]. [The government's argument that our current military isn't adequate isn't credible].

~~Reason 12: We need more troops~~

~~Reason 261: New military threats/technology doesn't make army obsolete~~

~~Chain: 12-261~~

Par 17 Again, the Labour government is withholding important information we need to make the right decision.

N/A

Par 18 Again, the Labour government is withholding important information we need to make the right decision. [We need more than just more troops to guarantee a strong defense].

N/A

Par 19 We need conscription so that we can get adequately trained reserves.

Reason 67: We need well-trained army and reserves

Par 20 Conscription will get us the reservists we need, but we still have some important questions about training that need answering [and the government hasn't yet answered them].

N/A

Par 21 The government must confirm we're using our existing manpower as effectively as possible, otherwise we won't vote for you in future. [I'm not convinced Labour is running the military correctly].

N/A

Par 22 Critical questions about this bill have been raised and we're entitled to answers [which the government hasn't yet given].

N/A

Par 23 Conservatives are prepared to support this bill but we need more information from the Labour government [which the government hasn't yet given].

N/A

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Claim: support the bill

Retained chains:

121-105 (used twice)

Isolated reasons:

4 (used three times, after filtering)

14 (used four times)

67 (used twice, after filtering)

Non-retained chains

12-261

202-4-67

202-4-67

260-4

Non-retained isolated reasons

84

106

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