

The Impact of Public Pressure on Military Non-Intervention in Argentina

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ABSTRACT

The literature on civil-military relations has overlooked the role of public pressure and public opinion in the non-intervention of the military in domestic politics. The case study used is Argentina from 1983 to 1987 and the methodology used is a content analysis of news headlines in the daily La Nacion.

The results obtained are datasets of headlines indicating that public pressure and public opinion did have a role in the institutional separation of the military from domestic politics post-1983.

INTRODUCTION

In December 2001, Argentina experienced one of the most devastating economic crises in its history. The crisis plunged the country into social chaos, shaking the foundations of government, resulting in the appointment of several presidents in less than three weeks.

With a history of military intervention in domestic politics, the most recent of which was from 1976 to 1983, Argentina seemed doomed to fall into military intervention once again. All the conditions for a military intervention were present: No period of democratic governance had lasted more than 15 years, and in 2002, already 20 years had passed since; more importantly, most of the major economic crises in Argentina had led to a military takeover. However, this did not happen.

This research adds a possible answer as to why there was a non-intervention of the military, focusing on the dramatic change in defense policy in Argentina, where the national defense was placed under civilian control. It explores the possibility that public opinion and public pressure may have had a decisive effect on this drastic change in defense policy. It posits an important question that is absent in the literature on civil-military relations: *Do public opinion and public pressure have effects on changes in domestic defense policies in countries with a recent history of military intervention?*

In this study the dependent variable is military intervention or non-intervention. The independent variables are public opinion, public pressure and government response.

Objectives and Importance:

This research is an important addition to the literature because it adds the overlooked connection of public opinion and public policy in the study of civilian control of the military in developing democracies. It also adds a significant dataset to the literature covering 694 newspaper editions of La Nacion acquired from the microfilm archives at the University of Chicago, Princeton and Georgetown University.

Hypothesis

Public opinion and public pressure in Argentina had an impact on defense policy between 1983 and 1987¹ by separating the military from domestic politics.

Findings:

The results support the hypotheses and suggest a relation. Military non-intervention in Argentina was likely the result of the government's response to public pressure demanding reforms to subordinate the military. Because the government was able to rely on a storage of public opinion that rejected the previous regime, it responded in a timely manner to public pressure and was able to separate the military from domestic politics, relegating it to sharing power over the inner most part and

¹ In 1983 democracy was restored in Argentina after a disastrous rule by the military Junta. Candidate Dr. Raul Alfonsin won the presidential elections that year paving the way for a complete reform of the military structure and its role in Argentine politics to prevent a future military intervention. Substantial changes in public opinion and changes in public policy regarding civil-military compliance policies should be particularly abundant during and after the transition because of the weak performance of the military in its constant forays into domestic politics.

less threatening boundary (Trinkunas, 2002) of external defense. This resulted in a dominating civilian government, which was able to establish a relatively stable democratic regime. During the economic crisis in 2001, non-intervention of the military was likely the result of the process analyzed in this paper.

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

One of the limitations of this research is establishing a direct relationship between policy changes and public pressure. However, this research focuses on the amount of public pressure and the changes in public policy but does not necessarily establish a direct relationship between the two.

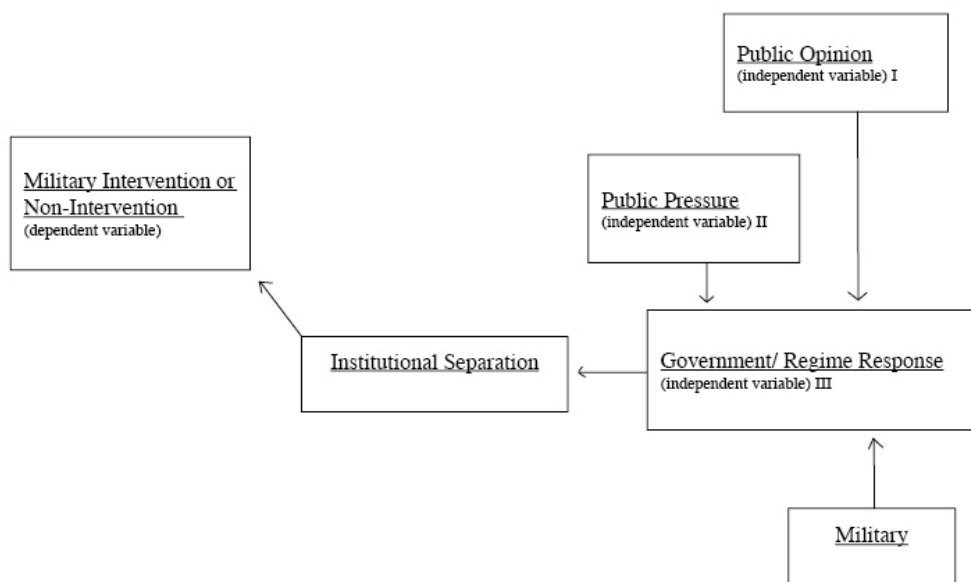
Another limitation is that it is difficult to determine whose differences are prevailing before a dispute gains public attention. Is the military manipulating policy before it gains public attention? Feaver (1999), warns researchers about this:

“A particularly adept military could enjoy enough political influence to shape policy without the issue gaining salience as a policy dispute. Likewise, focusing on the policy-decision stage risks missing compliance issues that arise at the later policy implementation stage.”
(Feaver, 1999)

This paper proceeds as follows. First, I discuss the previous literature, focusing on civil-military relations and public opinion's effect on public policy. Then, a background on the history of Argentina's Military Junta and its transition to democracy in addition to an interpretation of the 2001 crisis shall give the reader a better idea of who the main actors are in Argentina. Following the historical background I elaborate on the details of the methodology. Furthermore, I analyze the

qualitative and quantitative data acquired from the research providing a contemporary history of Argentina's civil-military relations, focusing on this paper's time period, exploring the most significant events related to civil-military relations and how the data fits these events. Finally, I discuss my conclusions and I offer recommendations for further research and discuss the limitations of this study.

Figure 1: Research Model



LITERATURE REVIEW

The current literature on civil military relations has focused widely on five independent variables (Feaver, 1999): Coups, Military Influence, Civil-Military Friction, Delegation and Monitoring, and Military Compliance. Of the previously mentioned variables, coups are the most researched because of their extreme nature. In trying to connect public opinion and civil military compliance in this study, I am researching a field that has been barely touched by other political scientists: Civil-Military Compliance.

Because public opinion was more difficult to quantify before new research methods like computer coding and content analysis came along in the early 1970s (Holsti, 1969), authors like Huntington, Finer, Putnam, and Janowitz were unable to

create a research design that would invigorate a line of research on public opinion and civil-military relations.²

On Military Compliance:

How do we know that civilian rule has finally subordinated the military? Samuel P. Huntington's theory states that "only when the armed forces are prepared to 'carry out the wishes of any civilian group which secures legitimate authority within the state', will the military fall under objective civilian control."³ David Pion-Berlin adds a significant requisite for the subordination of the military "...the democratic leaders must divest the military of numerous privileges it enjoyed under authoritarian rule if civilian control is to be realized."⁴ Pion-Berlin also argues that the civilian government must provide innovative direction in establishing new norms of military professionalism if it is to succeed in the subordination of the institution. He further warns that if the civilian-run government is not able to play a balanced game of rewards and punishment for the actions of the military, the tide may turn against the government out of too much pressure on the military coming from a flood of reforms. Rewards, on the other hand, if exceeded may turn the tide as well for officers may feel that the new government is weak or feels threatened by the power of

² There was also a lack of data for the authors.

³ See S. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, 1957), p.84 in Pion-Berlin, D. (1991). *Between Confrontation and Accommodation: Military and Government Policy in Democratic Argentina*. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 23(3), p.546.

⁴ Pion-Berlin, D. (1991). *Between Confrontation and Accommodation: Military and Government Policy in Democratic Argentina*. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 23(3), p.547.

the military.

There is a more encouraging side to these warnings and requisites as Pion-Berlin posits:

“However, where public repugnance over previous authoritarian practices is great, new democratic regimes may find that they can draw initially upon a huge store of legitimacy that can be turned against praetorian-minded officers. The failures of the Argentine military Proceso⁵ government provided the democratic incumbents with just this supply of political capital.”⁶

When Pion-Berlin talks about “public repugnance”, public opinion is a valuable tool to measure the level of repugnance towards the military, which is in turn a good indication that Alfonsin’s democratic regime was able to draw from that “huge store of legitimacy” to separate the military from politics and eventually to subordinate it. This is further developed in the section on public opinion.

The landmark study by Welch (1976) defines how civilian governments control the military. This study defines the difference between military influence and military control. The study also adds to the literature sets of rules for how best to control the military. More than a decade later, Norden (1990) tries to answer if Argentina’s constitutional status quo is the result of the subordination of the military. Her conclusion is simple: The history of civil-military relations in Argentina during President Alfonsin’s term is defined by a process of negotiation between the military and the civilian government leading to an unstable relationship between the two,

⁵ The Proceso or the Proceso de Reorganizacion Nacional (PRN) was the name of the program carried out by the military from 1976 to 1982 to reorient the country as they saw fit. This included getting rid of the subversives and also moving the country towards an open-market economy.

⁶ Pion-Berlin, D. (1991). *Between Confrontation and Accommodation: Military and Government Policy in Democratic Argentina*. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 23(3), p.547.

where it can be concluded that President Alfonsín did not consolidate power over the Armed Forces. Norden's conclusion is similar to the results of this research but it is still missing the essential role of public pressure.

David Pion-Berlin (1991) adds to the literature tactics of civilian control. He also studies Alfonsín's role in Argentina's struggle for the subordination of the military and concludes that while the president limited the power of the Armed Forces, he "left the Armed Forces in a professionally moribund state. Creating store for resentment." McSherry (1997) does the same but has the advantage of writing after president Menem has been in power for almost 10 years. Fuentes (2000) examines Chile to explain how civilian policies affect the subordination of the Armed Forces, concluding that civilians need to develop capabilities in military issues. He also adds that future research should consider this "civil" dimension more seriously because it may add to the understanding of the new and old patterns of civil-military relations, as well as to the prevention of military interventions. (138) This research shows precisely that this "civil" dimension plays a role in the subordination of the military.

Fravel (2002) essentially provides answers to the overlooked case of democratization and civilian control of the military in Taiwan, where civil-military relations improved due to internal defense law and suspension of mandatory military education programs. As this research shows, internal defense laws did not improve civil-military relations in Argentina, although they did relegate the military to a very small role in domestic politics. Trinkunas (2002) looks at civil-military jurisdictional

boundaries where the military only has authority over the inner circle (external defense) and the government has jurisdiction over the rest. This study is important for my thesis because I use the civil-military jurisdictional boundaries progression of Argentina to show how the military was institutionally separated from “domestic politics”, which in Trinkunas’ study represents all the other areas outside of external defense.

Finally, Croissant (2004) notices that the military in Asia has remained off the political radar, prompting his study in which he analyzes whether the Armed Forces in Asia have remained quiet because they are subordinate to civilian authority or because they have power in other ways that need no direct intervention. Even though this is one of few studies on developing countries, it still does not include public opinion as an important factor in its analysis. It only looks at endogenous and extraneous factors like ideological coherence, organizational cohesion, internal security, and economic development.

This research examines Military Compliance to explain non-intervention⁷ of Argentina’s Armed Forces in domestic politics. The previous research on Military Compliance has been mostly on developed democracies or European and Asian states. Few studies have been done on Latin American democracies (Norden 1990; Pion-Berlin 1991; McSherry 1997; Fuentes 2000; Trinkunas 2002).

⁷ Military Non-intervention: Defined as a military that will not move beyond the boundary of the external defense area, where it shares power with the civilian government (Trinkunas 2002).

Alfred Stepan's work deserves special attention. By looking at the social composition of the military and by coding editorials in the most prominent newspapers in Brazil, Stepan was able to draw the conclusion that the military in Brazil had acquired a moderating pattern in national politics. The idea to code *La Nacion's* headlines for this research was largely based on Stepan's method of editorial coding.

Content Analysis:

In the literature on military compliance, no research has examined public opinion as an important factor in determining the role of the military in national politics. It was precisely Fuentes (2000) who suggested the importance of looking at this relationship to better understand military compliance (138). Perhaps Stepan (1974) was close enough to start a line of research on this relationship but nobody followed. Stepan's method of research looks at public opinion. By examining editorials in Brazil's prominent newspapers the author points out that newspapers are an important indicator of public opinion in politics. The necessity to capture the relevance of public pressure for this research, requires a method of research that can give the reader a measure of the magnitude of the role of public pressure in this period of interaction between the government the military and the polity.

The literature on content analysis has broadly focused on conceptual and relational analysis, looking deep into the content of texts. For this study, a headline signifies an event (Lippman) and while political science has not moved deeper into

coding headlines, they are part of the body of research in content analysis. This method is defined as a research tool used to find concepts within texts, and the meaning of these concepts in specific contexts. The definition of text, it must be noted for this study, includes books, speeches and headlines among others. (Palmquist, 2005).

The Research on Public Opinion

All the research on civil-military relations and public opinion has been focused on explaining the effect of public opinion on foreign policy. Page and Shapiro (1983) wrote one of the most important studies on the topic. In trying to determine whether public opinion affects public policy they examined public opinion data from 1935 to 1979 in the United States, as well as policy data. They found that public opinion often influences policy more than public policy influences public opinion. (175) Because of the complexity of relations between public opinion and public policy, the study says one cannot take for democratic the responsiveness of government to public opinion. Perhaps it is plain manipulation by the parties. To this point the only thing they can be sure of is that public opinion, whatever its sources and quality, is a factor that does affect policies in the United States. But even after concluding this, they make it clear that sometimes governments do not follow public opinion. (189)

Although nothing new (Ostrom, 1978; Ostrom and Marra, 1986; Kriesberg and Klein, 1980; Russett, 1989, 1990; Russett and Graham, 1989; Hartley and

Russett, 1992), the study of defense spending as a predictor of the influence of public opinion on public policy provided no concrete conclusions. Huggs and Kilduff confirm this, finding that there are too many elements intervening in the relationship between public opinion and public policy to really establish a cause and effect relationship. Adding to the uncertainty is Holsti (2004), who looked at the relationship between public opinion and United States foreign policy, adding to the literature a compilation of criticisms of the theoretical field of political science.

However, there are important developments in the field pertinent to the research question of this study. Hobolt & Klemmensen (2005), analyzed public opinion and public policy in Britain and Denmark. They conclude that public opinion tends to drive government policy due to the threat of electoral sanction, which is more pronounced in proportional systems than in majoritarian democracies. Referring to the problems in the research with causation of responsiveness, they argue that “No analytical technique has been entirely successful in addressing these problems of causal inference.” (p. 380)

On the previous point about electoral sanctions, they argue in their conclusion that because governments aim to be reelected, they will have an inclination to move in favor of policies that fit the preferences of the electorate (p.381)

Furthermore, the research on the relationship between public opinion and civil-military relations has only looked at the United States and other developed democracies, making this research on Argentina an important addition to the literature.

The Connection:

The connection between the study of public opinion and its effects on military compliance in a Latin American state is therefore not only an important addition to the literature but a key addition in a context where most Latin American governments have a recent history of military governments and are still reforming civil-military relations to adapt to the new democratic standards such as in Argentina, 1983; Bolivia, 1982; Brazil, 1985; Chile, 1990; Ecuador, 1979; El Salvador, 1992; Guatemala, 1986; Honduras, 1982; Nicaragua, 1979; Panama, 1989; Paraguay, 1989; Peru, 1980; Uruguay, 1985.

Previous Methods:

This research explores a different field of civil-military relations (public opinion). Therefore, it will combine different methods of research that have not been used by previous researchers (Putnam 1967; Nordlinger 1970; Stepan 1974; Pion-Berlin 1991; Trinkunas 2002) in the context of developing Latin American democracies, offering more specific data for more measurable results.

Alfred Stepan's (1974) methodology is an interesting addition to the literature. I use Stepan's method of coding editorials in prominent newspapers to distinguish support or lack thereof for the military in power. I take this a step further and use not

only editorials but also every headline that refers to civil-military issues in Argentina. I code them according to who is doing the pressuring on whom.⁸

Shapiro and Page (1983), as mentioned before had an extensive dataset. Monroe (1998), looked at 13 years of data concluding that there is more consistency between public opinion and public policy in those issues that the public felt were more important. Burstein (2003), likewise, suggests that the impact is substantial and that salience enhances the impact. For this research, the dataset is extensive too. I coded a sample of 1,426 newspaper editions of *La Nacion*, of which 694 were microfilm versions and 732 were coded through an online database search. This dataset should provide a substantial amount of new data that was not available before.

On the other hand, because this research only intends to show how much public opinion pressure there was in Argentina to reform the military, the emphasis in the methodology is not so much to create a definitive link between public opinion and public policy (all previous research has been close to inconclusive). The emphasis is on the interaction between the military, the government and the constituents. Because of this Wlezien (1996) and Hobolt & Klemmensen (2005), provide a useful methodology. Hobolt & Klemmensen suggest that the opening speeches of parliament often reflect the public's policy priorities. They conducted a content analysis of the annual opening speeches in parliament for Denmark and Britain but they also examined party documents and policy manifestos. The best indicator of policy responsiveness, however, were the speeches to parliament because unlike in

⁸ More about this in the Methodology section.

party manifestos and electoral campaign documents, presidents tend to keep their promises. (p.386) Wlezein (2004), supports the previous conclusions and also suggests that representation of public opinion in public policy can occur in two ways. One is indirect, through elections, where the public selects like-minded politicians who then deliver what it wants in policy. The other way is direct, in which sitting politicians respond to public opinion. The author also suggests these two are related because incumbent politicians are often interested in being reelected, hence they are expected to respond to public opinion.

This study takes a descriptive/empirical approach as well as a theoretical approach. The empirical lens will look at the most important interactions between the political institutions and the Armed Forces (Feaver, 1999). The theoretical model specifies how changes in public opinion, military structure, and organizational mission are reflected in the Armed Forces' compliance with the government's defense policy.

The Problematique and the Aggravated Problematique in Developing Countries

Feaver mentions a *problematique* in civil-military relations. "The very institution created to protect the polity is given sufficient power to become a threat to the polity." (214) But the literature has an unfortunate dearth of documentation and studies on the relationship between public opinion and civil military compliance in developing countries (Fuentes, 2000), increasingly necessitating another definition of the *problematique*. When public opinion supports military intervention (Stepan,

1974), the *problematique* posed by Feaver takes an even more troublesome route. The Aggravated Problematique is what I define as the paradox: When the institution created to protect the polity is given sufficient power to threaten it and this threat to democracy is supported by the polity, who protects the polity from itself? In this study, the polity went from supporting the military government to completely rejecting it. The transitional government was necessary for the subordination of the military but it was not sufficient. In a country with a history of constant military interventions, we must look at the polity as an important factor in the subordination of the military. In Argentina, all the requirements for a stable civilian government could not stop a group of military leaders from intervening in several occasions. In Brazil as Stepan showed, it was the support of public opinion that had most influence in the moderating role of the Brazilian military.

METHODOLOGY

The thesis will explain how changes in public opinion and public pressure and the institutional separation⁹ of national defense from domestic politics are reflected in the subordination of the military to civilian power leading to the non-intervention of the military. The methodology is divided into five approaches:

1. Public opinion in Argentina affected defense policy (separation of national defense from domestic politics) between 1983 and 2000.

⁹ Institutional Separation: Defined as the removal of the military autonomy from domestic politics in the form of policy reforms as defined by Trinkunas' "civil-jurisdictional boundaries" method.

- a. A survey from World Value Surveys on the public's confidence in the Armed Forces and a qualitative assessment of what the literature tells us about public support for policy reforms will show whether public opinion supported the military or not and how the government utilized this to its advantage. While insufficient, this is necessary to back up the argument that the public backed any policy reforms geared to keeping the military subordinated. If public opinion supported the military in power, it would probably oppose any policy reforms that would subordinate the military.
2. Public pressure in Argentina had an important impact on government and the military.
 - a. Headlines in one of Argentina's most prominent¹⁰ and relatively independent newspaper, *La Nacion*, requesting or directly asking the government for a change in defense policies (Stepan, 1978), together with requests in the form of lobbying, bills in Congress, requests for trials of military

¹⁰ While Clarin has a larger circulation than La Nacion, the data for La Nacion is more accessible than Clarin's. "The 10 largest national newspapers, which may vary depending upon the source referenced are: Clarin (800,000 circulation; 1.2 million on Sundays); La Nacion (500,000 circulation; 800,000 on Sundays); Ambito Financiero (300,000 circulation); Cronica (300,000 circulation); Diario Popular (300,000 circulation); Pagina 12 (150,000 circulation); La Prensa (120,000 circulation); El Cronista (100,000 circulation); Buenos Aires Herald (100,000 circulation); and Ola; (100,000 circulation).

"The most influential national newspapers are Clarin and La Nacion, both based in the city of Buenos Aires." Aleman, Eduardo and Dinatale, Martin. World Press Encyclopedia. 2003.

officers or any form of direct, public communication with the government stemming from civil society groups (academics, think tanks, human rights groups, and interest groups) as well as the judiciary and the legislative bodies, which are the essential institutions keeping the checks and balances of the executive branch (Levy, 2007) will be quantified in charts. This data will not conclude decisively if the influence of public opinion on public policy is direct. However, they will indicate the degree of pressure from public opinion on general defense policies.

3. The government responded to public pressure.
 - a. The main method to check for a government response is to present a sample of the president's annual message to the Senate, where military matters are discussed. This is acquired from the Argentina Institute of Military History and translated for this study. Previous studies have shown that response to public opinion can be observed in opening speeches of new governments to the Congress or Parliament. Hobolt and Klemmensen (2005).
 - b. A test for government response in 1996 and 2000 is employed by coding for public pressure on government. In 1996 and 2000, the president did not mention the military

as he usually does. If I can show that there was no significant public pressure as there was in 1984 and 1987, then I can show that government responds by not mentioning anything about the military, also showing that the government responds accordingly to public pressure.

4. Defense policy in Argentina dramatically shifted between 1984 and 1991, separating the military from domestic politics.
 - a. Trinkunas' (2002), "civil-jurisdictional boundaries" concentric rings method shows the separation of the military from domestic politics over the time period that is examined in this study (1984-1987)
 - b. Newspaper reports on the events and reforms that separated the military from domestic politics.
5. The military subordinated to civilian power leading to the likelihood of non-intervention.
 - a. The dataset will show the levels of military subordination¹¹ based on the amount of headlines showing the subordination of the military.

¹¹ Military Subordination/ Military Compliance: Defined as the prevailing resolve of civilians in all cases. For this research please note that I use the terms interchangeably because the literature uses them that way as well.

A BACKGROUND ON ARGENTINA 1976-2001

The Military Junta and the Return to Democracy (1976-1983)

The dictatorship that replaced Isabel Peron in 1976 had a very strict program in mind, beginning with the eradication of the subversion that was trying to topple Isabel Peron, and a return to strict Western and Christian values. The military created an *Estado de Sitio*, or state of siege, created war councils and reinstated the death penalty. The suspension of any other political party was immediately enforced and left-leaning parties were prohibited. The military took over the municipal and provincial governments. The Congress was dissolved and in its place the military created the Comision de Asesoramiento Legislativo, or the Commission of Legislative Advice (CAL). This body was integrated by a representative from each branch of the Armed Forces. On top of all this, the judges of the Supreme Court were fired.¹²

When the military took power, a large portion of the high and middle classes supported the regime because the attacks of left-wing guerrillas¹³ were targeting businesses, diplomats and military personnel. From the beginnings of the guerrilla movement in 1966 to the end in 1976, they carried out 25 attacks on their targets injuring dozens, killing one person, and blowing up several businesses. The Proceso de Reorganizacion Nacional, or the Process of National Reorganization (PNR), was a

¹² Lobato, Z. M., & Suriano, J. (2000). Nueva Historia Argentina. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana. p. 500.

¹³ The main guerrilla groups were the Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo, or the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the Montoneros. The ERP was an urban communist guerrilla, which wanted to topple the government through violent means. The Montoneros on the other hand, were a rural guerrilla group from the province of Tucuman.

plan created by General Jorge R. Videla's administration to tackle the major grievances of Argentines. The plan included fiscal policies, the creation of a secret security force to end the insurgency of the "subversives,"¹⁴ and the militarization of government.

Not only guerrillas were considered subversives after the military took power. According to the regime, they were also supporters of the Communist Party, professors with left-leaning ideals, university students who dared to protest against the government, lawyers, writers, editors. A quote from the regime's appointed governor of Buenos Aires is indicative of the situation at the time: "First we will kill all the subversives; then, their collaborators; later, those who sympathize with them; afterward, those who remain indifferent; and finally, the undecided."¹⁵

In 1977, a group of mothers, who had lost their sons and daughters in a series of abductions by men who arrived in green Ford Falcons and carried machine guns¹⁶, walked silently around the Plaza de Mayo to get the attention of the government in order to find out where their children were. Their children had been kidnapped and taken to prison camps under the orders of the military regime for their subversive tendencies or affiliations. Azucena Villaflor, the founder of the movement walked every Thursday until she too was kidnapped, tortured, and murdered. The Madres of Plaza de Mayo gained international recognition after sending thousands of letters to

¹⁴ A subversive was anyone affiliated with left-leaning groups. This term was later expanded to include almost anyone who was outspoken against the regime.

¹⁵ General Iberico Saint Jean, Governor of Buenos Aires Province.

¹⁶ These were the descriptions of the abductions, which were recorded in testimonials during the trials of the 1980s and also testimonials recorded by the Madres of Plaza de Mayo.

foreign governments and human rights groups requesting the investigation of the regime's involvement in the murder and torture of Argentine civilians involved in left-leaning activities. The lack of response by the government¹⁷ allowed the women to march for years, until about 2,500 women were marching in front of the Casa Rosada.¹⁸

As the regime began targeting these women too, Jimmy Carter's human rights oriented foreign policy had its effects on Argentina's budget, when Carter cut all aid to Argentina until the government showed a will to stop the abductions. In 1982, as a way of garnering nationalist domestic support for the regime, General Galtieri declared war on England over the small islands of the Malvinas off the coast of Argentina. The military lost the war, which miserably de-legitimized their main purpose as defenders of the nation.

As the regime became weaker during the war of the Malvinas, and the economy crashed, the opposition gained momentum and was able to mobilize more and more people to pressure the regime. After General Galtieri lost the war of the Malvinas, an internal coup by General Reynaldo Bignone brought an end to the military regime and general elections were scheduled. Political parties were once again allowed to participate in all social and political settings. Massive rallies in support of the parties and other rallies in support of human rights were visible on the

¹⁷ The regime saw the mothers as non-threatening, hence the lack of response by the military to repress them.

¹⁸ The president's residence.

streets of Buenos Aires. In 1983, the pro-human rights candidate of the Union Civica Radical party, or the Radical Civic Union (UCR) won the majority of the votes.

A radical change towards democracy engulfed Argentina. The death penalty was abolished in 1984, the press was free once again and most important, journalists felt free to express themselves, getting rid of old fears of being tagged a subversive. Human rights trials began in 1984 and human rights groups, after becoming much more organized following the success of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, mobilized thousands requesting the trial of military personnel over human rights abuses. The military and defense codes were reformed to balance the power of government and the military, at the same time that people were able to have a parliament once again, as well as free municipal and provincial governments.

The Economic Crisis (2001)

For three years the government failed to contain the economic problems of the country, until in 2000 president Fernando De la Rúa's vice president, Carlos Alvarez resigned, protesting the president's lack of success in reducing corruption. In 2001, the economy minister resigned, signaling the beginning of the economic crisis. Defense Minister Ricardo Lopez Murphy was assigned the job of drafting a "shock therapy" program to halt the economic problems of Argentina. He was forced to resign shortly after making way for Menem's first economic minister, Domingo Cavallo. After all this restructuring, De la Rúa's previous support in the Senate and the House of Deputies began to crumble. The scenario on the streets for De la Rúa's

administration was not looking good. He had *Piqueteros* blocking roads every day, labor unions protesting and holding strikes, and the *Peronistas* were staging massive protests too.

The government tried to keep as much money in the banks as possible but Argentines hurried to the streets to withdraw as much money as they could to exchange it for U.S. dollars. When a quarter of the money from the banks had been withdrawn, economy minister Cavallo implemented unpopular moves to restrict the access to money and prevent the collapse of the banking system, known as the “Corralito”. Looting was reported on December 18.

More protests and looting, plus injured citizens was a sign that the government was losing the support it had enjoyed in previous years. The president called a meeting with the *Peronistas* to agree to a coalition government in order to quell the protests, but the *Peronistas*, led by House of Deputies Peronist bloc, said the party would not work with the current administration.

De la Rúa considered deploying the military to halt the social unrest, but the legislation implemented during Alfonsín’s government prevented the military from interfering in domestic matters unless it was absolutely necessary and the local and national security forces were overwhelmed. The other problem for this option was that the move needed a two-thirds vote of Congress. This was yet another reform in the legislation from the 1980s. However, a majority of Congress would never approve sending the military to the streets because this would be, in a way, the same process that triggered the coup of 1976 when Isabel Peron authorized the military to deal with

the subversion.

Robert Potash spent some time in the barracks during the social unrest: “Near the end of November 2001, I was in the Colegio Militar (Military School), in Buenos Aires, where I spoke to cadets. I am sure that their wish was to better themselves not to take power.” Potash expands this thought: “With this I just want to say that I was not surprised that the Armed Forces had remained off bounds from the economic and political crisis that affected Argentina.”¹⁹

De la Rúa’s next move was to try to censor all news outlets from Buenos Aires, but his Media Secretary refused to do this. This was a sign that Argentina had still fresh in its memory the censorship of the Proceso.

Left without any options, De la Rúa resigned. According to the new legislation, under the Acephaly Act²⁰ the interim president was the President Pro-Tempore of the Senate, Ramon Puerta. Puerta however, could only remain president until the Legislative Assembly appointed a temporary president from Congress or a provincial governor, who would finish the president’s period. Adolfo Rodriguez Saa, governor of San Luis, was appointed on December 22 by both houses of Congress. Saa was supposed to stay in power for just three months until a general election could be scheduled.

His populist policies to default on the debt and the appointment of corrupt politicians did not sit well with the population and more rioting exploded on the

¹⁹ Aires, L. d. I. C. A. d. B. (1999). Legislacion de la ciudad autonoma de Buenos Aires. Ley # 305. Retrieved from.

²⁰ Times, T. F. (2004). The Financial Times World Desk Reference. London: FT. p. 96

streets of Buenos Aires only a week after Rodriguez Saa's appointment. The legislation pointed again to Ramon Puerta to take over, but he resigned as President Pro Tempore of the Senate before he could be appointed. The next candidate for president was the Speaker of the House of Deputies, Mr. Eduardo Camano. He would remain in power until the Legislative Assembly met once again to decide on the next president of Argentina. On January 1st of 2002, Senator Eduardo Duhalde became president of the country. Finally, Duhalde handed power in 2003 to the new president elected by popular vote, Nestor Kirchner.²¹

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The period between 1983 and 1987 is defined by the separation of the military from domestic politics. To take a closer look at how the military came to be separated from national politics, I have selected Trinkunas' (2002) "Civil-Military Jurisdictional Boundaries" methodology in his study of civilian control in emerging democracies.

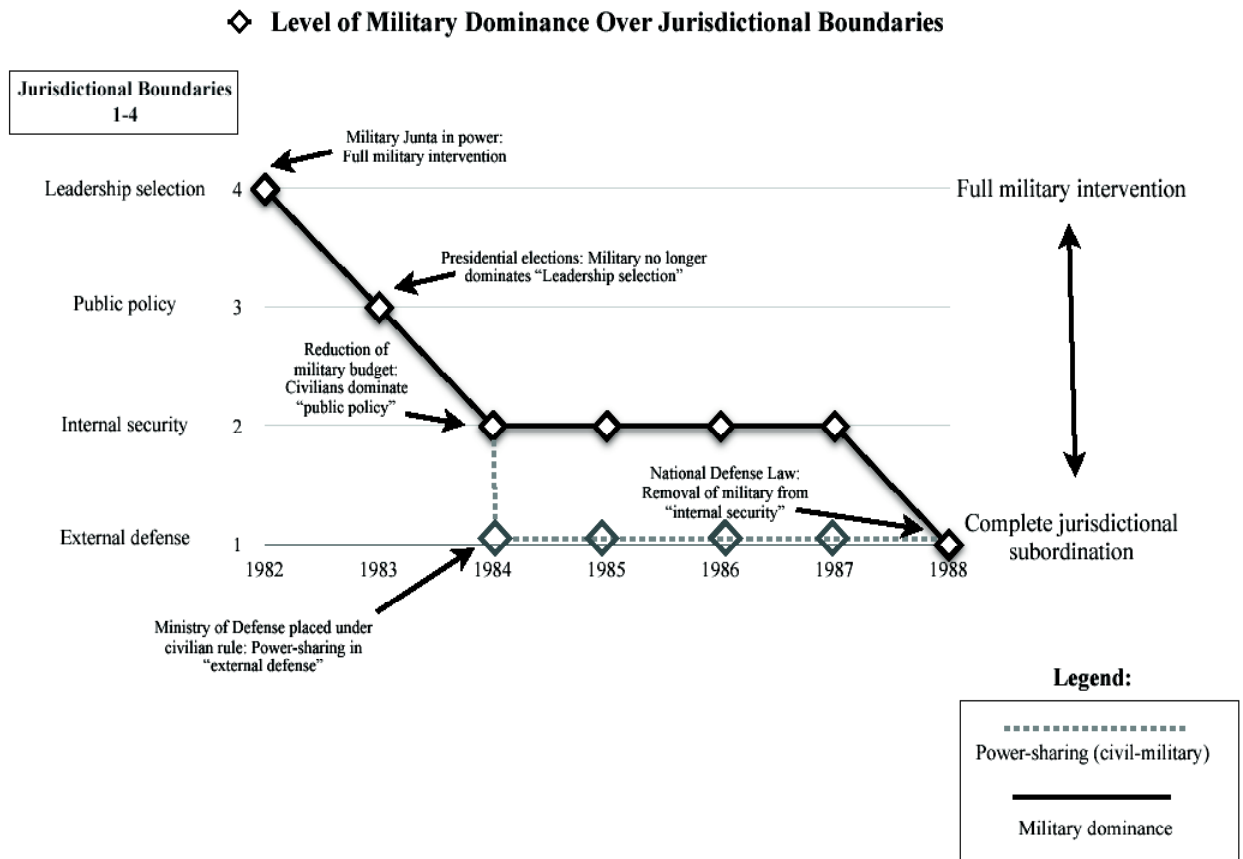
Trinkunas explains that governments have been known to utilize the military for a variety of purposes (tax collecting, policy enforcement, riot control), but when the military is free to determine "when and where they will engage in these activities, they evade civilian control." This makes subordination impossible and as the author argues, that was the case in Argentina in 1982. In this section, I argue that the civil-military jurisdictional boundaries in Argentina drastically changed, leading to the

²¹ After moving to a second-round of elections, former president Carlos Menem decided to step out of the presidential elections, automatically giving Kirchner the presidency.

subordination of the military and the subsequent non-intervention of the military in politics. In the section on public pressure and in the section on government response, I argue that these jurisdictional boundary changes occurred when a high level of public pressure pushed the government to respond and subordinate the military.

The following is a chart of the specific jurisdictional boundary changes that led to the subordination of the military.

Figure 2: Timeline of institutional separation, 1982-1988. (Centeno-Lairret, 2007)



The Civil-Military Jurisdictional Boundaries are arranged by the level of threat to civilian power. The Y-Axis represents the level of military intervention

measured by four levels of jurisdictional boundaries. These are: “leadership selection” (4), which refers to the process of selection of government authorities. “Public policy” (3), which focuses on state budget, policymaking and government strategy, among others. “Internal security” (2) refers to internal emergencies, anti-terrorism, and the overall security of the citizens from an internal threat. Finally, “external defense” (1) includes war-making capabilities and managing the military ranks.

Trinkunas looked at military autonomy and participation over time in order to track the changes in the jurisdictional boundaries.

The author makes an important distinction between governments. He argues that weak and strong civilian control depends on the jurisdictional boundaries. The key differences, says Trinkunas, is the distribution of autonomous military decision-making in internal security and external defense.

Where external security and internal security boundaries are weak, the military will not only share power over those areas with the civilian government, it will also dominate it, thus making the military more likely to dominate civilian authorities and leaving the doors open for the military to intervene in internal politics. In the strong civilian government, the military will share power in the area of external defense, but boundaries outside of external defense are strong enough that the military will not meddle in internal affairs.

In 1982, the Military Junta was in power and there were no signs that it would relinquish power, at least not until the very end of 1982, when internal fractures

between the hard-line officers²² and the moderate officers appeared over how to deal with a possible transition. In this case, the military dominated all areas and had full autonomy, indicating “full military intervention” on Figure 2.

After the transition to democracy on December 5th, 1983, when the Military Junta was dissolved, free and fair, multiparty presidential elections eliminated the level of military dominance over “Leadership selection” (4) and dominance fell to level three “Public policy”.

After the transition to democracy, the president’s first move was to expel almost fifty generals who were associated with the Dirty War and promote those loyal to the government. As part of the restructuring of the military, Alfonsín created a civilian-dominated Ministry of Defense, while downgrading the heads of each service from commanders to chiefs of staff.²³ The military command was also restructured by placing the officers mentioned before under the civilian rule of the Ministry of Defense. According to Pion-Berlin, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force were under the rule of Argentina’s Joint Chiefs of Staff, but only when they cooperated. This ensured that, in 1984, the military shared power over the external defense area.²⁴

Immediately afterwards, the government hurried to trim the large military budget. The civilian government moved in this area dramatically and systematically

²² The hardliners did not wish to relinquish power and pushed for war with England over the Malvinas. The moderators thought it was time to start a gradual transition to civilian rule.

²³ Pion-Berlin, D. (1991). Between Confrontation and Accommodation: Military and Government Policy in Democratic Argentina. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 23(3), p.547.

²⁴ Power-sharing can be identified in Figure 2 as the dotted line starting in 1984 when the Ministry of Defense is civilian dominated, effectively sharing power with the military.

according to an article published in *Clarín* in November of 1984. By that time, Argentina had the world's largest reduction of military spending in the defense budget of any country in the world whose regular budget was more than \$100 million. It was a 40 percent reduction from 1983 to 1986. Important to note is that military salaries fell 25 percent between December 1983 and October 1984, making some of the military officers uncomfortable with their jobs, which made them think twice about obtaining long-term careers in the military.

Civilian dominance over decisions on the military budget, removed the military from the area (3) of "public policy", as shown in Figure 2. At this point, of the four key jurisdictional areas, only the area of "internal security" (2) remained constitutionally in the hands of the military.

After reducing the budget, as many as 500 officers proceeded to premature retirement, and conscription was at an all-time low. By 1987, the army had lost 45 percent of its manpower, the navy 30 percent and the air force almost 12 percent. Some soldiers started doing the job of those that quit and the animosity towards Alfonsín's measures built up. But not all this can be blamed on the government's plan to subordinate the military. The economics minister, Juan Sourrouille, was centered on a tight fiscal budget, where no concessions could be made to any group, not even the military.²⁵

In 1986, however, the military began hitting back. Military officers were worried that the government had no limits and they expressed this to Alfonsín. The

²⁵ Ibid.

pressure was building up and in order to keep a balanced strategy, the administration decided to amend the Military Code of Justice, specifying that only those officers who gave orders to abuse human rights would be put to trial. Eventually, this backfired as many in the military, even those who committed the most atrocious acts, claimed that they were under orders from their higher ranking officers, which to some extent was true claiming *Obediencia Debida* (Due Obedience).

The first rebellion came in Holy Week of 1987 by a group of junior officers who would later be known as the *Carapintadas* for their camouflage painted faces. Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico rebelled inside the Campo de Mayo Regiment and did not let anyone out. They were demanding the resignation of General Rios Erenu, the government's chief of staff and Alfonsín's most trusted General. President Alfonsín went to speak with the rebels in Campo de Mayo and after making some concessions the crisis was resolved.

In Figure 2, the military dominates the area of "internal security" (2) until 1988, when the National Defense Law passed, restricting the military from intervening in "internal security". The law restricted the military's role in security issues to the area of "external defense". This is important because Trinkunas had already labeled the dominance of the military over "internal security" as non-existent in 1987, before the law had passed, awarding the civilian government full dominance over the four jurisdictional areas. I argue that the military had the constitutional dominance over the area of "internal security" until 1988, not until 1987 as Trinkunas argues.

The National Defense Law backfired with the takeover of La Tablada. A group of heavily armed men took hostages and destroyed the regiment, holding the siege for 36 hours. An amendment was put in place in the National Defense Law where, depending on the magnitude of the emergency, the government could authorize the military to step in. This tug of war between the civilian government and the military defined Alfonsín's term and Menem's first years in government. Nonetheless, Menem was able to secure the boundaries once more, isolating the military to its role in the area of external defense.

An significant mistake of the Alfonsín administration, and one that would partly account for the military rebellions against his administration from 1983 to 1989, was that he missed the opportunity to give the country's restructured military a mission. A military with no mission, no reason to stage rehearsals or even march in the barracks became a frustrated military and one that clashed with the government secretly (until it was publicly known when the army rebelled).

In an interview conducted by Pion-Berlin with General Heriberto Auel in 1989, the General explained that Alfonsín "ceded responsibility to devise a new strategic plan to the Policy and Strategy Department within the Estado Mayor Conjunto arguing that there were no hypothesis for conflict because Argentina's neighbors were all at peace with the country."²⁶

²⁶ Pion-Berlin, D. (1991). Between Confrontation and Accomodation: Military and Government Policy in Democratic Argentina. *Journal of Latin american Studies*, 23(3), p. 547.

Public Opinion

The first part of the analysis shows the importance of public opinion and the role it played in the non-intervention of the military in Argentina's politics.

Public Opinion is defined as the opinion of civilians, who are not government officials, in a certain period of time over a certain topic, including attitudes towards government and military.

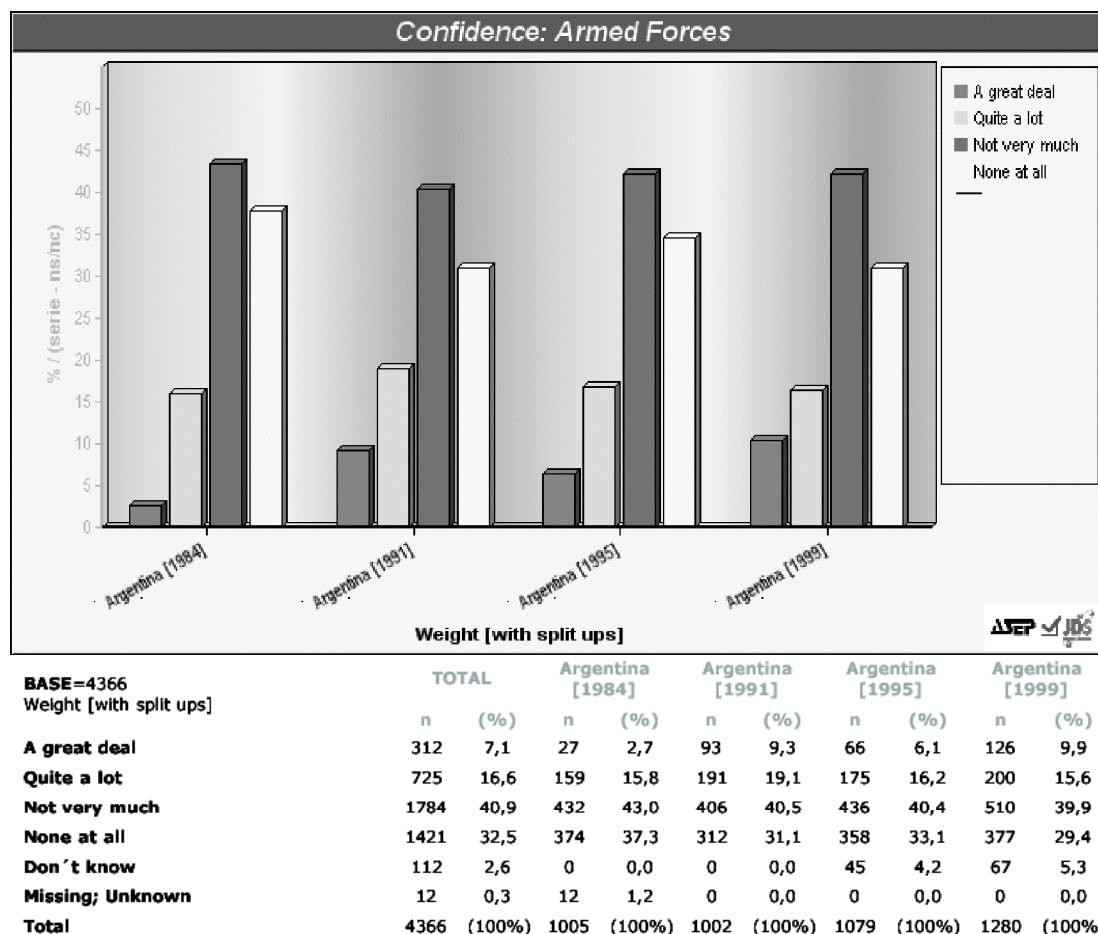
A poll conducted in August 1985 showed the military ranked last in prestige on a list of 12 major groups in Argentina. Not even the higher classes were supportive of the military as they had been in the past, observed one of the directors of the poll. Even more interesting was the support of the labor unions, who in the past had been very active against all the economic plans devised by the government. The labor union leaders saw Alfonsín's Plan Austral as a new chance to get back on track after the military had damaged the economy with a constant 100 to 150 percent inflation, peaking at 343 percent precisely the last year that the military was in power. "Many labor leaders recognizing that there was public approval for the anti-inflationary Plan Austral in 1985, urged restraint among their followers while joining in three-sided discussions (along with government and business) called by Alfonsín designed to smooth the passage of his economic plan."²⁷ In 1985, his ratings reached about 70 percent and polls showed the public still did not support the military.²⁸

²⁷ See Latin American Weekly Report, 28 June 1985, p. 10 in Pion-Berlin, D. (1991). Between Confrontation and Accommodation: Military and Government Policy in Democratic Argentina. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 23(3), p.551.

²⁸ Ibid.

While there are newspaper polls from different months and different years prior to 1985, for this part of the analysis I use the World Value Surveys poll because of the consistent availability of the data from 1984 to 1999.

Figure 3: Confidence of Argentina’s Citizens in the Armed Forces, 1984, 1991, 1995, 1999. (World Values Survey, 2007)



What is important to conclude from the numbers in Figure 3 is that when Alfonsín’s government began to play the game of “reward and punishment” mentioned earlier, the political capital to subordinate the military was there, in public opinion. While only 18.5 percent of public opinion had some confidence in the

military, the cluster “Not very much/None at all” shows an 80.3 percent vote of no confidence for the military in 1984. Furthermore, these statistics develop into a trend reaching as far as 1999, extending that storage of legitimacy over a period of fifteen years.

As will be observed in the coding results, the rejection of the military is constant from 1984 to 1987 but the policies of the government are not. With this comparison in mind, public opinion plays a key role in the government’s leverage against an unpopular military. This contrast of support (low for the military, high for the government) facilitated the jurisdictional boundary changes shown in the framework for analysis.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

The results for the content analysis employed for this section provide a much better measure than the previous literature (Stepan, 1974) of how public pressure interacted with the military and the government to produce the separation of the military from internal politics, thus making it less likely to intervene. For an in depth explanation of the content analysis, including headlines examples for each case, see Appendix 1.

While Stepan’s study does show how newspapers can portray the public’s support or lack thereof for the military, it does so focusing only on a small segment of society by looking only at editorials. The following analysis should encourage other

political scientists to look at public pressure²⁹ as an important factor in the separation of the military from internal politics.

Content Analysis Framework:

The content analysis follows the “Level of Military Dominance Over Jurisdictional Boundaries Timeline” (Figure 2). The analysis looks at the four jurisdictional changes specified in Figure 2 and specifically focuses the coding around two of these jurisdictional changes: the Code of Military Justice and the Law of Due Obedience.

For 1983-1984:

Ministry of Defense placed under civilian rule

Reduction of military budget

Code of Military Justice

For 1986-1987:

Law of due Obedience

The content analysis framework focuses on two jurisdictional reforms: the Law of Due Obedience and the Code of Military Justice. Because these jurisdictional reforms are approved between 1983 and 1987, they represent the beginning and the

²⁹ Public Pressure: Defined as the sum of demands, events and opinions coming from: politicians outside of government, families of the military and of the disappeared, human rights groups and reporters (media).

end of the period in the content analysis, thus providing a substantial quantity of newspaper samples before the laws are passed and after they are passed.

The Code of Military Justice was approved by Congress on November 16, 1983. This jurisdictional reform passed early enough to be a starting point in the 1983-1987 framework for the content analysis. The code was approved in order to allow the military to process military officers involved in human rights violations.

The Law of Due Obedience on the other hand, passed on June 3, 1987 is far enough in the time period between 1983 and 1987 to provide a representative measure of the interaction between the government, the military and the polity. The law specifies that officers who were taking orders from superiors during the Dirty War cannot be processed. Put simply, an officer claims due obedience in a trial if he was following orders.

The content analysis has been divided in pre-law and post-law periods in order to understand the dynamics of polity, government and military. The amount of weeks for pre-law and post-law are as follow:

Code of Military Justice:

Pre-Law: 13 weeks

Post-Law: 14 weeks

Law of Due Obedience:

Pre-Law: 17 weeks

Post-Law: 14 weeks

Grouping headlines by weeks eliminates the problem of inaccuracy when done by months. If the method is done by months, the months that had 20 headlines in a week and 0 headlines for the other three weeks will show 20 headlines per month, which is inaccurate for measuring public pressure. The reaction of the public to reforms or military issues does not take months to show up in headlines, it usually takes days or weeks. Furthermore, because this content analysis is looking for public pressure around the dates of specific reforms, weeks, not months, will show a better description of the intensity of public pressure before and after each law.

Pressure on the Military or Pressure on the Government?

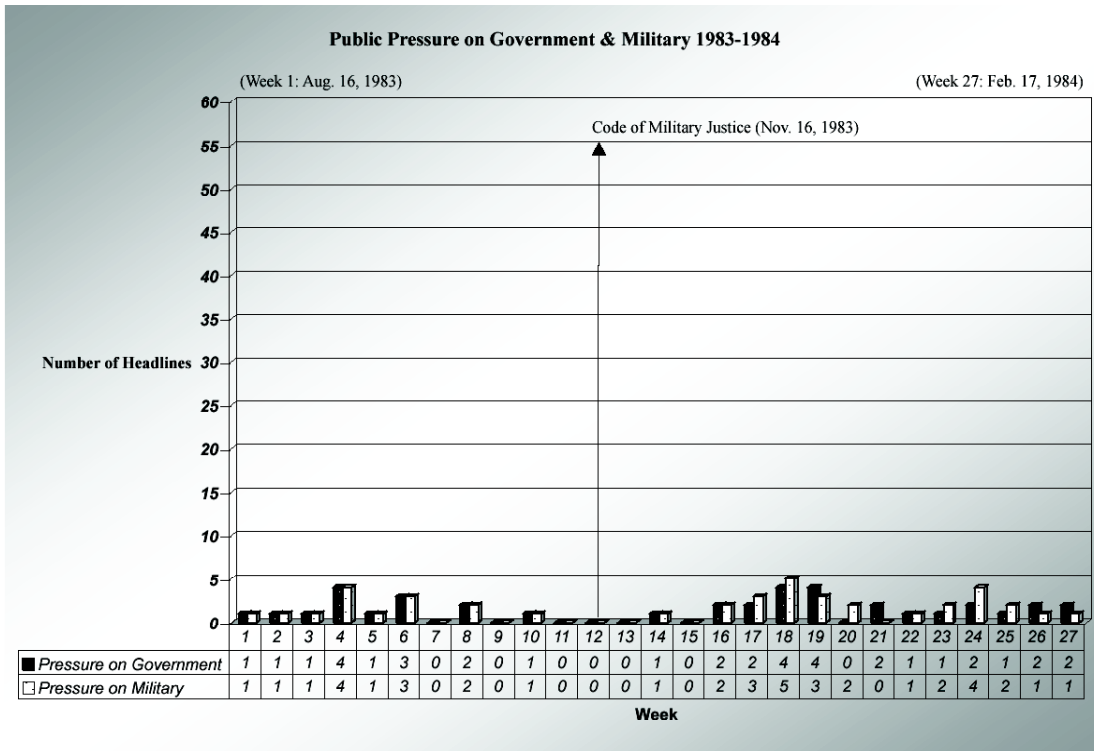
1983-1984 Coding Results:

The key in the sample I chose to code is the passing of the Code of Military Justice on November 11, 1983 (week 13). From that point the timeline of public pressure is divided in pre-law (weeks 1-13) and post-law (weeks 14-27).

The year 1984 was remarkably different than 1987 because it was the first year that Argentina experienced democracy since 1976. This means that the intensity of headlines will not be the same as they were in 1987 because of the media's self-censorship and also because only at the very end of 1983 did the military allow public gatherings³⁰, limiting the quantity of headlines like the ones presented in 1987.

³⁰ 07/15/83. La Nacion.

Chart 1: Public Pressure on Argentina’s Government and Military, as Measured by News Headlines, 1983-1984



There are two periods of time to point out from the chart (*PO*) *Government & Military 1984*. Period one from week 4-11 and period two from week 14-20.

Period one (4-11):

The four stacked bars in this period form a descending pattern of public pressure, starting at four headlines per week and falling to none in week eleven. On week four, the campaign for elections gains strength, inspiring the Madres of Plaza de Mayo to hold demonstrations and pressure the government through international

organizations and through requests to process the military officers, who had gone beyond their duties to torture and murder civilians during the Dirty War. As elections get closer (just two months away), newspapers focus on the presidential candidates and less on what human rights organizations have to say, triggering the downward trend in this period until it totals zero on week 11, extending to week 13 when the Code of Military Justice passes and public resurges.

Period two (14-20):

After the Code of Military Justice passes, public pressure gains strength until it hits an all-time high for the 1984 sample on week 18. By week 14, Alfonsín is already in power opening the doors to trials for the military officers of the Junta. On weeks 18 and 19 public pressure rises because there are rumors that the government may reform the Code of Military Justice to allow the trial of anyone involved in human rights abuses, no matter their rank³¹. Indeed, on January 2, 1984 the government begins the official debate on the Code of Military Justice.

The most insightful point of all these periods comes from the public's response to the first Code of Military Justice on week 13, which is created by the Junta. After its approval, headlines surge to four times as many as on week 13, possibly pressuring the government to begin unofficial discussions on a new Code of Military Justice between weeks 18 and 19. In fact, on week 19 *La Nación* reported that President Alfonsín met with leaders of civil society and Senators met with the

³¹ 12/22/83 "The investigations will be exhaustive" p.1

Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, something that had not happened before.³² The week after, the debate over the Code of Military Justice is officially announced.³³

1986-1987 Coding Results:

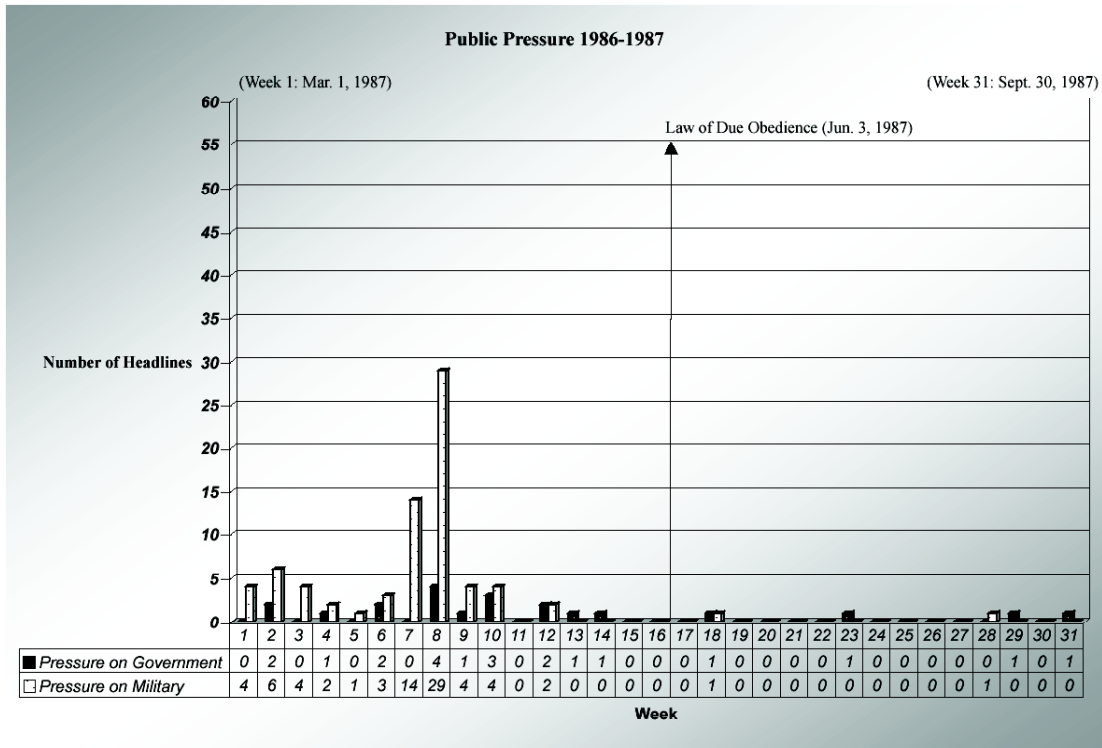
The key in the sample I chose to code is the passing of the Law of Due Obedience on June 3, 1987 (week 17). From that point the timeline of public pressure is divided in pre-law (weeks 1-17) and post-law (weeks 17-31).

An interesting characteristic of the findings is that while most public pressure is targeted at both the military and the government, when the democratic establishment is threatened by military rebellions, public pressure on the military increases dramatically. In a way it is almost as if public pressure is defending its civilian government. But this also provides an insightful element: when democracy is threatened, public pressure on the military is far higher than public pressure on the government. This reads like an obvious element in a democratic system but in Argentina the norm was that whenever a military government took power, it was supported by the higher strata of society and the business elite.

³² Ibid. Alfonsín meets with members of civil society. Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo with Senators p.15.

³³ 01/02/84 “The Debate Over the Code of Military Justice Starts” p.1

Chart 2: Public Pressure on Argentina’s Government and Military, as Measured by News Headlines, 1986-1987



Note in the *Public Pressure 1987* chart that on weeks seven and eight, there is a jump in public pressure headlines. On week seven, the first major military rebellion against President Alfonsin took place. On week six the data moves from just three headlines pressuring the military and two headlines pressuring the government to a staggering 14 headlines pressuring the military and zero pressuring government on week seven. The following week (week eight), that number increases almost 50 percent to reach 29 headlines, while pressure on the government only increases to four. This signals an increase by almost 10 times the intensity of pressure on the military. *La Nacion* reported demonstrations of 80,000 people in front of Congress in

support of the president and almost 500,000 demonstrators on the streets all over Argentina in just two days.³⁴

Also, these levels are unique because as soon as order is reestablished, public pressure on the military decreases to a normal level of zero to four headlines per week.

However, this is not the only explanation for the increases in public pressure against the military. The law of Due Obedience was created after a constant clash inside the government and between judges and human rights groups for weeks over whether Due Obedience was applicable in the Dirty War cases. The law was passed on the 17th week, on June 6, 1987.

The concept of Due Obedience was in public discussion long before the rebellion started. On week one, Due Obedience gained special notice when General Camps, on trial for human rights abuses became one of the first to be considered for trial on the basis of Due Obedience.³⁵ If the segment from week one to week fourteen and the segment from week 15 to week 31 are compared, notice that 15-31 has little to no public pressure and 1-14 does have plenty of it. Even before the rebellion there is a constant push on the military and the government to a lesser extent. This may suggest that the public had nothing to pressure for during weeks 15-31 and that the grievance it had in 1-14 was satisfied by both government and military.

³⁴ 4/20/1987 La Nacion (p.1)

³⁵ “Caso Camps: la Corte podria decidir la obediencia debida” 3/4/1987 La Nacion (p.6)

Indeed, looking at the headlines it is easy to see that from week 9-17, the government is responding to the grievance that thousands of demonstrators had: keep the democratic system and subordinate the military. But to do that, the government had to compromise to some extent with the rebels. While this did not mean the government would give amnesty to anyone, it did mean that it would examine due obedience as a possible law to be applied to all cases of the Dirty War. This satisfied both the military and the public, at least for the following months as the crisis was resolved and the public was satisfied with the resolution.

From week 9-17, the government invested all of its resources in forming the Law of Due Obedience, and when the government announced that it would move to propose Due Obedience as a law on week 11³⁶, no pressure was reported and only one or two headlines pressured the government or military in a span of 18 weeks after that, possibly pointing to the resolution, as mentioned before, of a public grievance.

While these results may seem isolated from the bigger picture of this research, they are pieces of the puzzle that will be fully comprehensible once all the variables are examined.

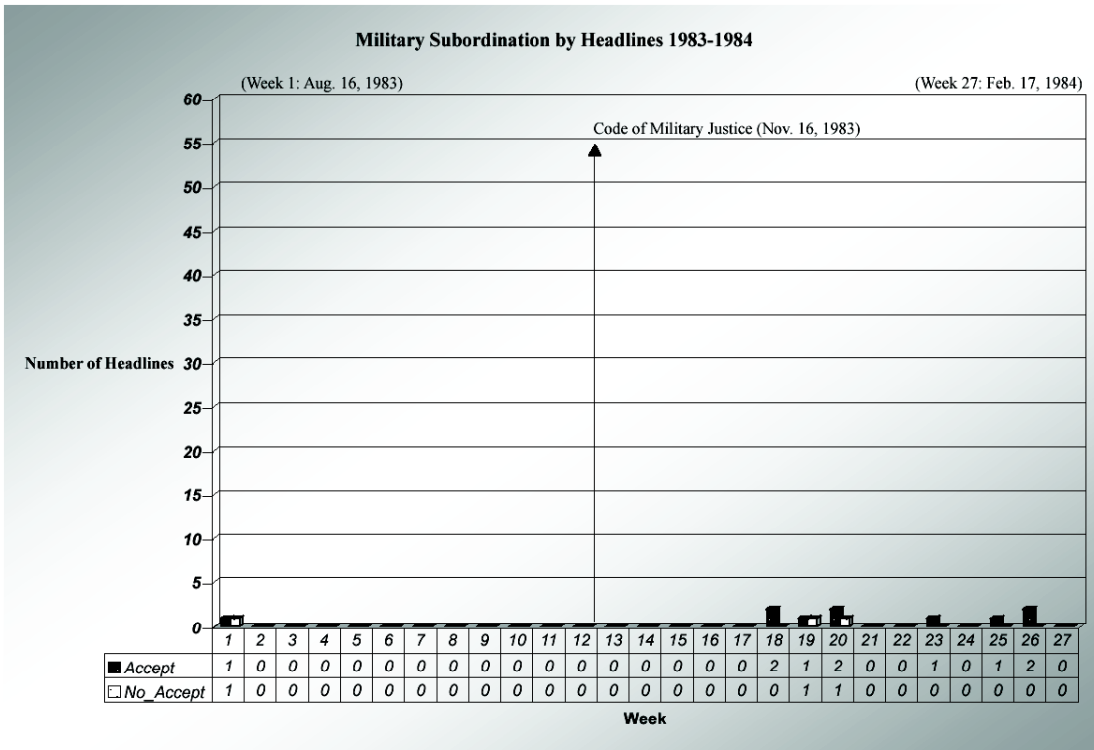
³⁶ 05/09/87 La Nacion "A project of law is imminent" p.6

MILITARY NON-INTERVENTION

In Trinkunas’ jurisdictional boundary analysis, it is possible to see that Alfonsin’s government subordinated the military drastically, changing it from a fully autonomous institution in 1982 to one sharing power in the most inner area of the jurisdictional boundary. According to Trinkunas this signals that in Argentina the Armed Forces are less likely to intervene.

I have used the same coding scheme to explain the subordination of the military. In the chart, “Accept” is when headlines show a military that accepts the demands of the civilian government and “No_Accept” is when headlines show the opposite.

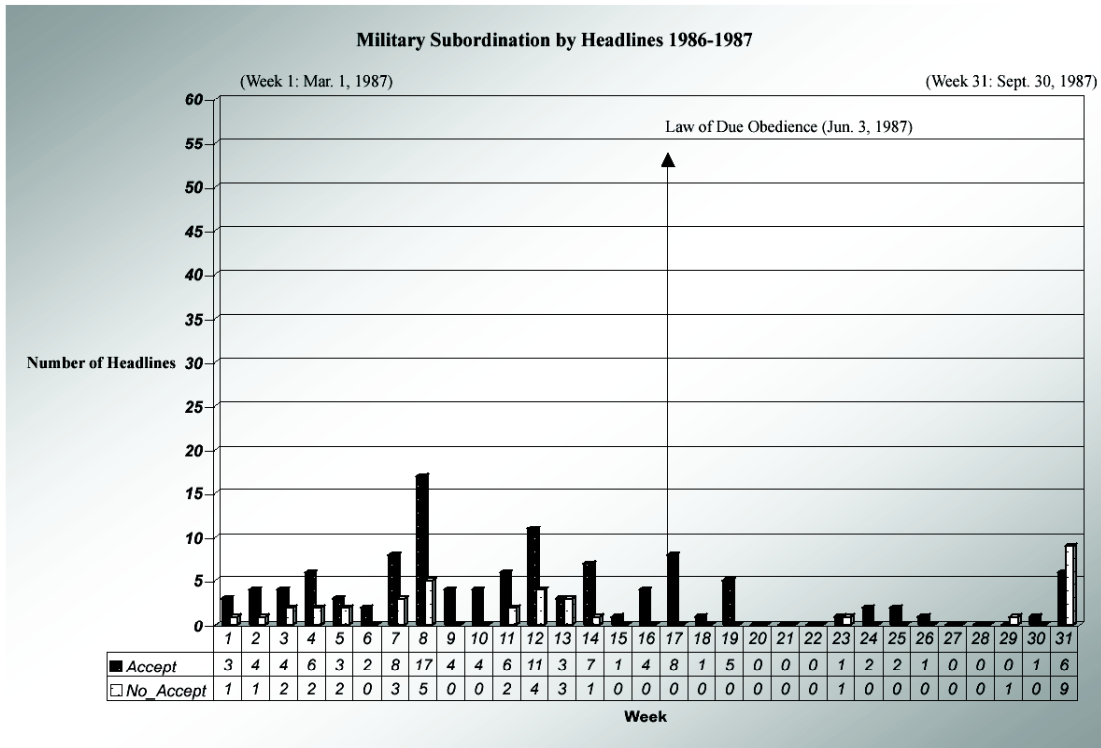
Chart 3: Subordination of Argentina’s Military, as Measured by News Headlines, 1983-1984



1983-1984 Coding Results:

The results for the chart Accept No_Accept 1984 are too insignificant to draw any conclusions. If anything is visible, it is that from week 18 to week 26, one can observe the beginnings of the subordination of the military.

Chart 4: Subordination of Argentina’s Military, as Measured by News Headlines, 1986-1987



1986-1987 Coding Results:

The results for 1987 provide a lot more information than 1984’s. For this time period, note the same separation of the chart at week 17 when the Law of Due Obedience passes.

The first thing to draw from this chart is that in all weeks but one the military is subordinated. The only week when the military is insubordinate is on week 31

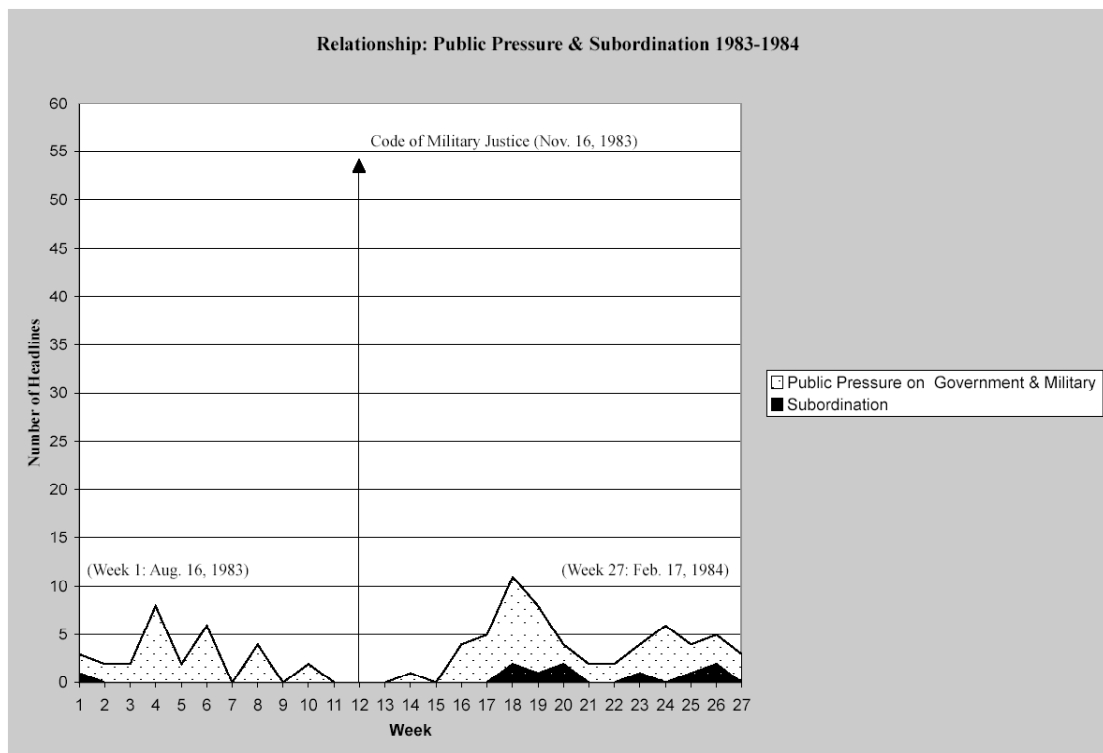
when there is an unexpected military rebellion in the third regiment, which is quickly put down the next day³⁷. Also important to note is that in 20 out of 31 weeks, headlines about the military subordinating to civilian power are twice as high or more than those headlines showing a rebellious military. Furthermore, 12 out of 31 weeks present only headlines of military subordination. These three results show a subordinated military during these 31 weeks, which compliments the conclusions drawn from Trinkunas' Figure 4, portraying 1984-1987 with a completely subordinated military.

Finally, after week 17 when the Law of Due Obedience passes, there are almost no headlines between week 20 and week 30, signaling the possibility that the military is no longer trying to rebel and that the government does not need to subordinate the military because the civilian government has imposed its will. The unexpected rebellion on week 31, though, is an exception to the rule as it was a minor rebellion that ended in a few hours.

³⁷ 09/28/87 "Acuartelamiento en el Regimiento 3: Efectivos de la unidad adoptaron esa medida en desacuerdo con el relevo de su jefe, el Tte. Coronel Dario Fernandez Maguer" p.1

PUBLIC PRESSURE AND THE SUBORDINATION OF THE MILITARY

Chart 5: Public Pressure on the Government and the Military Stacked with Subordination of the Military, as Measured by News Headlines, 1983-1984

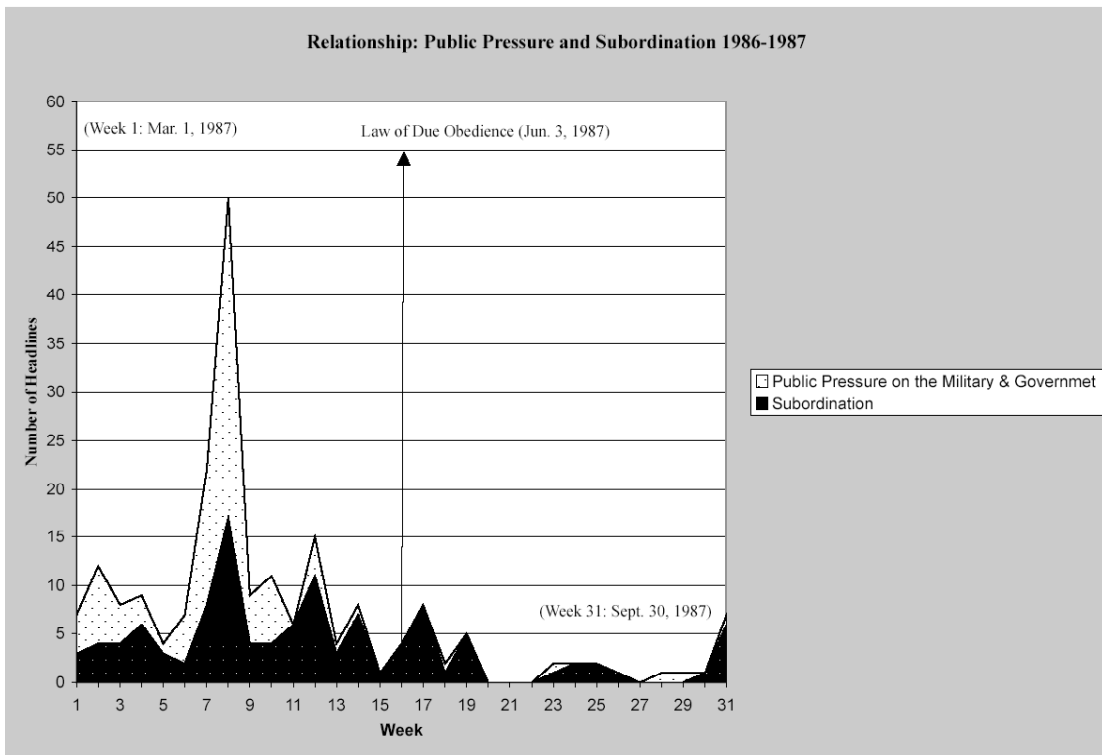


1983-1984 Coding Results:

Only two conclusions can be extracted from this chart. One is that public pressure is significantly higher after the Junta leaves (week 16) and the second is that subordination of the military starts to gain some ground around the time that members of civil society meet with Alfonsín and the senators meet with the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo (week 19).

As I stated in the beginning of the research, while it is nearly impossible to establish a direct relationship between public pressure in headlines and the subordination of the military, the results certainly show important patterns.

Chart 6: Public Pressure on the Government and the Military Stacked with Subordination of the Military, as Measured by News Headlines, 1986-1987



1986-1987 Coding Results:

After grouping Public Pressure indicators (Government and Military) to visualize the amount of public pressure compared to the amount of subordination, different conclusions can be drawn. The first possible conclusion is that public pressure was greater than subordination intensity prior to week 15 when subordination became more intense. The second possible conclusion is that the

clusters on the chart show great similarity in their highs and lows with respect to the time. For example, between weeks six and nine, where the largest quantity of public pressure is registered, the subordination level is also at its highest. Other cases with similar characteristics are weeks 3-5, weeks 11-13 and weeks 13-15. This signals that there must be a close relationship in the way that public pressure fluctuates over time and the way the military subordinates over time.

There is one very important conclusion to draw from the results. From weeks 1-13, public pressure is high and subordination is high but after that, and especially after the approval of the Law of Due Obedience on week 17, neither subordination nor public pressure make a strong comeback between week 20 and 30. I conclude that because public pressure dropped, the government did not feel the urgency to subordinate the military more than it already had subordinated it after the rebellion, hence the drop in instances of military subordination and public pressure. This is connected with the earlier assumptions from the *Accept No _Accept 1987* chart that showed that when the government subordinated the military, the headlines for government subordinating the military drop to almost none.

In conclusion: if the military is subordinated, the public does not need to pressure and the government steps back. The opposite happens during the rebellion: when the public pressured twice as much as any other indicator, the government stepped in, consequently making the military subordination indicator surge.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE³⁸

As mentioned in the literature review, studies have shown that the presidential speeches to the Senate are good indicators of government response because they seek reelection and they tend to base their reelection on how responsive they were to the requests of the polity (Hobolt and Klemmensen, 2005). Following the previous literature, this section measures independent variable III.

Two things show a response from the executive to the demands of the public. One is the mentioning of or allusion to specific policies that are examined in the previous headings dataset: Due Obedience Law and Code of Military Justice. The second element that shows response from the executive is a test I have conducted with the years 1996 and 2000, when there was no mention of the military in the annual speech to the Senate.

My assumption was that when the public does not pressure for changes in the military with the intensity that it pressured the executive before, the speech would show nothing on military matters. On the other hand, if I did find a similar intensity of pressure to the years 1984 and 1987, before and after a law is passed in 1996 and 2000, then I would have to conclude that the executive does not respond to public pressure in its annual speeches to the Senate because the executive does not mention military matters in 1996 and 2000.

³⁸ Government Response: Defined as the acknowledgement of public opinion and/or public pressure by the executive branch of government.

Tests for 1996 and 2000

Coding Results 1996:

The amount of headlines pressuring government in 1996 on military matters was so reduced that it was impossible to create a chart with the numbers. Instead, I will show that public pressure does not push the government or the military to act on anything regarding the military.

I have located a cluster of headlines between May 20, 1996 and July 9, 1996. Before and after this timespan, only one or two headlines on the military come up. What is impressive is that none of these headlines qualify as public pressure. They are all coded as Accept/No_Accept, meaning that they are all headlines coming from military leaders acting on government and or government acting on the military. In this cluster of data then, the average public pressure headline was zero.

Coding Results 2000:

To corroborate that this is not unique to this year, I look at the year 2000 as well, and it differs a bit. In a cluster of eight weeks where most of the headlines come up, (between February 8, 2000 and April 24, 2000,) seven headlines are coded as public pressure. All of them are dispersed and none of the days mentioned show more than one headline on a single day. This is remarkably different from 1984 and 1987, when on many instances the number of headlines in one day surpassed two and were clustered around a couple of weeks.

The topic that prompted all eight headlines was the trial of military officers for stealing³⁹ the babies of the Dirty War prisoners. General Videla, who led the Military Junta in 1976, was found guilty in 2000 of involvement in the stealing of the babies.

Qualitative Response in the Annual Speeches to the Senate

1984 Response:

In 1984, one must look back at the law that was analyzed in the public pressure section: the reform of the Code of Military Justice. There is one section of the speech where President Alfonsín mentions the change:

“We’ve advanced a lot. The modification of the Code of Military Justice, the restructuring of the Joint Chiefs of Staff...” and “the individual submission to the judges of the Constitution of those responsible for the previous military and political conduction...”⁴⁰

1987 Response:

In 1987 the speech comes just days after the military rebellion, providing a glimpse into what the executive was thinking about doing after the high level of public pressure. Remember that in 1987, before the rebellion, public pressure was high and after the rebellion it was high, too, compared to the reduced levels after the

³⁹ Stealing is the term used in the headlines as opposed to kidnapping.

⁴⁰ La Política de Defensa Argentina, A través de los Mensajes Presidenciales al Congreso 1854-2001. Bs. As., Instituto de Historia Militar, 2002. p.724-725

Law of Due Obedience passed. With this in mind, we can get a better understanding of why the President decides to reach out so much to civil society in his 1987 speech:

“Even after we had affirmed the never again, even knowing that this democracy is irreversible, the full comprehension of our force surged when workers, businessmen, union leaders, politicians, religious leaders, students, citizens of all ages, professions and social conditions went to the street to say No to the grudge of the past and Yes to the future. No, to those who put the Nation –again- in the military between life and death, between peace and blood.”⁴¹

Notice how Alfonsín attributes the resolution of the events on Campo de Mayo to civilians. To end his speech, Alfonsín once again makes a strong statement in response to public pressure for democracy: “...but all who attempt to meddle with the difficulties and problems of the Armed Forces is in fact attacking the democratic system in its entirety. And that, as was seen, will not be tolerated by the will of the majority of the people.”

If Alfonsín had not been pressured by the public to act on the events of 1987, and more importantly, if the public had not pressured the military as it did (as shown in the coding results), would Alfonsín have had the leverage to quell the rebellion? And for the purpose of this section on government response, could it have been possible for Alfonsín to leave the public out of the speech? While it is impossible to answer this question, it is possible to assume that the mention of public pressure on

⁴¹Ibid. p.730

the military in the President's speech in 1987 is a strong sign that there was government response in 1987 as well.

CONCLUDING ANALYSIS

The abundance of evidence contained in the current research explains how public opinion and public pressure, in Argentina, impacted defense policy between 1983 and 1987 by separating the military from domestic politics.

The government was able to rely on a considerable rejection of the previous regime, portrayed in public opinion, to reform the military structure as it saw fit. The analysis on the relationship between public pressure and the subordination of the military showed that while one cannot specifically point to a causal relationship, there are some very clear signs demonstrating that the fluctuations in public pressure intensity over time and the fluctuations of military subordination over time are similar. Nonetheless, the headlines coded before the rebellion of 1987 showed a pattern of pressure for government to act and military to comply but the headlines after and during the rebellion were all reactions to the rebellion. This is very important to note because it shows a non-linear interaction between public pressure and the other actors. In essence, the public pressured the government and the military, then the military pressured the public and the government and finally the military was subordinated until the next period of interactions.

It's also key to note that when democracy is threatened and/or when the military tries to intervene in domestic politics (i.e. the rebellion of 1987), public

pressure on the government decreased and public pressure on the military increased tenfold, in two weeks. This is a significant new result that the literature had not looked at before with quantitative measures.

Furthermore, the data shows that public pressure is high when a law is about to pass, while after it passes the levels of public pressure drop to almost no headlines (Law of Due Obedience, 1987), signaling the possibility that the government has indeed responded to those demands, quelling all calls for reform. In terms of government response, I also showed with a test of 1996 and 2000 public pressure headlines coding that when there is no significant public pressure in a determined period, the government does not respond, thus no reforms are made in military matters.

In sum, public pressure played a role in military non-intervention in Argentina in the post-1983 period. The literature overlooked one of the most important factors of civil-military relations: civilians. This research shows the importance of looking at the public as another intervening variable in civil-military relations.

Because the government was able to rely on a storage of public opinion that rejected the previous regime, it responded in a timely manner to public pressure and was able to separate the military from domestic politics, relegating it to sharing power over the inner most part and less threatening boundary (Trinkunas, 2002) of external defense. This resulted in a dominating civilian government, which was able to establish a relatively stable democratic regime lasting more than any other in Argentina's history.

CONCLUDING LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research is limited in several areas. One of them is time constraints and a lack of funds, which did not allow the author to employ a full content analysis looking at least at two different newspapers. But because of the relatively independent nature of *La Nacion*, the source of information provided a reliable source of headlines. This perspective was further aided by the headline-coding research method, allowing the author to code for events and actions, instead of opinions that may be biased.

This research would also benefit from an analysis of other years of reform to show the consistency of the results.

A final limitation was the availability of information. Most government archives are not available on the internet or microfilm. They are only available in Buenos Aires. For future research, I recommend processing this data onto a universal access format that will allow the researchers to use all sources of information.

The Argentine case study serves as a recent, well documented, case resembling the possible outcome of other democracies in the region. If Bolivia enters a deep socio-economic crisis, will public opinion and public pressure have a role in preventing the military's intervention in domestic politics? Other implications are important too: Ecuador has experienced a history of military governments that plagues current institutions. Is public opinion and public pressure having any impact on the separation of national defense and domestic politics? If not, more research should contain normative approaches to Ecuador and other unstable democracies with

fragile public opinion channels and underdeveloped defense policy in the democratic context.

Finally, a recommendation to political scientists: The literature on civil-military relations must be expanded to include studying the relationship between public pressure and public opinion on civil-military relations, not only in Latin America but also in Africa and Asia, where the military has had a permanent role in politics in countries like Guinea-Bissau or Thailand. If policy reforms have not been enough and if the public remains quiet after a military intervention, does that signal a similarity with Argentina in 1976 or Brazil's military experience? The *Aggravated Problematique* should remind the researcher that it is not enough to reform the military, the government or to professionalize the institution, it is also necessary to educate the populace.

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APPENDIX 1: CODING BOOK

The literature on content analysis specifies the need for a coding book to guide the process of coding. Included in the Coding Book, there is an explanation of the coding process used, including headlines and specific examples.

CODING BOOK

Don't code when:

Headline includes action by political candidate. For example: "Alfonsin talked about the disappeared" (La Nacion 02/21/84 p. 4)

Headline doesn't include an action by an actor on another actor. For example: "Relationship between the Armed forces and the government" (La Nacion 03/10/84 p. 6)

Headline is repetitive. For Example: "Due Obedience to be debated today" (La Nacion 05/28/87 p. 1) and "Senate debates Due Obedience today" (La Nacion 05/29/87 p. 1)

WHEN CODING (warnings)

Judiciary does not qualify as government. The parties involved in the trial are the ones to be coded. For example: "Detention of several military officers requested" (La Nacion 01/19/84 p. 10) Civilian makes the request, coded as pressure on military from civilians.

Before democracy, the Military Junta is both government and military.

CODING TERMINOLOGY

Public Opinion: human rights groups, non-political individuals, NGO representatives, the media, religious leaders.

Government: The executive, legislative branches. Central government and decentralized government too. Before December 5th 1983 it's the Military Junta.

Military: Former military, current military. All of the Armed Forces. Before December 5th, 1983, it's also the government. Code 1 for G and 1 M simultaneously.

CODING RULES

(M) Accept:

Code when military agrees with demands from government. For example:
“Insurrection group surrenders to government” (La Nacion 04/20/87 p. 1)

When it subordinates itself. For example: “Rios Erenu (highest ranking officer in the government) advocates for democracy” (La Nacion 03/26/87 p. 1) and “Taking power is not in our language” (La Nacion 04/14/87 p. 10)

When the government subordinates it. For example: “Commander of the VI Brigade was fired” (La Nacion 04/19/87 p. 14)

When the judiciary pursues the military. For example: “Rigorous prevention of liberty to Lieutenant Carella” (La Nacion 03/11/87 p. 1)

(M) No Accept:

Code when military doesn't agree with demands from the government. For example:
The rebellion of 1987 was clearly a rebellion against policies of the government against the military.

When it rebels, in words or actions, against the civilian government. For example:
“The Army will defend the dignity of its men” (La Nacion 03/04/87 p. 1)

When it subordinates the civilian government.

(PP) G:

When (PP) questions the government.
When (PP) demands something from government.

When (PP) makes grievance public by protesting, orally, or written. For example:
“Protest [demanding answers from government] ends in Congress” (La Nacion 12/09/83 p. 1)

(PP) M:

When (PP) questions the military. “Charges against Generals, intensified [human rights group]” (La Nacion 03/18/84 p. 12)

When (PP) demands something from the military. For example: In 1987 civilians protesting, demanded the surrender of the rebel soldiers.

When (PP) makes grievance public protesting, orally, or written. “People protested... in front of Congress [against the military rebellion]” (La Nacion 04/18/87 p. 1)

When (PP) requests the trial of military officer(s). Only code first request. For example: When General Camps was due in court, the newspapers kept repeating the order to take him to court.

When (PP) makes statements to support the constitutional government in a time of military rebellion. For example: When the federation of students organized a massive rally in support of democracy. (La Nacion 04/19/87 p. 19)

Special Coding Rules for Military Junta Period (follows same guidelines as before)

For Code of Military Justice, special codings are in effect before December 5th, 1983:

(M) Accept:

Code when military agrees with demands from presidential candidates.

When it subordinates itself.

When presidential candidates subordinate it.

When the judiciary pursues the military.

(M) No _Accept:

Code when military doesn't agree with demands from the presidential candidates.

When it rebels, in words or actions, against the presidential candidates.

APPENDIX 2: SURVEY INFORMATION

The first part of this survey (1984), has a sample size of 1,005 participants. Gordon Heald used a personal “face to face interview” procedure limiting the sample to the urbanized portion of the country, which counts for about 70 percent of the population.

The second part (1991), has a sample size of 1,002 participants. Instituto Gallup Argentina, conducted the poll for four months also targeting the urbanized portion of the population. The survey selected 200 sampling points, with about five people at each point.

The third part (1995), was also conducted by Gallup Argentina and had a sample of 1,075 participants in the same central, urban region of Argentina. Finally, the fourth part of the survey (1999) was conducted by the same institute with a sample of 1,280 participants and the same methodology.

APPENDIX 3: MORE ON THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND THE RESEARCH TOOLS

Dataset

The dataset is composed of headlines relevant to the issue of civil-military relations in which the words “military”, “army” and “armed forces” appear. The headline entry also includes page number and date of headline for accurate citation.

In order to measure the headlines importance for civil-military relations, they have been assigned indicators of public opinion pressure. In every headline the question that enables the coding of the text into one of the indicators is: Who is pressuring whom? It is important to note that some headlines will involve more than one indicator because not all headlines refer to just one unit pressuring another; they may include other actors pressuring various actors simultaneously.

As the literature on the methodology of Content Analysis suggests, the researcher must design a coding book.⁴²

Tables

There is one table in the research. Provided by the World Values survey, it presents the marginal statistics for the confidence in the military in 1984, 1991, 1994, and 1999.

⁴² See Appendix 1.

Charts

There are several charts. The charts on public pressure and military subordination have three important points of information. The (y) axis always represents the amount of headlines or the headline intensity. The (x) axis always represents the sample of weeks and finally, the vertical line that separates the charts in half, or sometimes into two-thirds, indicates the week in which a law is passed or a reform takes place.

President's Speeches to Senate

I present an analysis of two speeches to the Senate. One is in 1984 and the other in 1987. They are both taken directly from Argentina's Institute of Military History and I have translated the texts into English for this research.

Survey

In addition to the World Values Survey, there are four other surveys, three of which are conducted by the Gallup Institute in Argentina and one, which is conducted by Gordon Heald.