Congressional Support for the Use of Military Force Dataset

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgments **3**
Process of Collecting the Data **3**
Project Goals 3
Defining congressional sentiment toward the use of military force 4
Temporal and Geographic domain 5
Coding Procedure 7
Data-generating process 7
Coding process 8
Datasets and Variables **10**
Formats and identifier variables 10
Formats of the data 10
Identifier variables 11
CSUMF_Crises (Postwar U.S. Crises) 12
CSUMF_speeches (raw) 15
CSUMF_CSS (Aggregated Congressional Support Scores) 20
References **27**

Acknowledgments

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Undergraduate research assistants at UCSD, more than anything else, were the key to this research. Gurman Dhaliwal, Vorathip Plengpanit, Natalie Gold, Duy Nguyen, Carlos Paredes, Dillon Cooke, Gianna Pedro, Erika Villarreal Garcia, Manuel Aguilera-Prieto, Christa Cheung, Alexandra Vignau, Luis Favela, Jinneva Santiesteban, Jiayi Li, Kevin Chin, Anurag Asthana, and Cole Reynolds all contributed to developing the data between 2019 and 2023. This project also benefited from financial support from the UC San Diego graduate division, the department of political science, and the Stand Together Trust.

While the vast majority of the credit for this project belongs to the team of undergraduates who worked through thousands of congressional speeches—and Erik Gartzke's cPASS for funding this project—any faults found within are mine alone.

Process of Collecting the Data

Project Goals

The long-term goal of this project is to systematically measure congressional sentiment toward the possible use of military force in all crises relevant to the United States throughout history. As will be explained below, such a monumental task will have to wait until the future, but for now the project has sought to gauge lawmaker sentiment in nearly two hundred crises via the Congressional Record (i.e., floor speeches) in the years between 1945 and 2022. Additionally, tweet data from members of Congress has been collected and analyzed for the 2017 to 2022 time period. Future (and currently ongoing) versions of the data will be expanded temporally (i.e., prior to 1945 and after 2022), and via the media analyzed (i.e., beyond floor speeches and tweets to items such as member press releases, media appearances, statements in committee hearings, etc.). Ultimately, the question of interest is how congressional sentiment in foreign policy in general, and in military crises specifically, influences the crisis behavior of not only the American president, but also allies and adversaries abroad.

Defining congressional sentiment toward the use of military force

By "congressional sentiment toward the use of military force", this project is referring to the attitudes and preferences expressed by American lawmakers toward the (potential) use of American military force in pursuit of a foreign policy objective in a specific crisis. The intent here is not to gauge an abstract notion of lawmaker hawkishness or dovishness in general, but to see exactly the sentiment they are expressing toward potentially using military force *in a specific crisis context*. In other words, we are not trying to measure a lawmaker's latent hawkishness, but rather to measure the opinions of lawmakers toward using American combat power in specific situations—and then, in turn to compare this to the choice ultimately made by the executive branch, in order to determine how congruent U.S. military policy is with the expressed desires of lawmakers.

The motivation for this project is the observation that while members of Congress frequently avoid formal on-the-record votes on a use of military force decisions, they nevertheless frequently engage in position-taking regarding the propriety of using military force in crises. While many war-related votes—both legally-binding, and mere sense-of-Congress resolutions—have been collected in the course of this project, the vast majority of lawmaker opinion regarding the use of military force is conveyed not through roll-call votes but through *speech*. This *informal* congressional sentiment (as opposed to *formal* authorization for the use of military force—the action overwhelmingly focused on by scholars of the war powers, for example), is quite important. Plotted below is a frequency plot of floor speeches given by foreign policy leaders in Congress related to the possible use of military force in crises since the Second World War. Instead of abdicating attention over foreign policy (as is frequently alleged of lawmakers), the data shows lawmakers have given substantial attention to the use of American military force in virtually every crisis encountered by the United States.

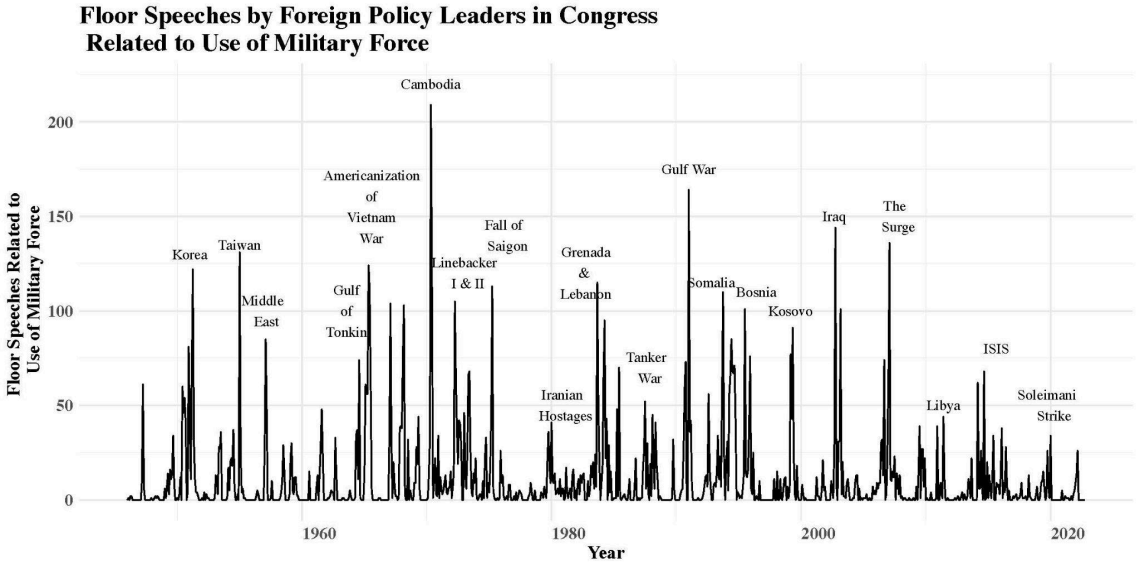


Figure 1: Floor speeches related to potential use of American military force in crises from 1945 to 2022.

There is strong reason to suspect such congressional sentiment matters when the ultimate use of force decision is made by the executive (Kriner 2010; Howell and Pevehouse 2007). Historians, legal scholars, journalists, and politicians frequently attribute use of military force decisions (or, decisions against the use of force) made in the White House to, inter alia, sentiment expressed in Congress. Lyndon Johnson often repeated that he never wanted to use military force without getting Congress "in on the takeoff" with him, for example.

Moreover, this informal congressional sentiment is frequently quite important abroad. Several prominent formal models in political science, for example, suggest legislature position-taking matters greatly (Schultz 2001; Ramsay 2004), and yet there has been very little empirical work measuring exactly what lawmaker sentiment is in military crises. Hence, the goal here is to measure lawmaker position-taking in supporting, or opposing, the use of military force in specific crises. For this, we focus on speech (i.e., text) data. This will be referred to as *informal* congressional sentiment toward the use of military force.

Temporal and Geographic domain

The current temporal domain of the CSUMF dataset extends from 1945 to early 2022, looking at nearly two hundred U.S. relevant military crises spanning the globe. The Congressional Record is the corpus from which lawmaker speeches were sourced in the entire period. Additionally, Tweets were collected for the 2017-2022 time period. Thus, it covers the postwar period up to the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022. Future iterations of the dataset will focus on temporal expansion (both, pre-WWII crises, and post-2022 crises going forward), as well as including additional media beyond floor speeches and tweets.

To start, a "universe" of crises in which the use of American military force might have reasonably been considered had to be identified. This is the CSUMF_Crises dataset, described further in the paper's appendix and below. The aspiration for this dataset was to be as comprehensive as possible—not only to include events found on lists such as the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MIDs) or the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) datasets, but even beyond to include as many use of military force decisions as possible. For instance, the Interstate Crisis Behavior dataset contains around seventy crises in which the U.S. is deemed to have been a crisis actor, but we need to also consider "dogs not barking"—i.e., cases in which military action was considered but decided against. To give one example, the U.S. is not considered by the ICB dataset to have been a crisis actor during the 1975 Fall of Saigon, but this was not due to any lack of serious consideration. Indeed, there is good reason to believe the administration's omission to use force was substantially due to congressional opposition to re-engagement in Indochina after the 1973 Paris Peace Accords.

In order to capture cases in which the U.S. might reasonably be considered to have had a substantial security interest, but in which it ultimately decided against intervention, we additionally include all ICB crises in which at least one crisis actor experienced economic—or greater—involvement by the United States in the crisis. Economic involvement in a conflict suggests the U.S. had some interest in the outcome of the crisis, even if its interest was not great enough to justify direct kinetic military intervention. Requiring this minimal level of U.S. involvement in the crisis helps eliminate cases in which

the U.S. had negligible interests involved. In the ICB dataset, this includes cases in which UNSINV is rated at "4" or higher at the actor-level, and thus also includes cases of higher U.S. involvement, such as propaganda involvement, covert involvement, U.S. semi-military involvement (military aid or advisors, without participation in actual fighting) and cases in which American military forces were directly involved. Frederick et al. (2021) and Schub (2022) utilize similar approaches in identifying U.S. opportunities to use military force. Altogether, this yields 141 ICB-defined crises between 1945 and 2016.

An even more inclusive list of U.S. crises was developed further in order to also include non-interstate crises (e.g., Somalia in the early 1990s or ISIS in the mid-2010s), crises occurring after 2017 (such as the 2020 Soleimani strike), and major decisions made during a war (for example the "Surge" decisions in Iraq and Afghanistan decided in early 2007 and late 2009, respectively). Cases from the ICB dataset in which the U.S. was not coded as being even "economically" involved, but for which we nonetheless have evidence that American intervention was considered, are also added. For example, we know from memoirs and news reporting that the White House closely followed the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008, but consciously ruled out direct intervention. Lastly, the Correlates of War's MIDs dataset was examined for disputes in which the U.S. was an actor, and each of these (except for fishing disputes or inadvertent airspace boundary violations) was also included. Thus, the dataset here includes not only virtually every potentially U.S.-relevant crisis from the ICB dataset, but also each of all but the most de minimis U.S. MIDs from the Correlates of War dataset. Altogether, this yields a grand total of 191 crises between 1945 and 2022. The list is meant to be as comprehensive as possible, and in future iterations will be expanded further. For the time being, it should include virtually every crisis encountered by the White House in the time period in which force was even somewhat seriously considered.

The plot below depicts the distribution of crises over time, organized by the adversary faced by the United States. Many of the adversaries of the U.S.today—especially China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea—are covered by a long history of crises extending all the way to the beginning of the Cold War. Crises with China extend all the way back to the Chinese Civil War in the late 1940s, through the Taiwan Straits crises of 1955, 1958, and 1996 to more recent crises over Taiwan up to 2022. Crises with North Korea similarly cover the beginning of the Korean War in 1950 to recent nuclear crises on the peninsula. Disputes with Russia extend from confrontations over Iran and Turkey shortly after the conclusion of World War II to the Ukraine War starting in 2022.

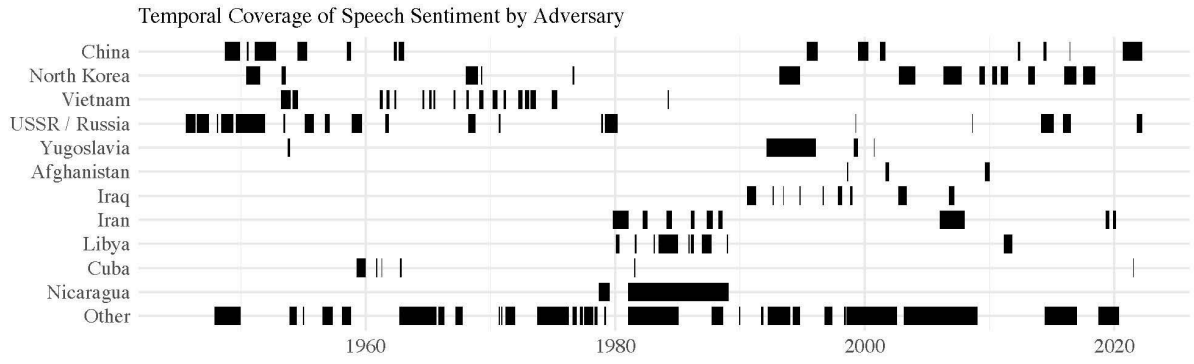


Figure 2: Temporal Coverage of Crises Covered in CSUMF Dataset, by Adversary

The locations of the crises considered were global. The figure below shows the concentration of congressional attention across the world in the time period since World War II. The map seemingly suggests legislators have been quite attentive to the major trends of American foreign policy in the time period. A clear ring, for example, is seen around the Sino-Soviet bloc—reflecting congressional attention to crises over Berlin, in the Middle-East, and in East Asia during the Cold War (with large amounts of attention seen in spots such as Korea, Vietnam, and in the Taiwan Strait). Cold War attention to Cuba and Central America (primarily Nicaragua and El Salvador) is also seen. Focus on former Yugoslavia—including crises in Bosnia and Kosovo—is also evident, as is clear attention to the greater Middle East region, in line with major interventions in Somalia in the early 1990s and in Iraq and Afghanistan in the early 2000s.

Figure 3: Geographic Visualization of Crises Covered in CSUMF Dataset, weighted by number of speeches

In future iterations, the dataset will be expanded temporally to extend back before the Second World War and into the 19th Century, and into the future beyond 2022. Moreover, media beyond floor speeches in the Congressional Records and Tweets will be utilized as well (e.g., press releases, media appearances, statements in committee hearings, etc.).

Coding Procedure

Data-generating process

The speeches included here are from the Congressional Record. Speeches range in size from a couple of sentences (usually, procedural remarks) to thousands of words, taking up multiple pages of the physical Congressional Record. The Stanford Social Science Data Collection provides parsed speeches from the Congressional Record from 1873 through 2016. A team of researchers at UC San Diego's Center for Peace and Security Studies (cPASS) additionally collected data for post-2016 crises, not only by collecting speeches from the Congressional Record but also by collecting all lawmaker Tweets in the time period. Tweets were collected from all members of Congress on their official Twitter/ X accounts. Hence, for the entire 1945-2022 time period, the corpus consisted of floor speeches from the entire

Congressional Record. For the 2017-2022 time period, the corpus additionally included Tweets from lawmakers.

Of all these floor speeches thus made in the time period, potentially relevant congressional speeches were identified by searching for a specific keyword(s) during the time period of the crisis and the three months prior to the beginning of the crisis. The total number of "matches" for all crises by all members of Congress was over one hundred thousand. These potentially relevant speeches were then analyzed in two ways described below—first, by hand (human coders), and second by a large language model (GPT-3.5 turbo).

Coding process

Each speech was read by a single coder, with coders assigned to specific crises and regions of the world.[1] A few students with special interest and academic backgrounds in Latin America, for example, were primarily assigned crises in the region (as were students interested in the Middle East and East Asia, respectively). Students were recruited based on background knowledge of world politics and regional expertise.

After being assigned a crisis, coders were assigned to read a general background of the dispute to ensure there was some level of contextual knowledge. For example, because many of the crises were based on the ICB dataset, coders were assigned to read the ICB narrative before undertaking speech codings. Similar resources were provided for non-ICB crises (e.g., a Wikipedia page). Students were encouraged to discuss with one another and were active in asking for further resources and clarification.

All speeches from the congressional record during the period of the crisis and the three months prior that included a key word were provided to coders in an online Google sheet. Hence, there was a unique Google sheet for each crisis, with all the potentially relevant speeches included. Speeches had the keyword(s) highlighted with capitalization and stars in order to aid the coders in identify potentially more relevant speech sections in very long speeches (e.g., *****IRAQ****).

While speeches from all members of Congress were provided, due to resource constraints (as discussed in the paper and appendix), not all speeches were evaluated by hand. While this dataset was being compiled, automated text analysis tools—such as supervised machine learning—were not yet good enough to measure policy prescriptions (Schub 2022), so qualitative hand-coding was employed. This, however, made the manual review of all speeches beyond the resources available. Instead, only speeches from important foreign policy leaders in Congress were assessed by humans.[2] These "Foreign Policy Elite" lawmakers included:

Senate

- Senate Majority Leader
- Senate Minority Leader
- Chairman and Ranking Member of Foreign Relations Committee
- Chairman and Ranking Member of Armed Services Committee

[1] 10% of speeches were labeled by a second coder as well. This yielded a Cohen's Kappa of 0.61 (excluding irrelevant speeches), equating to "substantial agreement". In only 1.5% of cases did one coder deem a speech to convey supportive sentiment and the other thought it conveyed sentiment in opposition to the use of force.

[2] For a handful of crises, speeches from all lawmakers were hand-labeled—for example, due to the fact that the underlying speech dataset (Gentzkow, Shapiro, and Taddy 2018) did not have speaker ID information for certain time periods (making the identification of speeches from foreign policy leaders impossible).

- Chairman and Ranking Member of Intelligence Committee
- Chairman and Ranking Member of Appropriations Committee
- All Members of Senate Foreign Relations Committee
- All Members of Senate Armed Services Committee

House of Representatives:

- Speaker of the House
- House Minority Leader
- Chairman and Ranking Member of Foreign Affairs Committee
- Chairman and Ranking Member of Armed Services Committee
- Chairman and Ranking Member of Intelligence Committee
- Chairman and Ranking Member of Appropriations Committee

This equated to roughly forty "Foreign Policy Elite" lawmakers per Congress. If the speaker were among this group of lawmakers, the column "Evaluate" was highlighted "Yes" for coders, who would then evaluate the speech. Students determined whether a speech was even relevant—specifically, whether there was any sentiment expressed (even implicitly) toward the use of force in the crisis. Specifically, coders were instructed: "Suppose you were an adviser to the president working in the White House. In the context of the crisis at hand, would this speech give you an idea of how this member of Congress felt toward potentially using military force?"

If not, the speech was marked irrelevant. If the speech was not irrelevant, then the coder had the opportunity to mark a series of sentiment characterizations, five supportive of action and five in opposition to it.

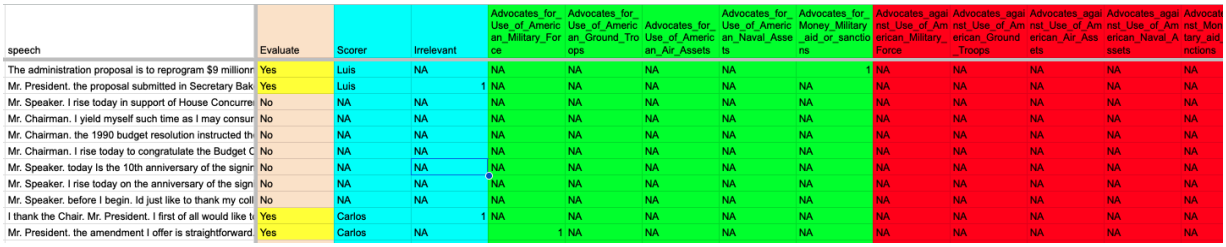
Supportive:

- Does the speaker seemingly advocate for, or would support the use of, American military force **in general** in this crisis? (GenSupp: Yes = 1, No = 0)
- Does the speaker seemingly advocate for, or would support the use of, American **ground forces** in this crisis? (GrdSupp: Yes = 1, No = 0)
- Does the speaker seemingly advocate for, or would support the use of, American **air assets** in this crisis? (AirSupp: Yes = 1, No = 0)
- Does the speaker seemingly advocate for, or would support the use of, American **naval assets** in this crisis? (NavSupp: Yes = 1, No = 0)
- Does the speaker seemingly advocate for, or would support the use of, American **aid or sanctions** in this crisis? (AidSupp: Yes = 1, No = 0)

Oppositional:

- Does the speaker seemingly advocate against, or oppose, the use of American military force **in general** in this crisis? (GenOpp: Yes = 1, No = 0)
- Does the speaker seemingly advocate against, or oppose, the use of American **ground forces** in this crisis? (GrdOpp: Yes = 1, No = 0)
- Does the speaker seemingly advocate against, or oppose, the use of American **air asset**s in this crisis? (AirOpp: Yes = 1, No = 0)

- Does the speaker seemingly advocate against, or oppose, the use of American **naval assets** in this crisis? (NavOpp: Yes = 1, No = 0)
- Does the speaker seemingly advocate against, or oppose, the use of American **aid or sanctions** in this crisis? (AidOpp: Yes = 1, No = 0)



speech	Evaluate	Scorer	Irrelevant	Advocates_for_Use_of_American_Military_Force	Advocates_for_Use_of_American_Ground_Troops	Advocates_for_Use_of_American_Air_Assets	Advocates_for_Use_of_American_Naval_Assets	Advocates_for_Money_Military_aid_or_sanctions	Advocates_against_Use_of_American_Military_Force	Advocates_against_Use_of_American_Ground_Troops	Advocates_against_Use_of_American_Air_Assets	Advocates_against_Use_of_American_Naval_Assets	Advocates_against_Money_Military_aid_or_sanctions
The administration proposal is to reprogram $9 millionr	Yes	Luis	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. President. the proposal submitted in Secretary Bak	Yes	Luis	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. Speaker. I rise today in support of House Concurre	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. Chairman. I yield myself such time as I may consur	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. Chairman. the 1990 budget resolution instructed th	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. Chairman. I rise today to congratulate the Budget C	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. Speaker. today is the 10th anniversary of the signir	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. Speaker. I rise today on the anniversary of the sign	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. Speaker. before I begin. Id just like to thank my coll	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
I thank the Chair. Mr. President. I first of all would like t	Yes	Carlos	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mr. President. the amendment I offer is straightforward	Yes	Carlos	NA	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Figure 4: Example of Google sheet utilized by human coders in labelling speeches

Coders would enter a "1" if they judged the speech to convey the relevant sentiment. They were welcomed to mark more than one sentiment. For example, a speech supportive of bombing ISIS in 2014 might be marked as supporting the use of force in general and the use of air assets specifically, but also expressing opposition to the use of ground troops.

Students were compensated for their time (not the *amount* of speeches they evaluated), and on average took approximately 6 minutes per speech. They were given initial feedback on their codings, and then subject to random audits. Coders marked roughly 70% of speeches as irrelevant to the crisis at hand, suggesting evaluators were discerning in deciding which speeches actually conveyed sentiment toward the use of force.[3]

Datasets and Variables

Formats and identifier variables

Formats of the data

The Congressional Support for the Use of Military Force dataset is released in two basic forms. The first version of the data is the **speech level data** (CSUMF_speeches). Here, the unit of analysis is the individual speech from an individual lawmaker. Thus, the data here is in its rawest form, and indeed includes the underlying speech as well.

The second version of the data consists of aggregated scores for congressional sentiment, as a whole, at the **crisis level** (Congressional Support Scores, or CSUMF_CSS). A variety of scores are provided, but all are based on the speech level data. Additionally, CSUMF_Crises, the list of postwar crises, is provided.

[3] As discussed below, GPT-3.5 turbo also deemed roughly 70% of speeches to be irrelevant or unclear in their sentiment toward the use of force in the specific crisis of interest.

Identifier variables

The following identifier variables exist in all versions of the data and help identify each specific crisis.

Crisno
Variable: crisis number
Type: numeric
Definition: Unique numeric identifier for each individual crisis. If the crisis is an ICB-recognized crisis, the 3 digit ICB crisis number is utilized. If not, a 5-digit identifier starting with "10" is used. E.g., the 2003 invasion of Iraq is in the ICB dataset, so its crisno here is the same (#440). The ISIS campaign is not in the ICB dataset, however, so it was given a 5 digit identifier starting with 10 (#10105).

Crisname
Variable: name of crisis
Type: character
Definition: A unique name for each crisis. If the crisis is an ICB-recognized crisis, the ICB crisis name is utilized, denoted in all capital letters (E.g. "N. KOREA NUCLEAR II"). If not, a descriptive name of the crisis is used (E.g. "El Salvador 1980s").

CSUMF_Crises (Postwar U.S. Crises)

This dataset consists of the nearly two hundred postwar crises identified as described in the appendix and above. These crises range in time from 1945 to 2022. Future iterations of the dataset will include crises going back into the 1870s and after 2022.

Crisno
Variable: crisis number
Type: numeric
Definition: Unique numeric identifier for each individual crisis. If the crisis is an ICB-recognized crisis, the 3 digit ICB crisis number is utilized. If not, a 5-digit identifier starting with "10" is used. E.g., the 2003 invasion of Iraq is in the ICB dataset, so its crisno here is the same (#440). The ISIS campaign is not in the ICB dataset, however, so it was given a 5 digit identifier starting with 10 (#10105).

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yrtrig
Variable: Start year of crisis
Type: numeric

motrig
Variable: Start month of crisis
Type: numeric

datrig
Variable: Start day of crisis
Type: numeric

yrterm
Variable: Last year of crisis
Type: numeric

moterm
Variable: Last month of crisis
Type: numeric

daterm
Variable: Last day of crisis
Type: numeric

US_force_init
Variable: Date U.S. forces initiated combat (if applicable)
Type: numeric
Definition: The day (YYYYMMDD) U.S. forces were ordered into combat. If U.S. forces were not ordered into combat in the crisis, this is "NA". Note that for major wars (e.g., Korea and Vietnam), this is the date the major ground force commitment was made. In the case of Korea, this is July 5, 1950. For Vietnam, this is July 28, 1965.

Begin_cong
Variable: The Congress at the beginning of the crisis period.
Type: Numeric
Definition: The Congress at the beginning of the crisis period (E.g., 114th).

End_Cong
Variable: The Congress at the end of the crisis period.
Type: Numeric
Definition: The Congress at the end of the crisis period (E.g., 114th).

Terms
Variable: The keywords used to identify potentially relevant speeches from the corpus.
Type: character
Definition: The keywords used to identify potentially relevant speeches from the corpus, during the time period of the crisis as well as the prior three months. For example, for the crisis corresponding to the 2003 Invasion of Iraq (#440), the keywords are "Iraq|Hussein|Saddam", meaning that all speeches from the corpus that included any of the terms "Iraq", "Hussein", or "Saddam" were deemed potentially relevant and collected for analysis.

Nice_Name
Variable: Name of crisis, standardized.
Type: character
Definition: Name of crisis made in a standardized format with year (e.g., "Iraq (2003)") for visualization purposes.

Prez_party
Variable: Party of the president
Type: numeric
Definition: The party of the president at the time of the crisis. For virtually every crisis, there was no overlap between presidencies, so determining the party of the president was non-controversial. For the 1992-94 Somalia intervention, Clinton (i.e., a Democrat) is listed as the president since the most important debates, decisions, and combat took place after his inauguration in January 1993.

US_high_act
Variable: The highest act—or escalation level—reached by the United States in the crisis.

Type: numeric
Definition: 15 point scale ranging from "no U.S. response" to U.S. combat involving 1000+ American combat fatalities. Codings from the International Crisis Behavior events (ICBe) dataset (Douglass et al. 2024) were examined to determine the most escalatory action undertaken by the United States in the course of the crisis. For non-ICB crises, relevant crisis narratives were examined to determine the most escalatory action. This was coded on a 15-point ordinal scale as follows:

1. No military action taken (e.g., mere diplomatic protest)
2. Aid or sanctions utilized
3. Threats absent deployments
4. Show of force or military exercise
5. Military advisors outside of combat
6. Uncontested military action (e.g., occupation without resistance)
7. 0 U.S. combat deaths
8. 1-5 U.S. combat deaths
9. 6-25 U.S. combat deaths
10. 26-50 U.S. combat deaths
11. 51-100 U.S. combat deaths
12. 101-250 U.S. combat deaths
13. 251-500 U.S. combat deaths
14. 501-1000 U.S. combat deaths
15. Over 1000 U.S. combat deaths

Show
Variable: Dummy variable used for visualization purposes on certain plots.
Type: numeric

CSUMF_speeches (raw)

Crisno
Variable: crisis number
Type: numeric
Definition: Unique numeric identifier for each individual crisis. If the crisis is an ICB-recognized crisis, the 3 digit ICB crisis number is utilized. If not, a 5-digit identifier starting with "10" is used. E.g., the 2003 invasion of Iraq is in the ICB dataset, so its crisno here is the same (#440). The ISIS campaign is not in the ICB dataset, however, so it was given a 5 digit identifier starting with 10 (#10105).

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speech_id
Variable: Speech identification number
Type: numeric
Definition: Unique numeric identifier for each individual speech text. As the vast majority of speeches are from the Stanford dataset, their speech number is utilized (Gentzkow, Shapiro, and Taddy 2018). This Stanford dataset ends in 2016, after which both tweets and speeches were collected by the group at UCSD cPASS. For cPASS collected floor speeches and tweets, observations were given unique identifiers.

MasterID
Variable: Identification code of speaker
Type: character
Definition: Unique identification code for an individual in a given Congress. The code consists of the lawmakers Last Name, their First Initial, their party (i.e. 100 for Democrats and 200 for Republicans), the chamber they were in (House or Senate), and lastly the Congress the speaker was in. (i.e., 114th). For example, LURIAE100H117 corresponds to a Democrat named E. Luria who served in the House of Representatives in the 117th Congress.

Date
Variable: Date of speech
Type: Date
Definition: The date on which the speech was made, formatted as YYYY-MM-DD.

Speech
Variable: The full speech or tweet
Type: Character
Definition: The full speech or tweet of the lawmaker in its entirety.

Foreign Policy Elite Lawmaker
Variable: Whether the speaker was a Foreign Policy Elite lawmaker
Type: Character (Yes or No)
Definition: As noted above, due to resource constraints in hand-coding thousands of speeches, coders gave priority to the potentially most important member of Congress with regard to foreign policy. This consisted of overall leadership in both houses, leadership in both houses of the Foreign Relations/ Affairs, Armed Services, Intelligence, and Appropriations committees, and all members of the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees. All FPE speeches were evaluated by a human coder.

HUMAN-LABELS

The next 9 variables consist of the human-determined codings of the coders. Each of these is a dummy variable (0 or 1). *Every* speech evaluated by a human coder will have at least one of these marked 1. If a speech was deemed irrelevant, "Irrelevant" will be marked "1" and the rest will be marked "0". If the speech was deemed relevant, "Irrelevant" will be marked "0" and at least one of the following 8 variables will be marked "1" for the sentiment conveyed toward the use of military force in the crisis.

Irrelevant
Variable: Irrelevant (human coded)
Type: Numeric (dummy)
Definition: Dummy variable for whether the human coder determined the speech to even be related to the use of force. "1" means that the speech is not relevant, and thus that none of the following sentiment variables will be marked positively.

Advocates_for_Use_of_American_Military_Force
Variable: Speaker advocates *in general* for use of military force
Type: Numeric (dummy)
Definition: Human coder determined the speaker seemingly advocated for, or would support the use of, American military force in general in the crisis.

Advocates_for_Use_of_American_Ground_Troops
Variable: Speaker advocates for use of ground troops
Type: Numeric (dummy)
Definition: Human coder determined the speaker seemingly advocated for, or would support the use of, American ground forces in this crisis.

Advocates_for_Use_of_American_Air_Assets
Variable: Speaker advocates for use of air assets
Type: Numeric (dummy)
Definition: Human coder determined the speaker seemingly advocated for, or would support the use of, American air assets in this crisis.

Advocates_for_Use_of_American_Naval_Assets
Variable: Speaker advocates for use of naval forces
Type: Numeric (dummy)

Definition: Human coder determined the speaker seemingly advocated for, or would support the use of, American naval assets in this crisis.

Advocates_against_Use_of_American_Military_Force
Variable: Speaker opposes *in general* use of military force
Type: numeric (dummy)
Definition: Human coder determined the speaker seemingly advocated against, or would oppose, the use of American military force in general in this crisis.

Advocates_against_Use_of_American_Ground_Troops
Variable: Speaker opposes use of ground troops
Type: numeric (dummy)
Definition: Human coder determined the speaker seemingly advocated against, or would oppose, the use of American ground forces in this crisis.

Advocates_against_Use_of_American_Air_Assets
Variable: Speaker opposes use of air assets
Type: numeric (dummy)
Definition: Human coder determined the speaker seemingly advocated against, or would oppose, the use of American air assets in this crisis.

Advocates_against_Use_of_American_Naval_Assets
Variable: Speaker opposes use of naval forces
Type: numeric (dummy)
Definition: Human coder determined the speaker seemingly advocated against, or would oppose, the use of American naval assets in this crisis.

tweet
Variable: Speech is a tweet (not a floor speech)
Type: numeric (dummy)
Definition: Speech is a tweet (not a floor speech). Only applicable to post-2016 crises. Note that these have been dropped in the corpus utilized for analysis in the article.

GPT-LABELS

GPT_Task
Variable: The prompt provided to the language model (GPT-3.5 turbo in April 2023).
Type: character
Definition: The exact prompt provided to GPT-3.5 turbo in April 2023. Each prompt consisted of the following structure:

"Task: would the speaker seeming support the use of American military force to [insert crisis specific prompt—e.g., "defend South Vietnam"]? Answer with only '1-yes', '2-no', or '3-unclear'. Speech: [full speech inserted]"

GPT
Variable: The response provided by GPT-3.5 turbo
Type: Character
Definition: The response provided by GPT-3.5 turbo, which was one of the following: '1-yes' (8.8% of speeches), '2-no' (13.9%), or '3-unclear' (73.9%). 4.5% of speeches had some other response, the overwhelming majority of which were "#ERROR!" due to the speech being too long for the context window of GPT-3.5 turbo.

human_labeled
Variable: Whether the speech was evaluated by a human coder
Type: numeric
Definition: Dummy variable representing whether the speech was evaluated by a human. As noted above, all FPE lawmaker speeches in all crises were human-coded. Moreover, in some crises all speeches were hand labeled (hence, some by non-FPE lawmakers). This was done, e.g., because for some periods speaker identification information was not available, so it was not possible to limit the analysis to FPE lawmaker speeches only.

Example of CSUMF_speeches (raw) use case beyond paper:

While the raw data was used here to develop the static Congressional Support Scores (CSUMF_CSS) described below (i.e., one score per crisis), this raw speech data can also be utilized to create dynamic scores as well. Because the speech data is coded at the individual speech level, it is possible to track changing sentiment in Congress *within* a crisis. For example, the plot shows congressional support by month for the use of U.S. military force in Somalia in the early 1990s. These dynamic congressional support scores are calculated the same way as described below, but with the underlying speeches limited to those in a specific temporal subset of the crisis. Here, the score is shown in monthly intervals, inside a six-month window. Thus, in any given month, only those speeches made in the past six months are considered. This allows for a "rolling average" of congressional sentiment during the crisis.

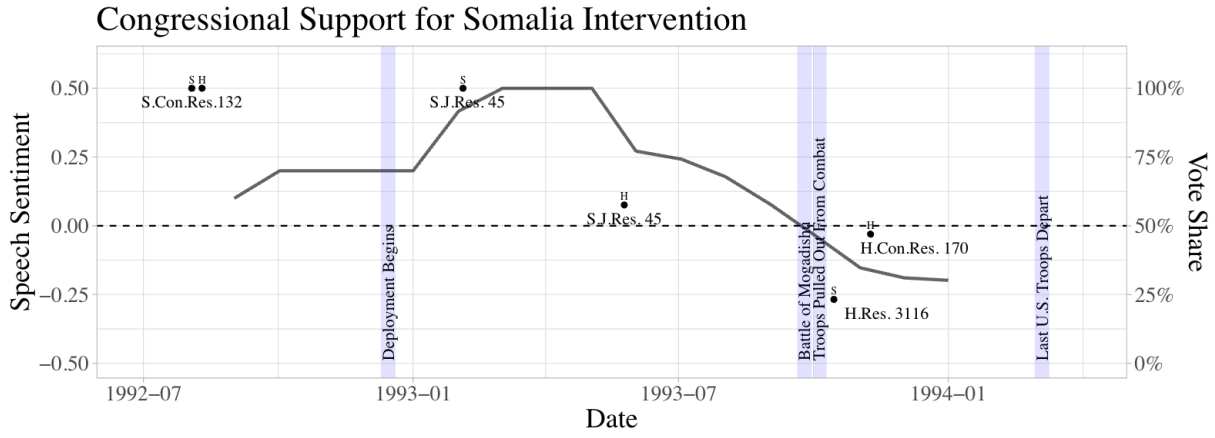

Figure 5: Example of using CSUMF_speeches (raw) data—dynamic *within* crisis sentiment

CSUMF_CSS (Aggregated Congressional Support Scores)

Crisno
Variable: crisis number
Type: numeric
Definition: Unique numeric identifier for each individual crisis. If the crisis is an ICB-recognized crisis, the 3-digit ICB crisis number is utilized. If not, a 5-digit identifier starting with "10" is used. E.g., the 2003 invasion of Iraq is in the ICB dataset, so its crisno here is the same (#440). The ISIS campaign is not in the ICB dataset, however, so it was given a 5 digit identifier starting with 10 (#10105).

Crisname
Variable: name of crisis
Type: character
Definition: A unique name for each crisis. If the crisis is an ICB-recognized crisis, the ICB crisis name is utilized, denoted in all capital letters (E.g. "N. KOREA NUCLEAR II"). If not, a descriptive name of the crisis is used (E.g. "El Salvador 1980s").

US_high_act
Variable: The highest act—or escalation level—reached by the United States in the crisis.
Type: numeric
Definition: 15 point scale ranging from "no U.S. response" to U.S. combat involving 1000+ American combat fatalities. Codings from the International Crisis Behavior events (ICBe) dataset (Douglass et al. 2024) were examined to determine the most escalatory action undertaken by the United States in the course of the crisis. For non-ICB crises, relevant crisis narratives were examined to determine the most escalatory action. This was coded on a 15-point ordinal scale as follows:

16. No military action taken (e.g., mere diplomatic protest)
17. Aid or sanctions utilized
18. Threats absent deployments
19. Show of force or military exercise
20. Military advisors outside of combat
21. Uncontested military action (e.g., occupation without resistance)
22. 0 U.S. combat deaths
23. 1-5 U.S. combat deaths
24. 6-25 U.S. combat deaths
25. 26-50 U.S. combat deaths
26. 51-100 U.S. combat deaths
27. 101-250 U.S. combat deaths
28. 251-500 U.S. combat deaths
29. 501-1000 U.S. combat deaths
30. Over 1000 U.S. combat deaths

Hand-Labeled Measures

Full Crisis

avg_agg_support
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in congressional speech.
Type: numeric
Definition: This is the baseline "Congressional Support Score", that following refinements simply build upon. It is the raw average aggregate support score amongst lawmakers who expressed sentiment toward the use of military force. As explained in the appendix, each lawmaker who spoke is given an "Individual Support Score" calculated as follows:

$$ISS_i = \frac{\sum Gen_i^{Supp} + \sum Grd_i^{Supp} + \sum Air_i^{Supp} + \sum Nav_i^{Supp}}{(\sum Gen_i^{Supp} + \sum Grd_i^{Supp} + \sum Air_i^{Supp} + \sum Nav_i^{Supp}) \; + \; (\sum Gen_i^{Opp} + \sum Grd_i^{Opp} + \sum Air_i^{Opp} + \sum Nav_i^{Opp})}$$

These "Individual Support Scores" are then simply averaged to yield an overall Congressional Support Score corresponding to the average aggregate supports there exists amongst lawmakers:

$$CSS = Average(ISS)$$

See appendix for longer discussion.

Full_set_speakers
Variable: Number of speakers who gave relevant speeches during the crisis.
Type: numeric
Definition: The number of unique speakers who conveyed sentiment regarding the potential use of force during the crisis. This is used to calculate the **avg_agg_support_5adjust** variable, below.

avg_agg_support_5adjust
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in congressional speech, with sentiment prorated toward zero if less than 5 speakers.
Type: numeric
Definition: Aggregate sentiment amongst all lawmakers, with the polarity scored prorated toward "0" (i.e., neutral) for crises in which relatively few speakers expressed an opinion. For this measure, if less than 5 lawmakers expressed sentiment toward the possible use of military force in the crisis, the polarity of the score was penalized proportionally. E.g., if five lawmakers spoke out against the use of force (and no one spoke in favor), the CSS score would be -0.5, representing uniform negativity in Congress. Had only 3 lawmakers expressed an opinion, however, the score would be prorated toward 0—i.e., the score would be penalized from -0.5 to -0.3. See appendix for longer discussion.

avg_agg_support_Repubs
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in Republican speech

Type: numeric
Definition: This is the baseline "Congressional Support Score" (See **avg_agg_support**, above), limited to Republican speakers.

Repub_speakers_full
Variable: Number of Republican speakers who gave relevant speeches during the crisis.
Type: numeric
Definition: The number of unique Republican speakers who conveyed sentiment regarding the potential use of force during the crisis. This is used to calculate the **avg_agg_support_3adjust_Repubs** variable, below.

avg_agg_support_3adjust_Repubs
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in Republican speech, with sentiment prorated toward zero if less than 3 Republican speakers.
Type: numeric
Definition: Aggregate sentiment amongst Republican lawmakers, with the polarity scored prorated toward "0" (i.e., neutral) for crises in which relatively few speakers expressed an opinion. For this measure, if less than 3 Republican lawmakers expressed sentiment toward the possible use of military force in the crisis, the polarity of the score was penalized proportionally. E.g., if three Republican lawmakers spoke out against the use of force (and no one spoke in favor), the avg_agg_support_3adjust_Repubs CSS score would be -0.5, representing uniform negativity in Congress. Had only 1 Republican lawmaker expressed an opinion, however, the score would be prorated toward 0—i.e., the score would be penalized from -0.5 to -0.166. See appendix for longer discussion.

avg_agg_support_Dems
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in Democratic speech
Type: numeric
Definition: This is the baseline "Congressional Support Score" (See **avg_agg_support**, above), limited to Democratic speakers.

Dem_speakers_full
Variable: Number of Democratic speakers who gave relevant speeches during the crisis.
Type: numeric
Definition: The number of unique Democratic speakers who conveyed sentiment regarding the potential use of force during the crisis. This is used to calculate the **avg_agg_support_3adjust_Dem** variable, below.

avg_agg_support_3adjust_Dem
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in Democratic speech, with sentiment prorated toward zero if less than 3 Democratic speakers.
Type: numeric
Definition: Aggregate sentiment amongst Democratic lawmakers, with the polarity scored prorated toward "0" (i.e., neutral) for crises in which relatively few speakers expressed an opinion. See avg_agg_support_3adjust_Repubs, above, and appendix for longer discussion.

Pre-Use of Force Only[4]

avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in congressional speech prior to the use of military force
Type: numeric
Definition: This is the baseline "Congressional Support Score", that following refinements simply build upon, but *limited to speeches made prior to the use of military force* (if military force is utilized in the crisis). This is used in some analyses (e.g., Figure 9 in the main text), to show Congressional sentiment *prior* to the use of force. Aside from limiting the relevant speeches to the time period prior to the use of military force, this score is calculated exactly the same as the avg_agg_support variable, above. Note that if the U.S. does not end up entering combat in the crisis, there is no need to cut off speeches prior to the use of force, and thus this score will not differ from the analogous score, above.

Pre_init_speakers
Variable: Number of speakers who gave relevant speeches during the crisis, prior to the use of military force.
Type: numeric
Definition: The number of unique speakers who conveyed sentiment regarding the potential use of force during the crisis, prior to force being used (if applicable). This is used to calculate the **avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_5adjust** variable, below.

avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_5adjust
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in congressional speech made prior to the use of military force, with sentiment prorated toward zero if less than 5 speakers.
Type: numeric
Definition: Aggregate sentiment amongst all lawmakers prior to the use of military force, with the polarity scored prorated toward "0" (i.e., neutral) for crises in which relatively few speakers expressed an opinion. This is calculated precisely the same as **avg_agg_support_5adjust**, above, but when limiting consideration to speeches made prior to the use of military force.

avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_REPUB
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in Republican speech prior to use of military force
Type: numeric
Definition: This is the baseline "Congressional Support Score" for Republicans, but *limited to speeches made prior to the use of military force* (if military force is utilized in the crisis).

Pre_init_speakers_Repub

[4] Note that for any of the following measures focused on speeches made prior to the use of military force, if force is not used by the U.S. in the crisis, there is no early speech cutoff and the score will simply be the same as the corresponding measure calculated above. Hence, the scores only differ here for crises in which force was ultimately used.

Variable: Number of Republican speakers who gave relevant speeches during the crisis, prior to the use of military force.
Type: numeric
Definition: The number of unique Republican speakers who conveyed sentiment regarding the potential use of force during the crisis, prior to force being used (if applicable). This is used to calculate the **avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_REPUB_3adjust** variable, below.

avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_REPUB_3adjust
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in Republican speech prior to use of military force, with sentiment prorated toward zero if less than 3 Republican speakers.
Type: numeric
Definition: Aggregate sentiment amongst Republican lawmakers, with the polarity scored prorated toward "0" (i.e., neutral) for crises in which relatively few speakers expressed an opinion. This is calculated the same as the **avg_agg_support_3adjust_Repubs** variable, above, but when limiting the analysis to speeches made prior to the use of military force.

avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_DEM
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in Democratic speech prior to use of military force
Type: numeric
Definition: This is the baseline "Congressional Support Score" for Democrats, but *limited to speeches made prior to the use of military force* (if military force is utilized in the crisis).

Pre_init_speakers_Dem
Variable: Number of Democratic speakers who gave relevant speeches during the crisis, prior to the use of military force.
Type: numeric
Definition: The number of unique Democratic speakers who conveyed sentiment regarding the potential use of force during the crisis, prior to force being used (if applicable). This is used to calculate the **avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_DEM_3adjust** variable, below.

avg_agg_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_DEM_3adjust
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in Democratic speech prior to use of military force, with sentiment prorated toward zero if less than 3 Democratic speakers.
Type: numeric
Definition: Aggregate sentiment amongst Democratic lawmakers, with the polarity scored prorated toward "0" (i.e., neutral) for crises in which relatively few speakers expressed an opinion. This is calculated the same as the **avg_agg_support_3adjust_Dem** variable, above, but when limiting the analysis to speeches made prior to the use of military force.

GPT-Labeled Measures

Full Crisis

gpt_support
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in congressional speeches, as classified by GPT-3.5 turbo.
Type: numeric
Definition: This is the baseline "Congressional Support Score" (using GPT labels) that following refinements simply build upon. It is the raw average aggregate support score amongst lawmakers who expressed sentiment toward the use of military force. Each lawmaker who spoke is given an "Individual Support Score" calculated as follows:

$$ISS_i = \frac{\sum GTP_i^{Supp}}{\sum GTP_i^{Supp} + \sum GTP_i^{Opp}}$$

Note that this is a simpler calculation than that used for the hand-labeled speeches. This is used because the only label the dataset (currently) has for GPT labels is a simple support or opposition (or unclear/ irrelevant) label, as discussed above for the **GPT variable.** In other words, because we do not (currently) have domain specific labels (e.g., support for air power but opposition to ground forces), the calculation is much simpler.

These "Individual Support Scores" yielded by the GPT labels are then simply averaged to yield an overall Congressional Support Score corresponding to the average aggregate supports there exists amongst lawmakers:

$$CSS = Average(ISS)$$

GPT_speakers_all
Variable: Number of speakers who gave relevant speeches (as determined by the GPT labels) during the crisis.
Type: numeric
Definition: The number of unique speakers who conveyed sentiment regarding the potential use of force during the crisis, as determined in labelling by GPT-3.5 turbo. This is used to calculate the **gpt_support_5_adj** variable, below.

gpt_support_5_adj
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in congressional speech (GPT determined), with sentiment prorated toward zero if less than 5 speakers.
Type: numeric
Definition: Aggregate sentiment amongst all lawmakers, with the polarity scored prorated toward "0" (i.e., neutral) for crises in which relatively few speakers expressed an opinion. For this measure, if less than 5 lawmakers expressed sentiment toward the possible use of military force in the crisis, the polarity of the score was penalized proportionally. E.g., if five lawmakers spoke out against the use of force (and no one spoke in favor), the CSS score would be -0.5, representing uniform negativity in Congress. Had

only 3 lawmakers expressed an opinion, however, the score would be prorated toward 0—i.e., the score would be penalized from -0.5 to -0.3. See appendix for longer discussion.

Pre-Use of Force Only[5]

gpt_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in congressional speech (labeled by GPT) prior to the use of military force
Type: numeric
Definition: This is the baseline "Congressional Support Score" (GPT labeled), but *limited to speeches made prior to the use of military force* (if military force is utilized in the crisis).

GPT_Pre_Use_of_Force_Speakers
Variable: Number of speakers who gave relevant speeches during the crisis (GPT determined), prior to the use of military force.
Type: numeric
Definition: The number of unique speakers who conveyed sentiment regarding the potential use of force during the crisis, prior to force being used (if applicable). This is used to calculate the **gpt_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_5_adj** variable, below.

gpt_support_Pre_Use_of_Force_ONLY_5_adj
Variable: Aggregate support or opposition to the use of force expressed in congressional speech (GPT determined) made prior to the use of military force, with sentiment prorated toward zero if less than 5 speakers.
Type: numeric
Definition: Aggregate sentiment amongst all lawmakers prior to the use of military force, with the polarity scored prorated toward "0" (i.e., neutral) for crises in which relatively few speakers expressed an opinion. This is calculated precisely the same as **gpt_support_5_adj**, above, but when limiting consideration to speeches made prior to the use of military force.

[5] As with the hand-labeled measures, note that for any of the following measures focused on speeches made prior to the use of military force, if force is not used by the U.S. in the crisis, there is no early speech cutoff and the score will simply be the same as the corresponding measure calculated above. Hence, the scores only differ here for crises in which force is used.

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