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Congress and the Cold War

This book provides the first historical interpretation of the congressional response to the entire Cold War. Using a wide variety of sources, including several manuscript collections opened specifically for this study, the book challenges the popular and scholarly image of a weak Cold War Congress, in which the unbalanced relationship between the legislative and executive branches culminated in the escalation of the U.S. commitment in Vietnam, which in turn paved the way for a congressional resurgence best symbolized by the passage of the War Powers Act in 1973.

Instead, understanding the congressional response to the Cold War requires a more flexible conception of the congressional role in foreign policy, focused on three facets of legislative power: the use of spending measures, the internal workings of a Congress increasingly dominated by subcommittees, and the ability of individual legislators to affect foreign affairs by changing the way that policymakers and the public considered international questions.

Robert David Johnson is a professor of history at Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He has published three books: *The Peace Progressives and American Foreign Policy* (1995); *Ernest Gruening and the American Dissenting Tradition* (1998); and *20 January 1961: The American Dream* (1999). He is the editor of a fourth book: *On Cultural Ground: Essays in International History* (1994). Professor Johnson has published articles or essays in *Diplomatic History, Journal of Cold War Studies, Oxford Companion to American History, International History Review*, and *Political Science Quarterly*, among others.

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ROBERT DAVID JOHNSON
Brooklyn College

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Abbreviations Used in the Text

ABM	Anti-ballistic missile
ACDA	Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
ADA	Americans for Democratic Action
AEC	Atomic Energy Commission
AID	Agency for International Development
AIPAC	America Israel Public Affairs Committee
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CR	*Congressional Record*
D	Democrat
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
ESSFRC	*Executive Sessions of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee*
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
FNLA	National Front for the Liberation of Angola
FPD	Foreign Policy Defense
FRUS	*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*
HUAC	House Un-American Activities Committee
ICBM	Inter-continental ballistic missile
IPA	International Police Academy
IPR	Institute of Pacific Relations
JCAE	Joint Committee on Atomic Energy
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JEC	Joint Economic Committee
MAD	Mutually Assured Destruction
MaRV	Maneuverable reentry vehicle
MCPL	Members of Congress for Peace through Law
MIRV	Multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola

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NCPAC	National Conservative Political Action Committee
NLF	National Liberation Front
NSC	National Security Council
PIS	Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSI	Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations
R	Republican
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
SHAFR	Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations
SISS	Senate Internal Security Subcommittee
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
UN	United Nations
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

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The historical offices of both chambers of Congress are concrete examples of how government funds can improve the study of American political

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institutions. Ken Kato of the House Office of History and Preservation provided keen insights on a draft of the manuscript; without his unfailingly helpful suggestions, I would have missed many necessary political science works. All historians of Congress, meanwhile, owe an enormous debt to the Senate Historical Office's Don Ritchie, who has overseen publication of the invaluable *Executive Sessions of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee* series as well as the Senate Historical Office's collection of oral histories. As he had for my previous books, Don critiqued a draft of this manuscript.

As a professor at the City University of New York, I am fortunate to work at an institution replete with examples of appropriate academic leadership. Chancellor Matthew Goldstein has fostered a renaissance at the university with his emphasis on quality and the need for a faculty that values research. Trustees Jeffrey Wiesenfeld, Randy Mastro, and Kay Pesile have worked consistently to improve standards at CUNY.

During the writing of this book, I met two people who gave me a crash course in how lawyers at the top of their profession use government documents, and in the process I dramatically improved my skills as a historian. Vice Chancellor Rick Schaffer is the model of integrity in the CUNY General Counsel's office. And I cannot say enough about my attorney, Bob Rosen – a friend whose remarkable intellect yielded editorial guidance that I often found myself recalling in writing this book.

At Brooklyn College, I teach a variety of electives in political, legal, and diplomatic history – what some have called the study of "figures in power." I have found students strongly receptive to studying this kind of history, and I have learned a great deal from them in turn. This book would not have appeared without the efforts of Dan Weininger, Christine Sciascia, Brad Appell, Isaac Franco, Martine Jean, Yehuda Katz, Ryan Sacks, Mike Duchaine, Jenna Schlanger, Bobby Hardamon, Samantha Rosenblum, George Ionnaidis, and John Makaryus. John and Dan also served as my research assistants – and frequently forced me to redefine how I thought about the events detailed on the following pages.

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especially unfair behavior after they refused to compromise their principles; both, in different ways, displayed remarkable courage in the process.

I would have considered myself lucky if, at some point in my career, I had worked with even one colleague of the intellectual and personal caliber of David, Andy, Lenny, Phil, Steve, Eric, Paula, Jamie, and Margaret. That I can count all as my friends is something for which I am truly grateful.

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Prologue

Diego Garcia attracted widespread national attention in 1991, when it served as the only U.S. Navy base from which offensive air operations were launched during Operation Desert Storm. Located 1,000 miles southwest of India, the 17-square-mile atoll described by *Time* as "one of those incongruous specks on the map that once posted the British Empire" passed under U.S. lease in 1966.[1] The island provided strategically placed access to the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, and the Middle East. After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, Diego Garcia experienced the most dramatic buildup of any U.S. overseas military installation since the Vietnam War, culminating in completion of a $500 million construction project a few years before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.[2]

The Gulf War did not represent the first time in which Diego Garcia's fate intersected with momentous national events. In early 1974, ignoring formal protests from the governments of India, New Zealand, Australia, and Sri Lanka, the Navy requested $29 million to expand what was then a limited communications facility into the beginnings of a full-fledged military base. "In terms of political implications and potential for troublemaking," the *Baltimore Sun* noted at the time, "Diego Garcia has dimensions that warrant a full-scale congressional study."[3] A highly charged debate ensued in the House of Representatives: after New York Democrat Bella Abzug came out against the Navy's scheme, Wayne Hays indicated that while he knew little of the issue, he understood that "our presence in the Indian Ocean is going to upset Mrs. [Indira] Gandhi and . . . that it upsets the gentlewoman from New York."[4] The notoriously acerbic Ohio Democrat could not "think of two better reasons to be for it."[5]

[1] *Time*, 1 April 1974.
[2] http://www.dg.navy.mil/general_info/frameset.htm, accessed 2 March 2004.
[3] *Baltimore Sun*, 9 March 1974.
[4] 120 *Congressional Record* [hereafter *CR*], 93rd Congress, 2nd session, p. 9843 (4 April 1974).
[5] 120 *CR*, 93rd Congress, 2nd session, p. 9843 (4 April 1974).

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The plan's fate remained uncertain throughout the summer of 1974; opponents hoped to use the final House debate on the matter, scheduled for August 9, to rally support from a public wary of post-Vietnam overseas commitments. This particular discussion, however, received virtually no notice, either from the media or within the lower chamber itself, since Minority Leader John Rhodes interrupted consideration of the measure to announce that Richard Nixon had become the first president to resign, replaced by Vice President Gerald Ford.[6] Robbed of public attention, the critics' amendment failed overwhelmingly. Opponents of the Navy's plan regrouped in the Senate, however, and a conference committee between the two branches agreed to postpone final determination of the matter for a year. Congressional scholar Barry Blechman correctly termed this procedural gambit "a move typical of legislative decisionmaking."[7]

One of the highest-profile legislators seeking to block the Diego Garcia expansion, Iowa senator Harold Hughes, described his comrades' philosophy as a "new internationalism," based on the "demilitarization of foreign policy," with an increased emphasis on cultural and economic factors. This approach would replace the bankrupt "old internationalism," which had relied on armed intervention, secret alliances, and military bases. With little chance that the executive would embrace this approach, the Iowa senator reasoned, only an empowered Congress could produce a more moral foreign policy.[8]

The new internationalists were one of two significant factions that attempted to marshal the institutional powers of Congress to remake Cold War foreign policy. Congressional power, in this respect, was value-neutral, since the other bloc to pursue an ambitious legislative foreign policy role championed a conservative nationalist agenda. In the early 1950s, the "revisionists" (in that they claimed to desire a "revision" of Cold War liberalism) demanded a more rigorous prosecution of the Cold War at home, a greater focus on East Asia, and recognition of the ideological dangers of aiding the social democratic governments of Western Europe.

In the end, both the revisionists and the new internationalists failed in their efforts, and their leading advocates paid the ultimate political price – loss of their seats in Congress.

What commentator Walter Lippmann termed the Cold War – the diplomatic, strategic, and ideological contest between the United States and the Soviet Union – opened with an institutional memory of an exceptionally active and powerful legislative branch. In 1919 and 1920, a combination of ideological disagreements, personal rivalry, and institutional jealousy coalesced in the

[6] 120 *CR*, 93rd Congress, 2nd session, p. 27592 (9 Aug. 1974).
[7] *Washington Post*, 20 July 1975.
[8] 117 *CR*, 92nd Congress, 1st session, p. 15953 (19 May 1971).

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successful campaign to block U.S. membership in the League of Nations, which served only as the most spectacular assertion of congressional power following World War I.[9] Shortly before the Senate considered the Treaty of Versailles, Woodrow Wilson bypassed Congress and sent American troops to revolutionary Russia, and legislators threatened the ultimate sanction: a resolution introduced by California senator Hiram Johnson to cut off funds for the intervention failed by a perilously close tie vote. What Acting Secretary of State Frank Polk termed a demonstration of the "critical spirit of Congress" convinced the administration to withdraw U.S. forces.[10] If anything, Congress assumed a more aggressive posture in the 1920s, attempting to prevent U.S. military intervention in the Caribbean Basin, and in the mid-1930s, especially through the efforts of the Nye Committee, which investigated the U.S. entrance into World War I.[11] Secretary of State Cordell Hull complained that the legislative branch, by approving the Neutrality Acts of 1935 and 1936, had usurped "the constitutional and traditional power of the Executive to conduct the foreign relations of the United States."[12]

Some common patterns guided the interwar congressional approach to foreign relations. A willingness to use roll-call votes on appropriations matters, even on issues such as military spending, enhanced Congress's constitutionally designated abilities to influence international affairs. The prevalence of treaties heightened the importance of the "advise and consent" role that the Constitution assigned to the Senate. Internally, Congress settled into a stable bureaucratic pattern in which the House of Representatives played a minor role and the Foreign Relations Committee reigned supreme in the Senate, producing a relatively small "foreign policy elite" composed of Foreign Relations Committee members and the few other senators who for personal, political, or ideological reasons exhibited intense interest in international affairs.

This structure, however, was unsustainable after World War II. The willingness of the federal government to use its financial might for foreign policy purposes forced Congress to consider the relationship between its appropriations power and international affairs. In addition, a bipartisan consensus came to interpret such undertakings as the Nye Committee and the Neutrality Acts as embodying an excessively aggressive implementation of congressional power. Finally, the advent of nuclear weapons placed the government on what amounted to a permanent war footing, spawning a new

[9] Lloyd Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Diplomatic Tradition: The Treaty Fight in Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[10] David Foglesong, *America's Secret War against Bolshevism: U.S. Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1917–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), pp. 71, 251.

[11] Robert David Johnson, *The Peace Progressives and American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), chapters 4–5.

[12] Wayne Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932–1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), pp. 161–178.

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interpretation of constitutional theory that redefined the commander-in-chief clause to increase the president's freedom to act unilaterally. The early Cold War, accordingly, is not remembered as a period of intense congressional activism; Michigan senator Arthur Vandenberg complained at the time that issues seemed to reach the legislature only when "they have developed to a point where Congressional discretion is pathetically restricted."[13]

The reality was considerably more complex. In 1947, even as the administration was uniting behind diplomat George Kennan's containment doctrine, three foreign policy alternatives enjoyed strong support in Congress. The most tenacious opposition to the Truman Doctrine came from a small group of liberals, led by Florida senator Claude Pepper, who believed that extending military assistance to the undemocratic regimes in Greece and Turkey would contradict the internationalist ideals for which the United States fought in World War II. To the administration's right, a sizable bloc led by William Knowland in the Senate and Walter Judd in the House demanded that the administration reorient its foreign policy toward East Asia by aiding the nationalists in China's civil war. Finally, nationalists, such as the unscrupulous Pat McCarran, questioned any initiative that would threaten U.S. sovereignty and feared that an activist foreign policy would strengthen the federal government. They instead advocated concentrating on the Cold War at home by cracking down on alleged Communist sympathizers.

Truman spent most of his term addressing the consequences of this shaky base of support. He was hampered further by the era's ineffectual Democratic congressional leadership, few of whose members were entirely convinced by the merits of the containment doctrine. Working with internationalist Republicans was therefore vital: more than flattery was at stake in Dean Acheson's attempts to woo the likes of Vandenberg and his ideological colleagues, Henry Cabot Lodge and Alexander Smith. The trio chastised the administration for conceiving of containment in realpolitik terms and recommended – successfully – framing Cold War foreign policy in a manner more consistent with traditional U.S. ideals of democracy, human rights, and self-determination. The unusual breakdown of Congress thus played an important role in the early stages of the Cold War, but in a different way than has been commonly perceived. The temperaments, ideologies, and inclinations of the internationalist Republicans made them players on virtually every key issue of the day, in a bipartisan foreign policy where formal and informal powers seamlessly intersected.

In 1949 and 1950, however, a combination of events – the Communist triumph in China, the Soviet testing of an atomic bomb, Joseph McCarthy's allegations of Communist penetration of the State Department, passage of the McCarran Internal Security Act, and, most important, the outbreak of

[13] William Banks and Peter Raven-Hansen, *National Security Law and the Power of the Purse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 102.

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hostilities in Korea – doomed the minimal trust between the parties upon which bipartisan foreign policy rested. The leading GOP internationalists passed from the scene (Vandenberg died in 1951, Lodge lost his seat the following year), and a radically different conception of congressional power emerged. Best captured in the approaches of Pat McCarran, Joe McCarthy, and John Bricker, the revisionists challenged Truman's authority to send troops to Europe, demanded increased legislative control over internal security measures, recommended alliances with right-wing regimes internationally, and championed a constitutional amendment to prevent treaties from superseding domestic legislation.

Eventually the group overreached: the Senate censured McCarthy in December 1954, a few months after it had rejected Bricker's proposed constitutional amendment. McCarran's death the same year removed the bloc's most powerful Democrat. The trio's effects, however, lingered long after their departure from the scene, as their activities linked the idea of enhanced congressional power with a right-wing foreign policy agenda, making liberals skittish about championing a strong Congress in international affairs.

The revisionists' collapse eliminated from the political culture the most formidable critics of what was, in many ways, a postwar constitutional revolution, characterized by the dramatic decline of congressional power over war and treaties. Ambitious members of Congress, however, pursued other avenues to influence affairs. McCarthy, for instance, was the most prominent senator to use a subcommittee to advance his own international agenda, but his activities are best viewed as part of a broader decentralization of power within Congress on national security matters. Overall, the number of foreign policy subcommittees in the Senate alone grew from 7 in 1946 to 31 two decades later, and Dwight Eisenhower's second term witnessed the establishment of 4 important subcommittees, each chaired by a contender for the 1960 Democratic presidential nomination.[14] The quartet's performance highlights the importance of looking beyond the traditional standards of measurement when analyzing the congressional role in the Cold War. The amorphous committee structure gave senators an avenue for direct influence – by facilitating informal ties with members of the national bureaucracy, by using public hearings that sought to shape the course of political debate, and by providing a vehicle for marshaling the appropriations power. In the end, subcommittee government confirmed Dean Acheson's aphorism, "The route from planning to actions leads through the committees to legislation."[15]

While its war-making and treaty-making functions atrophied in the postwar years, Congress displayed a mixed record in its third major constitutional

[14] Robert David Johnson, "Congress and the Cold War: Survey Article," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 3 (2001), pp. 77–101.
[15] Dean Acheson, *A Citizen Looks at Congress* (New York: Harper, 1957), p. 61.

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venue relating to foreign policy – the appropriations power. On defense appropriations bills, little initiative appeared until the late 1960s. But congressional involvement with foreign aid was extensive from the program's inception, since overseas assistance so clearly derived from the appropriations power. Foreign aid also allowed the body in which all fiscal matters traditionally originate, the House of Representatives, to play a greater international role than was the case before World War II. Louisiana congressman Otto Passman, chair of the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the program's funding, regularly secured a reduction of 20 to 25 percent of the amount requested by the executive; in 1960, the London *Times* described Passman as "almost a law to himself on foreign aid."[16] Politically, the program's unpopularity provided such a freedom to resist executive branch policies that one Senate aide, noting that political survival dictated his boss becoming "known as an articulate critic of the Administration on at least one issue," observed that foreign aid had "so little public support that it is a tempting choice."[17]

For the early postwar period, foreign aid was primarily targeted by congressional conservatives worried about its excessive cost and the support that it provided for left-of-center regimes. As long as these conservatives remained the only opposition, a bipartisan coalition of northern Democrats and moderate Republicans ensured the program's survival. But beginning in the early 1960s, the program started coming under attack from a group that foreign aid officials labeled the "dissident liberals."[18] Senators such as George McGovern, Albert Gore, Frank Church, Wayne Morse, and Ernest Gruening contended that assistance too often had gone to dictatorial regimes solely because of their anti-Communist credentials. These legislators began offering amendments to deny aid to governments that came to power through undemocratic means, and they gradually expanded their efforts to launch an attack on military aid that veered toward repudiating Cold War liberalism itself.

This opposition occurred at a critical moment, for in the early 1960s foreign aid assumed a new importance. John Kennedy's counterinsurgency theories dictated a considerable expansion in military aid expenditures; the administration also based its boldest new international initiative, the Alliance for Progress, on a multi-year commitment of economic and military assistance to Latin America. Unfortunately for Kennedy, in 1963, Passman's conservatives and the dissident liberals formed an awkward alliance that produced what *U.S. News & World Report* described as the "foreign aid

[16] *The Times* (London), 17 Feb. 1960.
[17] Phil to Thomas McIntyre, 6 Oct. 1963, Box 99, Series III, Thomas McIntyre Papers, University of New Hampshire.
[18] Larry O'Brien, "Memorandum for the President," 4 Nov. 1963, Box 53, President's Office File, John Kennedy Presidential Library.

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revolt."[19] In the revolt's aftermath, foreign aid bills became a favorite vehicle for policy riders on issues as diverse as human rights, expropriation of U.S.-owned property, and the international policies of recipient regimes. Commentator Robert Pastor correctly termed the annual foreign aid measure "the nearest thing Congress has to a 'State of the World Message.' "[20]

Though he continued to fulminate against the "frustrating, fanatical, frightening, and foolish" program, Passman's power waned after the 1964 death of his mentor, Appropriations Committee chairman Clarence Cannon, but the left-wing critics of foreign aid – the group that Harold Hughes later would describe as the new internationalists – gained strength as the 1960s progressed.[21] In this respect, the tactical and ideological foundation of the congressional dissent against the Vietnam War dated from the late Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. It unified around three broad principles: first, a concern that in the passion of the Cold War, the United States had too readily endorsed policies, such as aiding dictatorial regimes, that served short-term strategic interests at the expense of traditional American ideals; second, a fear that policymakers relied on military solutions to address fundamentally political problems; and third, a suspicion, best seen in the foreign aid revolt, that the United States had overcommitted itself internationally. Tactically, the period from 1957 through 1963 suggested that Congress could most effectively influence foreign policy through the appropriations power, subcommittee government, and framing how the public considered foreign policy issues.[22]

This dissent, however, emerged when more than 20,000 U.S. troops were already on the ground in Vietnam, with the Johnson administration already well on its way toward Americanizing the conflict. Just as Lyndon Johnson tried and failed to find a middle ground on responding to deteriorating conditions in South Vietnam, so too did most members of Congress. In the process, the Vietnam War polarized the legislature, especially the Senate, while prompting increased emphasis on issues such as European affairs, military aid, and individual weapons systems that had received little legislative attention for the preceding decade.

In the altered environment, the Foreign Relations Committee renewed its influence after a period of decline. Rhode Island senator Claiborne Pell attributed the committee's remarkable power during the Nixon and

[19] *U.S. News & World Report*, 25 Nov. 1963.

[20] Robert Pastor, "Coping with Congress' Foreign Policy," *Foreign Service Journal* 52 (1975), pp. 83–104.

[21] Otto Passman, "To the American Taxpayer," 1 July 1971, Box 1920, George McGovern Papers, Princeton University.

[22] For more on this theme, see Michael Kirst, *Government without Passing Laws: Congress' Nonstatutory Techniques for Appropriations Control* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979).

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Ford administrations to the effect of Stuart Symington, whose presence gave Foreign Relations Committee members the "tremendous advantage of . . . having knowledge of what was going on in Armed Services."[23] The final senator in American history to sit simultaneously on both national security committees, the Missouri Democrat arrived in the upper chamber after serving as the first secretary of the Air Force; his continued sympathies led critics to label him the "Senator from the Air Force."[24] He achieved national prominence during the Army-McCarthy hearings of 1954, when partisan Democrats hailed his willingness to take on McCarthy, who in turn ridiculed him as "Sanctimonious Stu."[25] A traditional Cold War liberal for his early tenure in the upper chamber, Symington embraced an alternative national security philosophy in the late 1960s, and thereafter developed into the legislature's most effective opponent of military spending. The Missouri senator also chaired the Cold War Congress' most significant subcommittee, the Subcommittee on Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad, which investigated U.S. commitments in Thailand, Spain, and Laos. As Henry Kissinger informed President Nixon at the time, the subcommittee "obtained from DOD, State, and field missions a vast amount of highly sensitive information," mostly of "the type that has never been given to the legislative branch in previous administrations."[26]

In these efforts, Symington transformed the congressional role in Cold War foreign policy. In 1967 hearings on foreign arms sales, he offered a concrete demonstration of the link between military aid and foreign policy. In the 1968–1969 battle against the anti-ballistic missile (ABM), the first full-fledged congressional challenge to a Pentagon weapons system, he showed that dissenters needed detailed technical knowledge of military matters if they hoped to prevail in debates on national security issues. In his inquiry into executive agreements with Spain, he uncovered how overseas bases, frequently obtained without congressional approval, brought with them broader diplomatic requirements. And in the Laotian hearings, he offered a glimpse at how secrecy could obscure not only national security material but also covert wars that were occurring without legislative sanction.

Behind all of these efforts stood a willingness to challenge executive supremacy when considering national security matters, a dramatic shift from the legislative environment of the 1950s and 1960s. The Cold War climate had not only subjected those who voted against defense spending to charges of being soft on Communism, but also the spreading of weapons contracts around the country transformed defense into an economic as well as a

[23] U.S. Senate, Rules Committee, *Hearings, Committee System Reorganization Amendments of 1977*, 95th Congress, 1st session, p. 114 (18 Jan. 1977).
[24] *Washington Post*, 3 April 1969.
[25] Flora Lewis, "The Education of a Senator," *Atlantic*, Dec. 1971.
[26] Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon, 1 Oct. 1969, Box 20, White House Central File, Richard Nixon Presidential Materials Project, National Archives, II.

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national security matter. (In 1968, for instance, Lockheed made 88 percent of its sales to the federal government, the comparable figure was 67 percent for General Dynamics, 75 percent for McDonnell-Douglas, 54 percent for Boeing, 62 percent for Martin-Marietta, and 67 percent for Grumman.[27]) As a result, members of Congress rarely endorsed amendments to reduce the Pentagon budget, and even less frequently supported policy riders attached to defense bills, abandoning an interwar custom. The decade between the end of the Korean War and John Kennedy's assassination featured only 22 roll-call votes – in the House and Senate combined – on amendments of any sort to defense appropriations measures. Only by overturning the institutional culture that encouraged deference to the Defense Department could a comprehensive congressional attack on the principles of containment occur.

By the early 1970s, the effects of the conflict in Vietnam, the implications of the Sino-Soviet split, skepticism about the containment theory, and the impact of the Watergate crisis weakened support for unilateral presidential initiatives and many of the anti-Communist assumptions upon which postwar executives had based their policies. In response, the new internationalists fleshed out the ideological alternative that first had appeared in the foreign aid revolt. After the 1973 military coup in Chile, representative Donald Fraser and senator Edward Kennedy opened hearings on Augusto Pinochet's human rights abuses; Congress then enacted a series of measures to end U.S. assistance to the regime. When Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974, Thomas Eagleton pushed through an amendment cutting off military aid to the Ankara government. The most important such effort occurred in December 1975, when the Senate passed an amendment to the defense appropriations bill introduced by John Tunney terminating covert assistance to anti-Communist forces in Angola; later that winter, an amendment to the foreign aid bill sponsored by Dick Clark extended the ban. The two offerings represented the high point of a congressional revolt against the anti-Communist ethos of the Cold War and executive authority in foreign policy.

Earlier in the Cold War, revisionist aggressiveness triggered a backlash that provoked the group's ideological and political demise; a similar fate befell the new internationalists, but with one important difference. Whereas the revisionists had, by and large, failed to institutionalize their agenda through legislation, the new internationalists passed a host of structural reforms that froze into place elements of their program even after they had lost their political strength. The reaction against new internationalism therefore assumed two dimensions, with opponents seeking to tear down the group's main reforms while also developing a new congressional model for approaching international affairs. Often using tactics pioneered by the new internationalists, in the late 1970s and early 1980s anti-Communist legislators targeted such diverse measures as arms control,

[27] *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, 24 May 1968, 25 March 1972.

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the congressional budget process, human rights diplomacy, and intelligence oversight.

The final years of the Cold War also featured a profound shift in the internal balance of power within Congress, as, for the first time, the House emerged as the more powerful branch on international questions. In part, this change flowed from the efforts of the "Watergate class of 1974," which was concentrated in the House and whose influence peaked during the late Carter and Reagan administrations. In the 1980s, the lower chamber featured most of the talented congressional critics of Reagan's foreign policy – figures such as Tom Downey, Les AuCoin, Joseph Addabbo, and Michael Barnes, each of whom actively sought venues for using legislative power to affect U.S. foreign policy. Finally, unlike the situation in the Senate, the House leadership aimed to maximize the lower chamber's international role.

In the end, however, the House proved ill equipped to fashion a sustained alternative on foreign policy and national security issues, although members of the lower chamber put up a good fight. Sometimes they used wit: when the Reagan administration proposed a civil defense plan assuming that Boston residents could escape nuclear war by traversing over the city's always crowded streets en route to New Hampshire, Massachusetts congressman Barney Frank mused that perhaps civil defense planners could lighten traffic by persuading "the Russian military to coordinate their schedule with the Red Sox."[28] Sometimes they used the techniques of subcommittee government, especially after Addabbo assumed the chairmanship of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee in 1979. And sometimes they used force of intellect: during one arms control debate with Downey, Alabama Republican Jack Edwards conceded that "on the subject of defense, the last thing I want to do is to get into some big debate over what he is very knowledgeable about."[29]

By the end of 1985, however, the most significant ideological and structural reforms of the new internationalists had been scaled back or replaced altogether, culminating in the repeal of the Clark amendment in July 1985. While the old order thus had been swept aside, little time existed for a new consensus to emerge. The sudden end of the Cold War shortly thereafter found the institution adrift on international affairs, poorly situated to assume a prominent position in responding to the post–Cold War world.

In 1990, the late senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan lamented, "The neglect of congressional history is something of a scandal in American scholarship."[30]

[28] 128 *CR*, 97th Congress, 2nd session, p. 18580 (29 July 1982).
[29] 129 *CR*, 98th Congress, 1st session, p. 13374 (23 May 1983).
[30] Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *On the Law of Nations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 50.

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The ensuing 15 years has featured some progress, especially in the realm of congressional biography. For instance, studies of J. William Fulbright and Frank Church, who between them chaired the Foreign Relations Committee for all but 4 years between 1959 and 1981, impressively place their subjects within the era's broader institutional context.[31] Most other books on Congress during the Cold War focus on the struggle for constitutional supremacy between the legislative and executive branches; with the important exceptions of monographs by James Lindsay and Barry Blechman, they describe a series of events in which Congress either voluntarily yielded its power over foreign policy decisions or stood by while the executive branch usurped it.[32] According to this interpretation, the unbalanced relationship between the Congress and the executive culminated in the escalation of the U.S. commitment in Vietnam, which in turn paved the way for a congressional resurgence best symbolized by the passage of the War Powers Act in 1973.[33]

Understanding the congressional response to the Cold War, however, requires looking beyond instances where Congress did (or did not) declare war or approve treaties to examine three other facets of legislative power: the use of spending measures; the internal workings of a Congress increasingly dominated by subcommittees; and the ability of individual legislators to affect foreign affairs by changing the way that policymakers and the public thought about international questions – qualities inherently more difficult for historians to measure. Even congressional attempts to affect policy through the most tangible of these three elements, the appropriations power, often occurred in indirect ways. To take one example, in the mid-1960s, Frank Church championed ceiling amendments to the military aid program, less from an abstract desire to reduce military assistance expenditures than from a conviction that, due to the fixed nature of NATO assistance, aid to Africa and Latin America, which he considered harmful, would be the first programs cut.

In addition, as Wisconsin congressman Les Aspin once remarked, "Congress loves procedure. It's the next best thing to not having to decide

[31] LeRoy Ashby and Roy Gramer, *Fighting the Odds: The Life of Senator Frank Church* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1994); Randall Bennett Woods, *Fulbright: A Biography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[32] Barry Blechman, *The Politics of National Security: Congress and U.S. Defense Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); James Lindsay, *Congress and the Politics of U.S. Foreign Policy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

[33] Louis Fisher, *Presidential War Power* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995); John Hart Ely, *War and Responsibility: Constitutional Lessons of Vietnam and Its Aftermath* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Loch Johnson, *The Making of International Agreements: Congress Confronts the Executive* (New York: New York University Press, 1984); Michael Glennon, *Constitutional Diplomacy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

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at all."[34] Only by recognizing the importance of procedural initiatives that superficially seemed devoid of policy content can we appreciate the myriad ways in which the legislature affected the conduct of the Cold War. In addition, as most clearly revealed in Robert Caro's stunning volume on Lyndon Johnson's tenure in the Senate, historians can explicate the role of procedural gambits in Congress only through precise, detailed descriptions of the tactics involved.[35] As with looking beyond the more traditional legislative roles in treaty and war-making, moreover, evaluating the impact of procedural initiatives requires a flexible conception of congressional power, one that focuses on intent and effect. Congressional advocates of enhanced oversight of the CIA, for instance, couched their appeals in the procedural language of fulfilling a basic legislative task, but they expected oversight to make covert operations less likely to occur.

Finally, this preference to address controversial international questions in a back-door fashion resulted in members of Congress often becoming associated with untested policy outcomes that lacked sufficient public support. Ironically, the more powerful that movements such as the new internationalists and the revisionists became, the greater the temptation to use their procedural power in ways that would accelerate their decline. What the *Wall Street Journal* termed "the crippling disease of procedure-itis" occurred when congressional blocs that opposed executive initiatives "for ideological reasons [stuck] to the procedural issues" to hide their agenda's lack of popular support.[36] By removing the built-in check associated with confronting issues openly, this preference for procedure established what amounted to a self-destruction mechanism that prevented the most ambitious of the era's legislative dissenters from achieving their goals. The outcome of the Army-McCarthy hearings provided the most spectacular illustration of how a congressional bloc's procedural success could mask a decline in its popular base, but the new internationalists suffered from a similar problem in the 1970s, when they were slow to realize how much public attitudes about cutting defense spending shifted as the decade progressed.

Iconoclast journalist I. F. Stone once labeled congressional hearings his most valuable source. Since they did not appear in print until several weeks after the event, they were of little use to daily journalists, and therefore did not shape newspaper coverage. But they often contained unexpected insights: hearings are the only forum within the American constitutional

[34] James Dillon, "Congressman Aspin and Defense Budget Cuts [sequel]," Kennedy School of Government Harvard University Case C14-75-022S, p. 1.
[35] Robert Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: Volume 3, Master of the Senate* (New York: Knopf, 2002).
[36] *Wall Street Journal*, 11 Feb. 1985.

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structure for extemporaneous, on the record, discussion between members of one branch and policymakers from another. As if to reinforce the point, in 1974 New Jersey senator Clifford Case lectured Secretary of State Henry Kissinger about proper protocol in Foreign Relations Committee hearings, during which "testimony is given on both sides of the bench."[37] To a much greater extent than in a study centered on the executive branch, which rarely made foreign policy in the open, printed documents provide a starting point for any examination of the legislature. The foremost such source, the *Congressional Record*, forms the official record of the proceedings and debates of Congress; while technological and cultural changes have rendered floor proceedings much less substantial since the late 1970s, for most of the period covered in this book, the *Record* is of considerable use, despite members' right to revise their remarks before the document's publication.

Although congressional history involves a branch of the federal government, most archival material falls outside the National Archives system because congressional manuscript collections remain the personal property of the legislator, to deposit wherever desired. This project draws from 107 manuscript collections, of varying quality and status, deposited at 62 different archival sites from Maine to Alaska. This list does not include the collections of several key figures from the early Cold War or from the House, such as Mendel Rivers, Robert Leggett, and Joseph Ball, whose papers were lost or destroyed. Nor does it contain material from relevant current members of Congress, such as Ted Kennedy or Tom Harkin, or from former members such as Charles Percy, Bob Dole, Mark Hatfield, and Jesse Helms, who have not yet opened their papers to scholars. Contemporary journalistic accounts, oral histories, and personal interviews have compensated to the extent possible, but no doubt some aspects of the historical record have fallen through the cracks.

This book also does not claim to examine all aspects of the congressional role in post–World War II foreign policy. Policy toward certain regions, especially the Middle East, largely fell outside of the Cold War framework because of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the role of oil diplomacy, the activities of the Israeli lobby, and the emergence of terrorism in the mid-1970s. Therefore, Middle East questions receive attention only when they involved procedural reforms related to broader themes in the study – such as the legislative reactions to Dwight Eisenhower's Middle East Resolution in 1957 or Ronald Reagan's sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia in 1981. Meanwhile, legislators responded to some types of international issues, notably foreign economic policy and, after 1952, immigration, almost exclusively through

[37] U.S. Senate, Foreign Relations Committee, *Hearings, Foreign Assistance Authorization*, 93rd Congress, 2nd session, p. 30 (7 June 1974).

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the lens of domestic political interests, and so the study does not consider these matters.

Dean Acheson once remarked that dealings with members of Congress "follow a distinctly oriental pattern."[38] While recognizing the wisdom of the former secretary of state's comment, this book hopes to remove some of the mystery from the congressional response to the Cold War.

[38] Dean Acheson, *Sketches from Life of Men I Have Known* (New York: Harper's, 1961), p. 136.

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