What are the four primary ways that societal interests affect U.S. foreign policy?

What is the “rally around the flag” effect? What is “war fatigue”? What does Mueller mean when he says that the American public is “casualty-phobic?

What is a public good? What is the free rider problem and how does it relate to the provision of public goods?

How does the free rider problem relate to foreign policy and the provision of something like national defense? How do special interest lobbying groups solve the free rider problem?

How have powerful economic interests captured state power and fashioned economic trade policy to further their interests through the Open Door policies of the 19th century?

THE RALLY AROUND THE FLAG EFFECT

LBJ did not run in 1968 due to dissatisfaction with Vietnam. 2008 Obama won cause of opposition to Iraq war

**Rally around the flag:** The tendency for the public to rally behind the pres and the cause for war at times of perceived crisis, bush 2001 and 2003 spikes in approva

Why?

Nationalism (Putin and Ukraine 20% up despite sanctions)

Lack of interest/information

Dramatic impact of foreign crises (public opinion on FP is volatile)

Fleeting nature of support

**War Fatigue**

“War Fatigue” and Declining Public

Support for American military intervention:

The tendency for public support for American military intervention to decline over time.

Is the American public “casualty-phobic”?:

“American public opinion became a key

factor in all three wars, and in each one

there has been a simple association: as

casualties mount, support decreases.”

John Mueller, The Iraq Syndrome

Mueller: (Emphatic) Yes

Historical trend in Korean, Vietnam, and Iraq Wars

Immune to “damage control” (anything a president does to slow this this fails(support))

Long-term (consequences) apprehension about future use of American military force

LOBBYING AND THE FREE RIDER PROBLEM

Interest group influence in FP function of its ability to organize lots of voters

Organizational capacity (and influence) set by ability to transcend free riding

National defense example: if relied on voluntary contributions to collective good like defense, would be undersupplied. Instead, need coercion to enforce contributions.

**Lobbying**

In democracy, citizens and politicians interact through elections and lobbying (efforts to pressure, persuade, convince politician to support a policy)

Campaign contributions as important example of lobbying

Individually costly for citizens to try and change policy through lobbying or appeals to government officials

Consequently, try to organize lobbying groups or blocs of voters

Benefits of lobbying victory (change in policy) as public good, diffused across society

Public good as nonexcludable and nonrivalrous (my consumption does not restrict your access to it), Letter to Osama allowing Moser to get it

Remember provision of public goods (policy change here) subject to free riding

This means lobbying undersupplied because individual don’t want to pay its costs

(like a campaign contribution)

THE COLLECTIVE ACTION PROBLEM AND SOCIETY IN FP

Societal attempts to influence FP subject to free rider problem

Difficult to mobilize sufficient societal support to influence FP unless rely on group that has already solved collective action problem

Role of selective incentives (AARP, goodies if contribute)

Foreign policy example: AIPAC

**Organizational Costs to changing FP: Difficulties of Free Trade**

A puzzle: given national income benefits of free trade, why governments restrict?

Key beneficiaries: consumers

E.g. The Wal-Mart effect, to CHINA!

Consumers poor advocates for free trade because of free rider problem and diffuse benefits, does saving 25 -30 $ make you want to lobby reduction in tariffs

Importing competing interests more successful at lobbying for protection because losses from free trade concentrated (facilitates collective action)

E.g. Labor unions, steel industry groups, Coal

ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND THE OPEN DOOR

For economic interests: consumer markets and cheap raw materials

Is the US an empire?

US steady program of territorial expansion since 1840’s

Continental—Texas, California, Oregon

Global beginning in 1890’s—Philippines, Cuba, Caribbean, Central America

Post World War II—Germany, Japan, Middle East, Latin America, Caribbean

Post Cold--Afghanistan, Iraq

One argument – State Capture Theory – Corporations have disproportionate influence over American FP (Wall street banks and bailing out Mexico)

Economic interests of big corporations have captured the state and shape foreign policy interests of US

**Imperial Designs?**

American territorial expansion to facilitate “Open Door”

Equal access for all firms in global economy to a market (They are supposed to be competitive)

In practice has meant access for American businesses to external markets to sell their products; and cheap inputs (raw materials and labor)

Great depression: Market was too efficient and we needed to sell our stuff and Europe owned the markets

Examples:

US 1890’s: Caribbean and Philippines

Wilson fights to undermine European empires

Post WWII

US fosters German economic recovery (French oppose)

Force British to stop limiting access to their Empire

Interventions in Central and South America—Chile, Grenada, Venezuela?

Middle East—special relationship with Saudi Arabia, Iraq shaped by oil