

Chapter 11 Civil War, Volunteer Soldiers, and the Military

Abstract

Chapter 11 contends that a state's choice between two opposing military manpower systems affects its vulnerability to civil violence. The postulation is that, compared to conscripted soldiers, volunteer soldiers are more likely to regard themselves as guardians of a sacred nation and are, therefore, more inclined to perceive episodes of social unrest as opportunities which call upon them to defend certain moral positions in defiance of sitting governments. Consider, for example, the 1999 military intervention laid out by Pakistani General Pervez Musharraf: he reasoned that the nation was in a state of political turmoil and economic collapse so that "[the military intervened] with all sincerity, loyalty and selfless devotion to the country" (quoted in Dugger October 13, 1999). From this perspective, the volunteer military sees itself as acting extra-politically, if you will, in order to safeguard the unity and security of the nation that they have volunteered to defend.