Political Coerciveness and Turmoil

A Cross-National Inquiry

IVO K. FEIERABEND and BETTY NESVOLD

with ROSALIND L. FEIERABEND

San Diego State College

The central theme of this paper concerns the difficult question of whether the use of force, and, generally, the coercive character of a political regime stimulates or inhibits the occurrence of political strife and violence. More specifically, two questions are raised: First, what is the relationship between the degree of regime coerciveness and the amount of violence experienced within political systems? Second, in what way does the consistency or inconsistency with which force is applied affect internal political stability and turmoil?

Two contradictory views are commonly held regarding the use of force by political authorities. The deterrent view argues that the punishing arm of the law—the police or the army—discourages troublemakers, while permissive rule is an invitation to increased strife. The calling of the National Guard into

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strife-torn cities may be seen as guided by the notion of deterrence. On the other hand, it is also argued that the use of force creates more, rather than less, turmoil. Oppressive rule may well invite the wrath of the people, an untimely show of force may provoke anger, and coercion may radicalize previously peaceful opposition. As a consequence more, rather than less, violence will ensue. In this view, what is more likely to forestall political crisis and pacify a tense political situation is the permissiveness of the political regime.

The present inquiry into these questions is empirical in nature and extensive in scope. In a search for answers, 73 nations are scrutinized for more than 20 years of their recent history. In general, the patterns of coerciveness and the patterns of violence are ascertained for these countries and then compared. This broadly comparative, cross-national approach may reveal patterns that would go unnoticed in specific case studies. On the other hand, detail, depth, and even accuracy may be lost in the panoramic overview that would be more thoroughly preserved in the exploration of a single country or a single incident.

CROSS-NATIONAL DATA BANK OF REGIME PERMISSIVENESS-COERCIVENESS

The basic tools used in this analysis are cross-national collections of data on the permissiveness-coerciveness of regimes and on the occurrence of political instability and violence (Feierabend, Feierabend, and Boroviak, 1968; Feierabend and Feierabend, 1965).[1] Political permissiveness-coerciveness is a very complex notion. It invokes core concepts of political science such as force, power, control, and tyranny, as well as freedom, liberty, and democracy. However, the theoretical and observational definitions guiding the data collection are not so broad nor all-encompassing. Instead, the meaning of permissiveness-coerciveness of regimes is limited to fit the particular purposes of the study.

Coerciveness as a political category is understood in terms of the psychological concept of inhibition.[2] More precisely, it is the equivalent of punishment and negative reinforcement. Coerciveness is the set of restraints (inhibitions) instituted by the complex of office holders within the political system. It involves the use or threat of force or other severe sanctions. Political coerciveness can involve single restraining acts, such as arrests and imprisonments, or more complicated situations, such as martial law or press censorship. It can also involve coercive structures such as police, prisons and concentration camps. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that coerciveness entails aggressive, sometimes violent behaviors—that is, behaviors intentionally injurious to others.

All political systems by their very nature are coercive to some degree. And since permissiveness-coerciveness is a matter of degree, it is conceptualized as a continuous variable. Regimes with relatively low levels and narrowly defined spheres of application of force may be characterized as permissive, that is, at the

low end of the coerciveness continuum. In summary definition, permissiveness-coerciveness of political regimes refers to the complex of inhibitory acts, situations, structures, and processes that entails the threat or use of force by the office holders within the political system.

This limiting definition excludes other restraints on political behavior that are not coercive, such as the legitimacy of the political system or restraints that stem from social, economic, or ecological systems. Yet this meaning remains sufficiently broad to include a variety of observable political behaviors, events, and institutions. To identify specific categories of restraints or freedoms is to probe into the position of individuals or groups within the system, as well as into the political roles and institutions that affect political coerciveness.[3] The following questions are all relevant to our inquiry: Are the civil rights of the individual citizen maximally respected, or are they sometimes or often violated? Are the freedoms of speech, press, religion, and assembly maximized within the political system? Is seditious speech punished? Is the individual afraid to speak freely? Are journalists prevented from criticizing governmental policies? Is there serious press censorship? Is there academic freedom? Is there freedom of arts and sciences in the country?

Questions concerning the status of groups within the political system are also important. Do minority groups enjoy freedoms? Is labor free to organize? How do other major associations—such as churches, business, landed interests, universities, social and cultural groups, and youth—fare within the system? Is political opposition tolerated? Are there competing parties in the political arena?

Finally, in order to estimate the degree of coerciveness within the political system, specific arrangements of political structures and institutions are relevant. How authoritarian is the executive? Does he arbitrarily perpetuate himself in office through the use or threat of force? Is the legislature endowed with rule-making powers, and is it representative? Does the country hold regularized, free elections, recognizing universal suffrage? Is the judiciary empowered to act independently from the executive? All of these questions refer to the specific variables which form the content of the cross-national data bank of regime permissiveness-coerciveness. In addition, the collection includes information on the role of the government in the economy, social reformism, the role of the military and the police, and arrangements of local autonomy.

It could be objected on several grounds that many of these questions are elusive, as are the civic freedoms or restraints which they explore. Freedom is a subjective perception; the philosopher may feel free even in jail, and a powerful king may feel himself a slave to his throne. Entire peoples accustomed to a long rule of tyranny may not feel oppressed. These claims may be true; the data collection, however, does not include subjective perceptions. The coerciveness variables rely on criteria that refer to objectively ascertainable behaviors or structures. For example, in the case of press censorship, we ask whether foreign correspondents are able to move freely within the country or whether they are

expelled; whether newspapers are sometimes banned and editors jailed, and whether there are censors on the staffs of the news media. In the case of the relative freedom of labor unions, we may ask the following questions: Are strikes legal? Is there collective bargaining? Are labor unions organized by the management and the government, or are they independent? Or, in the case of political opposition, we want to ascertain whether extremist parties are outlawed, or, on the contrary, whether their activities are tolerated; whether there are members of opposition parties participating in the national legislature and, if so, how many.

COLLECTING THE DATA

The data collection phase was guided by these definitions, considerations, and questions. The task consisted of coding and rating relevant information from specific source materials, using a detailed set of criteria. For the most part, degree of permissiveness-coerciveness was rated on a six-point ordinal scale, with each scale point specifically defined for each separate behavior or measure. In general, point one refers to a very permissive set of conditions; point two, to permissive conditions; point three, to slight permissiveness; point four, to slightly coercive conditions; and points five and six, respectively, indicate coercive and extremely coercive situations, conditions, behaviors, or structures.

As mentioned earlier, independent national polities served as the units for which data were collected. Eighty-four nations were preselected which were independent, or close to independence, in 1945. Seventy-three of these serve as the units of analysis in this presentation. The decision not to code colonial territories meant that African nations were underrepresented in the data bank, although all other regional areas were included. All of the American and European and most of the Asian nations were independent or close to independence at that time. The data collection spans a 22-year period, 1945-1966, and each nation within the sample is rated at least once a year on each of the indicators of permissiveness-coerciveness. The data sources are concise chronicles of political situations and events. The three major sources are the yearbooks of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and *Collier's Encyclopedia* and the *Political Handbook of the World* (Council of Foreign Relations, 1946-1966). For some measures, such as press censorship and trade union freedom, monograph sources were used that dealt specifically with these institutions. These sources were employed either to supplement the yearbook data or to serve as a check on source reliability.[4]

Some of the variables from the data bank are listed in Table 1, and the correlational matrix in this table affords a cursory look at the bank. The high intercorrelation among the coerciveness measures is striking. This supports the theoretical supposition that permissiveness-coerciveness is one underlying dimension of related characteristics in the political system. Nevertheless, the less

than perfect relationships indicate that an overall score on permissiveness-coerciveness should combine several of these measures rather than rely on a single indicator. One can note, for example, that civil rights (general) correlates with freedom from internal press censorship at a rather high level (r = .72). This value shows that 52% of the variance in one variable is accounted for by its association with the other, but still leaves a significant amount of variance unexplained. On the other hand, civil rights (general) accounts for 86% of the variance in permissiveness of the executive. This latter variable, however, has a much lower association with most of the other measures on the matrix. One can also note the low association between variable 20 (absence of government participation in the economy) and all other measures in the matrix. This may indicate an aspect of the relative independence of the economic sphere from the political sphere.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

As mentioned previously, two hypotheses are explored in the cross-national empirical analyses. The first postulates a curvilinear relationship between coerciveness of regime and political violence.

> Hypothesis 1: Low levels of political coerciveness (that is, political permissiveness) and high levels of coerciveness are associated with internal stability while mid-levels of coerciveness are associated with political violence.

The second hypothesis postulates inconsistency in the use of force as the predictor of political violence. More specifically, the hypothesis may be formulated as follows:

> Hypothesis 2: The greater (lesser) the fluctuation in level of political coerciveness, the higher (lower) the level of political violence.

It is assumed that these two variables—the level of coerciveness and the consistency with which it is applied—are largely unrelated. Furthermore, if they are combined, they will in combination predict political violence more efficiently.

The logic underlying the relationships postulated in the two hypotheses is not self-evident. It may be explicated within the framework of the frustration-aggression theory in social psychology. This is a complicated and elaborate doctrine; however, in its most basic insight it specifies aggression (as well as certain other behaviors) to be the result of frustration. Frustration itself is defined as interference with attainment of goals, aspirations, and expectations.[5]

This motivational concept of frustration is often thought more appropriate to individual than to social circumstances. The notion of *systemic frustration*,

TABLE 1

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG LEVELS OF COERCIVENESS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1.	Freedom of speech	–																				
2.	Freedom of religion	.63	–																			
3.	Academic freedom	.94	.61	–																		
4.	Freedom of arts and sciences	.88	.83	.86	–																	
5.	Freedom of assembly	.92	.58	.90	.76	–																
6.	Civil rights (general)	.96	.62	.94	.82	.95	–															
7.	Freedom of minority groups	.78	.68	.75	.65	.80	.80	–														
8.	Freedom from internal press censorship	.78	.59	.81	.82	.72	.76	.62	–													
9.	Freedom from external press censorship	.78	.60	.82	.79	.75	.78	.67	.94	–												
10.	Freedom from radio censorship	.75	.43	.75	.67	.71	.75	.60	.83	.78	–											
11.	Freedom of labor	.81	.46	.83	.73	.81	.84	.72	.69	.72	.65	–										
12.	Freedom of landed interests	.67	.76	.56	.88	.53	.62	.65	.67	.63	.53	.44	–									
13.	Freedom of business	.67	.71	.65	.92	.74	.81	.75	.75	.78	.71	.74	.85	–								
14.	Freedom of churches	.64	.79	.57	.80	.60	.65	.65	.53	.53	.46	.49	.80	.80	–							
15.	Freedom of universities	.88	.58	.94	.81	.86	.89	.73	.75	.77	.72	.84	.77	.76	.56	–						
16.	Freedom of associational groups (general)	.90	.61	.91	.83	.88	.93	.76	.75	.77	.69	.88	.67	.87	.68	.92	–					
17.	Opposition in the lower house	.70	.50	.73	.79	.65	.67	.49	.75	.72	.79	.66	.49	.66	.50	.67	.69	–				
18.	Permissiveness of the executive	.90	.53	.90	.75	.89	.92	.75	.74	.76	.76	.81	.56	.76	.59	.87	.88	.64	–			
19.	Party opposition	.86	.57	.89	.81	.81	.83	.59	.83	.81	.83	.76	.63	.76	.60	.84	.83	.82	.83	–		
20.	Absence of government participation in the economy	.21	.43	.20	.64	.12	.16	.13	.11	.15	.02	.09	.68	.44	.59	.15	.28	.18	.08	.08	–	
21.	Suffrage	.72	.40	.74	.57	.73	.72	.68	.64	.69	.63	.69	.37	.63	.41	.77	.69	.64	.70	.74	.05	–

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however, makes it available to the analysis of behavior within social systems. Systemic frustration is defined in reference to three criteria:

(1) as frustration interfering with the attainment and maintenance of social goals, aspirations, and values;

(2) as frustration simultaneously experienced by members of social aggregates and hence also complex social systems; and

(3) as frustration that is the result of processes within social systems.

Systemic frustration and social strain are thus frustrations experienced collectively within societies (Feierabend, Feierabend, and Nesvold, 1969).[6]

Three general propositions further qualify the notion of systemic frustrations:

Proposition 1: Systemic frustration at any given time is a function of the discrepancy between present social aspirations and expectations, on the one hand, and social achievements on the other.

Proposition 2: Present estimates or expectations of future frustrations (or satisfactions) are also responsible for level of present frustration (or satisfaction).

Proposition 3: Uncertainties in social expectations in themselves increase the sense of systemic frustration.

The first proposition focuses on the discrepancy between aspirations, expectations, and attainments within the present situation. Further refinements of this proposition relate level of frustration to the number of unfulfilled aspirations, their level of valuation, their frequency of occurrence within various population strata, their expected level of attainment, and the degree of certainty with which these expectations are held. Similar criteria apply to the notion of social attainment. It should also be pointed out that it is perceived, rather than actual, social attainment that is important. Aspirations in our definition include the goals that people wish to attain as well as the desired values already in their possession. Expectations, on the other hand, include only the portion of aspirations which we expect to achieve and maintain. Strictly speaking, expectations refer always to the future. Yet expectations are disappointed (or fulfilled) in the context of the present. This is the measure of systemic frustration as formulated in the first proposition.

An expectation of future frustration or satisfaction may also intensify or counteract present predicaments. The second proposition recognizes this possiblity and hence uses the term "expectation" in a somewhat different sense. It does not refer to expectations regarding the present situation but rather to present expectations of future occurrences. The third proposition singles out uncertainty as a separate source of systemic frustration and social strain. Uncertainty is a special quality of expectation. Ambiguity as to whether the

future will bring disaster or salvation should be considered a distressful experience, adding to the present sense of frustration.

In more usual usage of the frustration-aggression hypothesis to explain political violence, systemic frustrations have been sought in the economic circumstances of a society. Inequality of land distribution, level of development, income, health, and other socioeconomic circumstances all have been explored in relation to level of political unrest.[7] It is the tenet of this paper, however, that political coerciveness can also be regarded as a special instance of systemic frustration. In fact, it fits the stated definition as a set of restraints that regulates the attainment of social goals, aspirations, and expectations. Most of the 21 variables listed in Table 1 could be classified as social values or aspirations, or else as instrumentalities for achieving these values. The coerciveness level of the regime thus equals the degree to which the attainment of these goals is blocked or frustrated.

However, the function of coerciveness is more complex than this. Coerciveness is not only a frustration interfering with the attainment of social goals and hence an instigating condition for political violence; it also has quite an opposite function. In the frustration-aggression theory, as well as in common sense, punishment is an inhibitory force that prevents the overt expression of the aggressive impulse. In this role, coerciveness may act as the controlling, inhibiting factor, muting or preventing outbursts of political violence and turmoil (Gurr, 1970: esp. ch. 8). These two functions of coerciveness must be kept separate, and it is to the first function—coerciveness as frustration—that we are directing our attention at this time. Thinking of coercion as frustration and not as inhibition, it follows that high levels of coerciveness should result in high levels of systemic frustration and hence should instigate high levels of internal political turmoil. This inference may be further refined in reference to expectations and achievements as formulated in the first two propositions. According to proposition 1, the higher the expectations of permissiveness (coerciveness) and the higher (lower) the actual level of coerciveness, the greater (less) the systemic frustration. According to proposition 2, the higher the expectation of future permissiveness (coerciveness), the lower (higher) the sense of systemic frustration experienced in the present. In other words, if coerciveness is in fact expected, then less systemic frustration will ensue when it actually occurs. If it comes unexpectedly, a sense of outrage may stimulate political violence.

This recognition could be further extended by speculating that a justifiable use of force is the one kind of force that is both accepted and expected. Such legitimate use of force or coerciveness stemming, for example, from a legitimate government, should be considered the least serious creator of frustration. In fact, neglecting to use legitimate force may be frustrating if indeed coerciveness was fully expected by the members of the political system and was viewed as an appropriate technique to maintain valued social goals.

It must be pointed out that our data do not tap the dimension of expectation but only the actual level of coerciveness. However, expectancy could be inferred from the data, even if imperfectly. It may be assumed that any sudden changes in the level of coerciveness may be evidence of a sudden change in expectation regarding coerciveness. Political regimes employing consistent levels of coerciveness, either high or low, reinforce social expectations of similar levels to follow, Hence previously permissive regimes which suddenly turn coercive will sharply disappoint social expectations of permissiveness. Furthermore, it may be that this fluctuation in level and deterioration of political liberties may be felt as illegitimate and tyrannical by the citizens.

The hypothesis that fluctuation in coerciveness levels breeds violence finds an additional justification in the third proposition elaborating the notion of systemic frustration. Undue and repeated flux in any social, political, and economic performance or environmental condition is postulated as an important source of systemic frustration and social anomie. It is likely to create feelings of ambiguity and uncertainty of present as well as future expectations. Not knowing what to expect, the members of social systems must feel that they live in a haphazard, perplexing, and insecure environment.[8] The wider and the more salient the social domain that experiences this flux, the more threatening its nature, and the greater the resultant social strain. Permissiveness-coerciveness of regime might so qualify, especially in the context of the modern, highly politicized world of the twentieth century. Fluctuation between the extremes of political permissiveness and coerciveness must be considered an important source of frustration and social strain.

Turning to the second function of political coerciveness, it can in addition be conceptualized as inhibiting the overt expression of aggressive behavior. This is by far the more usual perception of the role of force and punishment. Hence, coerciveness may be said to be cast in a dual role. It created a condition of systemic frustration instigating the impulse to violence, but at the same time it has the capacity to curb the actual manifestation of violence. This may lead to yet another reason that fluctuating levels of coerciveness instigate violent responses. If punishment, or an expectation of the use of force, is suddenly removed, the deterrent power of coerciveness is gone and the accumulated impulse to aggression may find its release. Highly coercive regimes that suddenly are weakened, for whatever reason, in their coercive prowess should expect to experience violent, perhaps even revolutionary behavior.

The dual role of punishment explains the first hypothesis, which postulates a curvilinear relationship between coerciveness and political violence. Permissive regimes must be presumed to give little impulse to political aggressiveness; minimally punishing, they give minimal offense. Extremely coercive regimes, although they must be presumed to frustrate maximally, are nonetheless also maximally able to inhibit the expression of violence. Regimes at the median levels of coerciveness must bear the brunt of internal turmoil. Although

instigating violence by being coercive, they are not sufficiently coercive to inhibit it.

While a curvilinear relationship is postulated between level of coerciveness and violence, a linear relationship is indicated between violence and degree of inconsistency, or fluctuation in level of coerciveness. Fluctuation may be said to create systemic frustration for the three reasons discussed above: (a) Inconsistency in coerciveness may be an indirect indicator of an unexpected and perhaps even illegitimate use of force. The sharp increase in coerciveness that disappoints an expectation of permissiveness and stimulates violence is depicted in Figure 1. It is the discrepancy between the social expectations of permissiveness and the sudden introduction of coercion that causes frustration. (b) A sudden decline in coerciveness may also breed violence. In the first place, it can create an exaggerated expectation of permissiveness which is bound to be disappointed (see Figure 2). Secondly, it means the removal of the inhibitory mechanism, but not necessarily the removal of the instigation to violence that still may linger as the heritage of the previously coercive regime. (c) Significant and repeated fluctuations in the level of coerciveness, as demonstrated in Figure 3, add yet another dimension. Uncertainty of expectations regarding the coerciveness of the regime must be presumed to create social strain and hence, under certain circumstances, a readiness to recruit the populace for turmoil and violent activity. In addition, fluctuation of permissiveness-coerciveness could be presumed to bear witness to an arbitrary use of force and hence also suggests a lack of legitimacy of the regime.

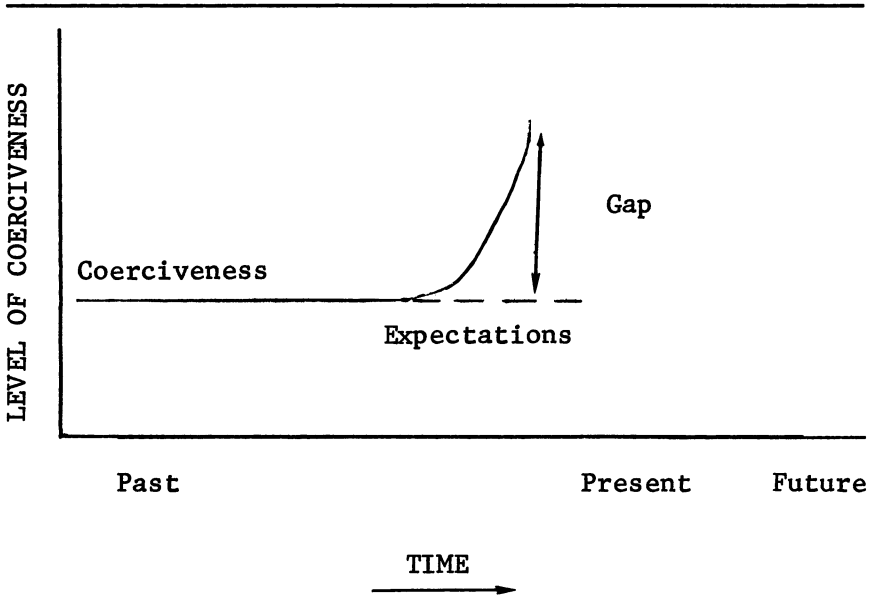

Figure 1.

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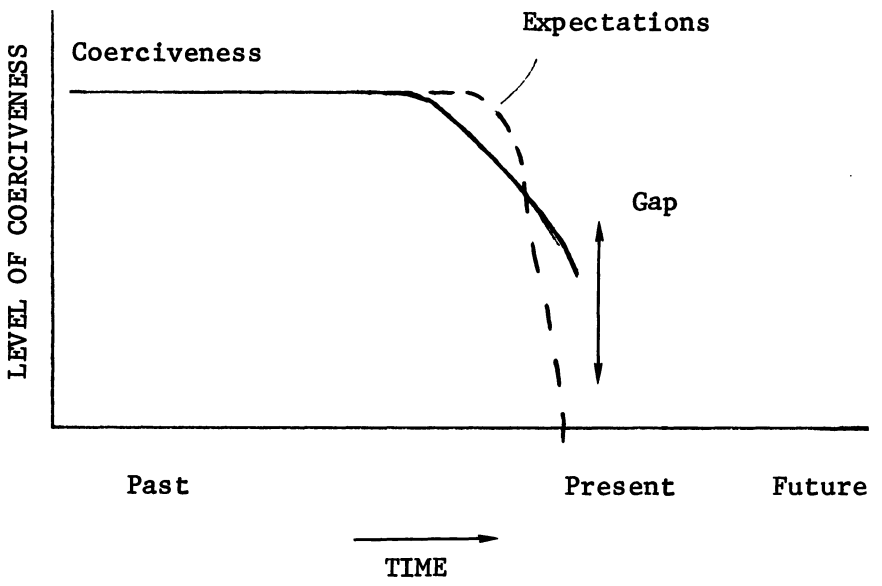

Figure 2.

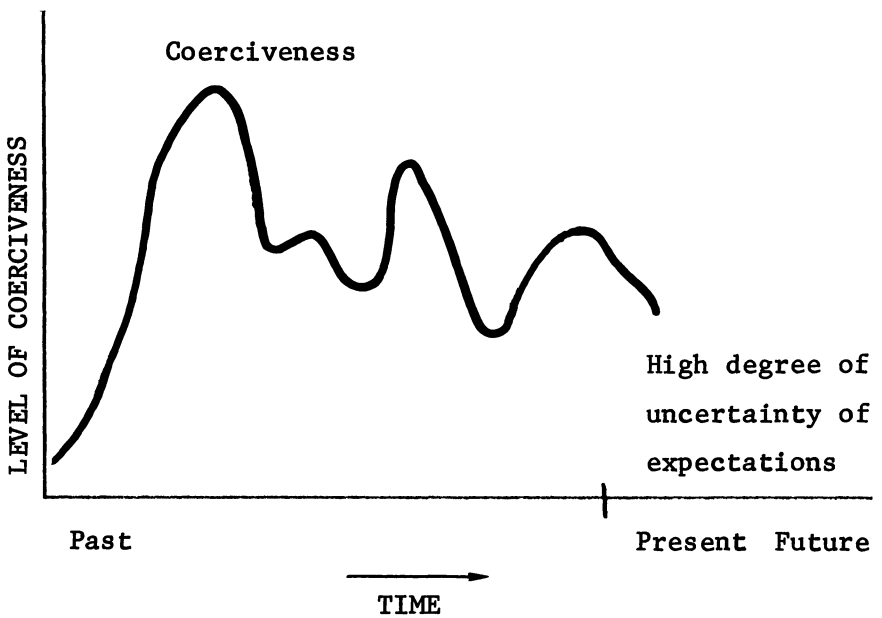

Figure 3.

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Contemplating the relative merits of the first and second hypotheses, it is possible to consider inconsistency as the overriding stimulus leading to discontent. Inconsistency in coerciveness, as depicted in Figure 1, may be experienced in usually permissive regimes, while highly coercive regimes experience the type of fluctuation illustrated in Figure 2. If this is the case, very permissive and very coercive regimes, although predicted to be stable in terms of hypothesis 1, still might experience an outburst of political violence.

FINDINGS

From the set of 21 coerciveness variables reported in Table 1, 5 were selected as representing different facets of the permissiveness-coerciveness syndrome: (1) suffrage, (2) internal press censorship, (3) party opposition, (4) general civil rights, and (5) permissiveness of the executive. These 5 were among those with the most complete yearly scores for each of the 73 nations in our study. A mean score on all 5 measures for each of the 22 years was calculated to serve as a summary value denoting the level of coerciveness of each nation. These scores are listed in Table 2. A value of 1.00 reflects consistently permissive behavior for each of the years 1945-1966, for each of the five measures. On the other hand, a score of 6.00 reflects consistently coercive conditions during that time. No nation was scored at this extreme level of coerciveness, but Albania and East Germany come close to this limit. The Communist nations occupy the top six positions at the coercive end of the scale, and the highly permissive nations are all Western European-type polities. This is not a surprising finding, and it lends initial face validity to the scoring endeavor.

Table 3 reports the profiles of consistency or inconsistency in coerciveness-permissiveness for the 73 nations. These scores represent a mean number of fluctuations for each country for the 22-year period calculated from the same 5 coerciveness variables. It was constructed by recording the absolute difference in scale value each time a nation underwent a change in level of permissiveness-coerciveness. The greater the number of changes in policy within a nation, the larger the number of difference scores. These difference scores were summed for each of the 5 measures separately, for the 22-year period. The 5 scores were then averaged to create an index of fluctuation for each nation.

It may be seen in this table that there is a considerable range of values, from zero, indicating no changes in regime coerciveness, to fourteen, indicating frequent reversals of policy. The countries lowest in fluctuations are the highly permissive regimes, a finding which will be explored further below. The countries exhibiting the most fluctuations are principally Latin American states, and the Communist nations are scattered throughout the table. Some, such as Albania and East Germany, show very little evidence of regime change. Others, such as Czechoslovakia and especially Poland, indicate considerable change in policy over time.

TABLE 2

LEVEL OF COERCION MAP, 1945-1966
(n = 73)

Country	Score	Country	Score	Country	Score
Iceland	1.00	Ceylon	2.26	Sudan	4.07
Luxembourg	1.00	India	2.34	Republic of South Africa	4.10
New Zealand	1.00	Panama	2.52	Tunisia	4.18
Norway	1.00	Brazil	2.72	Egypt	4.24
Sweden	1.00	El Salvador	2.86	USSR	4.38
Finland	1.02	Cyprus	2.92	Indonesia	4.44
Ireland	1.02	Liberia	2.92	Syria	4.50
United States	1.02	Bolivia	2.94	Dominican Republic	4.52
Netherlands	1.04	Libya	3.00	Nicaragua	4.54
Belgium	1.08	Laos	3.10	Cuba	4.60
Canada	1.08	Ecuador	3.12	Paraguay	4.62
United Kingdom	1.14	Turkey	3.12	Cambodia	4.66
Italy	1.20	Lebanon	3.26	Afghanistan	4.68
Costa Rica	1.22	Ethiopia	3.34	Iraq	4.74
Uruguay	1.28	Morocco	3.34	Portugal	4.96
Israel	1.36	Honduras	3.42	Haiti	4.98
Australia	1.40	Colombia	3.46	Saudi Arabia	4.98
France	1.40	Venezuela	3.46	Spain	5.00
Austria	1.44	Peru	3.48	Czechoslovakia	5.26
Japan	1.44	Argentina	3.72	Romania	5.28
Philippines	1.48	Jordan	3.82	Hungary	5.30
Switzerland	1.54	Pakistan	3.84	Bulgaria	5.36
Mexico	1.60	Poland	3.88	East Germany	5.76
West Germany	1.66	Thailand	3.98	Albania	5.98
Chile	2.08				

A question which arises in connection with these fluctuations in coerciveness is whether they can be viewed as independent of the absolute level of permissiveness-coerciveness exhibited by the regime. A mean score close to one or close to six on level of coerciveness in Table 2 means, mathematically, that the amount of fluctuation in coerciveness *must* be very low. Freedom to fluctuate is thus primarily associated with intermediate levels of permissiveness-coerciveness. Since there are a large number of nations close to a mean value of one on level of coerciveness, it was expected that they would also be close to the zero value on fluctuation of coerciveness, and this is the case. On the other hand, there are very few nations which approach a mean value of six on level of coerciveness. Thus the logical possibility remains that the coercive nations, with the exception of East Germany and Albania, could experience considerable fluctuation. It was postualted that a modest loosening of extreme controls and immediate reinstatement of them would be as unsettling as frequent and perhaps

TABLE 3

FLUCTUATION OF COERCION MAP, 1945-1966
(n = 73)

Country	Score	Country	Score	Country	Score
Iceland	0	United Kingdom	1.40	Egypt	5.20
Luxembourg	0	Cyprus	1.80	Haiti	5.80
New Zealand	0	Ethiopia	2.00	Poland	5.80
Norway	0	Japan	2.00	Chile	6.00
Sweden	0	Morocco	2.00	Dominican Republic	6.50
Finland	0.20	Bulgaria	2.20	Panama	6.50
Italy	0.20	France	2.20	Cuba	7.20
Philippines	0.20	Spain	2.20	Brazil	7.60
Ireland	0.25	Liberia	2.25	Jordan	7.60
Albania	0.40	Libya	2.25	Colombia	7.80
Netherlands	0.40	Costa Rica	2.60	Lebanon	8.20
Switzerland	0.40	Mexico	2.80	Paraguay	8.20
United States	0.40	Republic of South Africa	2.80	Syria	8.20
Belgium	0.60	Tunisia	3.00	Sudan	8.25
Canada	0.60	Romania	3.20	Thailand	8.60
Israel	0.80	Iraq	3.60	Argentina	9.20
Saudi Arabia	0.80	West Germany	3.60	Indonesia	9.80
Australia	1.00	Nicaragua	3.80	Laos	10.20
Cambodia	1.00	Hungary	4.00	Turkey	10.20
USSR	1.00	India	4.60	Honduras	10.40
Uruguay	1.00	Pakistan	4.60	Peru	10.40
Austria	1.20	Czechoslovakia	4.80	Ecuador	11.00
Portugal	1.20	Ceylon	4.90	El Salvador	11.20
Afghanistan	1.40	Bolivia	5.20	Venezuela	14.20
East Germany	1.40				

larger changes at the more moderate levels of coercion. The patterning between level of coerciveness and fluctuation in coerciveness is shown on the scatterplot in Figure 4. The two most coercive nations are low in fluctuation, as are all of the most permissive nations. Beyond this, however, there is wide variation in the relationship between these two variables.

To measure the dimension of political instability, acts were recorded that denoted aggressive behaviors within polities. Specific instances of overt aggression were selected as evidence of political instability. Events such as civil war, riots, mass executions, and guerrilla warfare are good examples of the more extreme hostilities. Less violent events, such as general strikes, attempted assassinations, and demonstrations were also selected. The data were collected from the yearbooks (1945-1966) of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and *Deadline Data on World Affairs* (1945-1966), and although these chronicles are cursory, they were deemed sufficiently detailed and and accurate to provide the required material.[9]

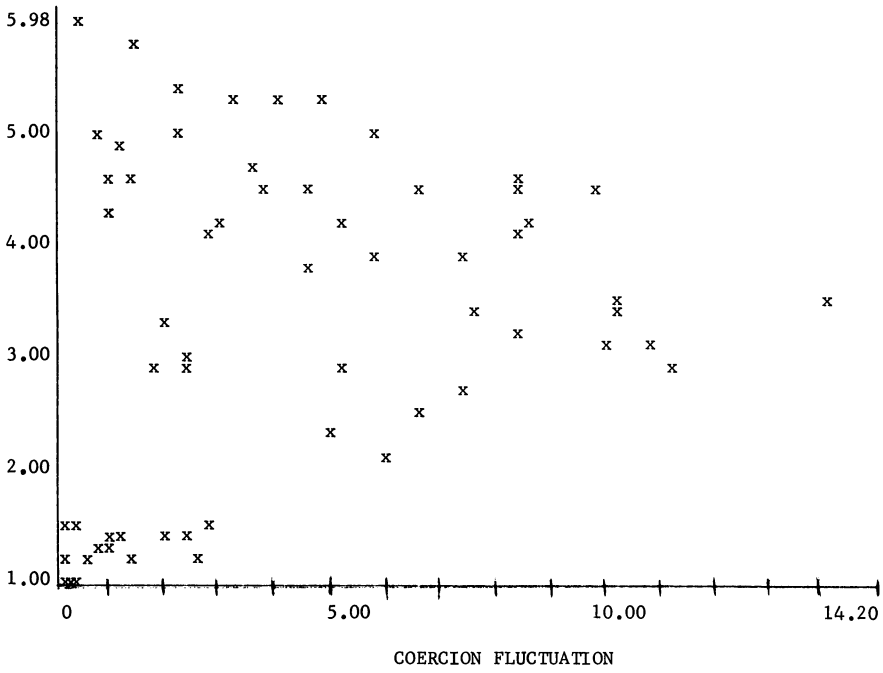

Figure 4.

All instances of political aggression in each of the 73 countries were recorded for the period 1948-1965. Twenty-eight different items were selected as being representative of all the specific disturbances that occurred in these countries.[10] Examining these 28 types of events, it seemed obvious that they implied different degrees of severity or intensity of social disturbance. For example, the intensity of aggression in a civil war may certainly be judged greater than that of a general strike. For this reason, it seemed feasible to arrange these items on a continuum ranging from those denoting the least aggression or disturbance to those denoting the most aggression.

Specifically, these 28 items were arranged on 7-point scale. The continuum ranged from extreme stability, point 0, to extreme instability, point 6. Point 0 indicates an absence of disturbance within the political process, which proceeds in a completely peaceful and institutionally prescribed manner. Point 1 on the scale indicates a mild strain in the political system. Although policies are still carried out in a prescribed manner, an aura of mild crisis is noticeable. Point 2 on the scale indicates the presence of some disturbance, and incipient aggressive tendencies can be noted. Point 3 identifies overt social aggression which is, however, not so widespread that the political leadership cannot be expected to

cope with the disturbance effectively. The initial indicator of instability is point 4. Disturbances have become more widespread than at point 3; overthrow of the government is a distinct possibility and may even have been attempted. Point 5 on the scale identifies even more intense and widespread disturbance. If a coup d' état has taken place, it has been accompanied by riots and violence. If a plot to overthrow the government has been uncovered, serious and widespread repercussions such as mass arrests and violent activities follow. Point 6 indicates a situation of the utmost instability and aggression. Civil war, mass executions, and revolution that involve a large segment of the society fall within this last category.

On the basis of the scale values, stability profiles for the 73 countries were computed. The entire time period was divided into 3 6-year periods, and each nation's score was calculated for each subperiod separately. A grouped scoring method was used which weighted both the intensity and the frequency of occurrence of instability events. The grouped scores for each of the 3 subperiods were then summed to yield a nation's instability profile. The instability index calculated in this manner appears in Table 4.[11]

We see in this table that Indonesia was the most unstable country in the world during these eighteen years, experiencing a civil war during each of the three six-year subperiods. Latin American and Middle Eastern countries also show high levels of political unrest. At the opposite end of the continuum, among the highly stable countries, we find primarily modern industrialized democracies, as well as some very traditional states such as Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan. The Communist bloc of countries are fairly spread throughout the table. Albania shows the highest level of political stability and East Germany the highest level of unrest in this bloc of nations. The United States is close to the center of the distribution, as is the USSR. Of all the modern western-style democracies, France is the most unstable.

In the theoretical discussion, it was postulated that political turmoil would be curvilinearly related to the level of coercion within a society, and linearly related to the degree of fluctuation of coerciveness. In testing these hypotheses, the measures were intercorrelated, using first a product-moment coefficient in which linearity is assumed, and second an *eta* which makes no assumptions of linearity. The results are in Table 5.

If we examine first the product-moment correlation between fluctuation of coercion and political instability, we find evidence of a relatively strong linear relationship ($r = .67$). Thus 44% of the variance in instability is accounted for in its relationship to fluctuations in coerciveness. Furthermore, this level of relationship stays essentially the same when the eta calculation (.66) is performed. Turning to the level rather than the fluctuation of coercion, we find a more complex association with instability. A sizeable amount of variance in instability (33%) is accounted for by making assumptions of linearity in the relationship with level of coercion ($r = .58$). Furthermore, the joint relationship

TABLE 4
POLITICAL INSTABILITY MAP, 1948-1965
(n = 73)

Country	Score	Country	Score	Country	Score
Luxembourg	03012	Chile	10156	Portugal	13190
Netherlands	04021	Belgium	10162	Morocco	13194
New Zealand	05015	Albania	11067	Brazil	13209
Saudi Arabia	05018	Bulgaria	11071	Republic of South Africa	13422
Ireland	05031	Japan	11123	France	13435
Sweden	06020	Ceylon	11152	El Salvador	14079
Australia	06026	Dominican Republic	11195	Panama	14101
Finland	06056	Spain	11284	Honduras	14105
West Germany	06087	United States	11318	Tunisia	14126
Iceland	07026	Nicaragua	12096	Laos	14129
Austria	07057	Ecuador	12117	East Germany	14138
United Kingdom	07112	USSR	12165	Paraguay	14141
Norway	08034	Sudan	12189	Egypt	14152
Switzerland	08042	Pakistan	12231	Lebanon	14212
Canada	08084	India	12360	Peru	15196
Afghanistan	09029	Cambodia	13071	Haiti	15205
Costa Rica	09058	Czechoslovakia	13100	Syria	15329
Romania	09060	Philippines	13105	Venezuela	15429
Libya	09069	Hungary	13113	Colombia	16244
Italy	09192	Cyprus	13123	Iraq	16274
Ethiopia	10034	Jordan	13145	Cuba	16283
Liberia	10036	Thailand	13152	Bolivia	16318
Israel	10064	Poland	13179	Argentina	16445
Uruguay	10100	Turkey	13189	Indonesia	18416
Mexico	10111				

between fluctuation and level of coercion accounts for 58% of the variance in political instability, an unusually strong association for this type of complex cross-national study (R = .76). Nevertheless, the eta coefficient between instability and level of coercion (.69) exceeds the linear value, a finding that brings modest support to our postulate suggesting a curvilinear patterning between these two variables.

A final association described in this table concerns the two measures of permissiveness-coerciveness: level and fluctuation. Here we find evidence of a strong curvilinear relationship (.78) as against a weak linear one (.36). These statistics describe the patterning shown in Figure 4, in which very high levels of coerciveness and very low levels of coerciveness (permissiveness) show the least amount of inconsistency of policy. The highest levels of fluctuation occur in states which are at mid-levels of coerciveness.

To clarify the relationships between political instability and the two measures of coercion, scatterplots were drawn. Figure 5 plots the relationship between

TABLE 5

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG MEASURES OF COERCIVENESS AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY

Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients[a]	1	2	3	Eta Coefficients	1	2	3
1. Fluctuation of coercion	–			1. Fluctuation of coercion	–		
2. Level of coercion	.36	–		2. Level of coercion	.78	–	
3. Political instability	.67	.58	–	3. Political instability	.66	.69	–

a. Multiple Correlation Coefficient $R_{3.12} = .76$

fluctuation of coercion and instability, and Figure 6, level of coercion and instability. It is possible to see the linear patterning in Figure 5, in which increasing fluctuation is accompanied by increasing political instability. In Figure 6, however, the most unstable countries are at mid-levels of coerciveness. No countries at the highest levels of coerciveness fall into the highest scale position on instability. On the other hand, only one highly coercive country falls at the most stable end of the political violence scale. In these plots we can see that the strong tendency for permissive nations to be peaceful has an overriding effect on the correlational analyses. If these permissive nations are removed from the plot, linearity is still noticed between inconsistency in coercion and political instability, but a modest tendency toward curvilinearity appears in the relationship between level of coercion and political unrest.

Two further analyses were performed to combine the postulated curvilinear association of level of coercion and the linear association of fluctuation with political instability. The first analysis is an expanded contingency table in which countries are first dichotomized into stable and unstable groups (see Table 6). They are then further subdivided into two degrees of fluctuation of coercion (high and low) and three levels of coercion (permissive, coercive, and moderate). By ordering the three levels of coercion so that a moderate level indicates greatest political instability, we find a striking linear pattern in the table. Permissive nations with a low level of fluctuation of coercion (high consistency) are overwhelmingly stable, while countries at mid-coercive levels with high levels of fluctuation (inconsistency) are predominantly unstable. It is especially among highly coercive countries that the notion of consistency adds a particular refinement. Coercive countries with high fluctuations of policy are predominantly unstable (10: 3), while highly coercive countries which are consistent in these controls are predominantly stable (6: 4). We also find that those very few moderately coercive countries which are consistently moderate in their policies tend to be politically stable (3: 2).

In the final analysis of these interrelationships, a mean instability score was calculated for the three levels of coercion and the two degrees of fluctuation, in combination. These values are reported in Table 7, where the only really deviant score is found in the upper right-hand cell. However, with only two cases in this

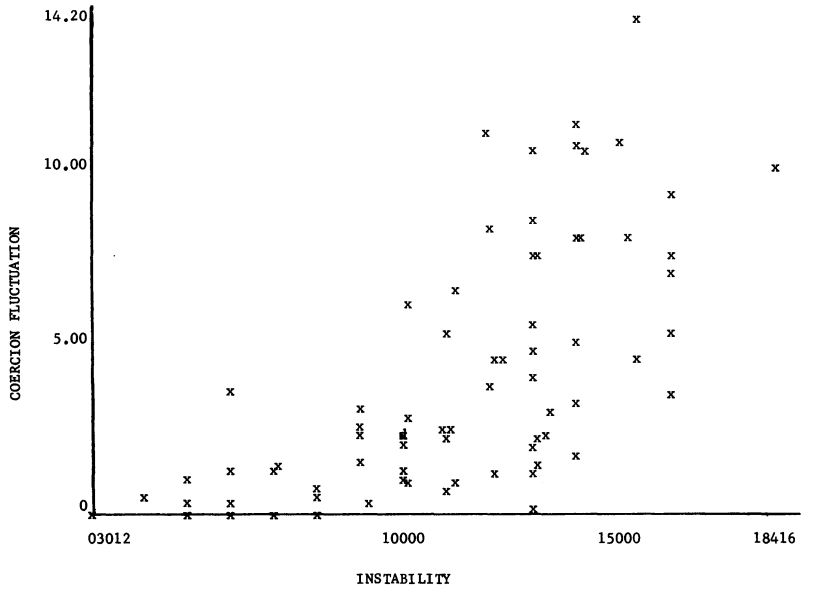

Figure 5.

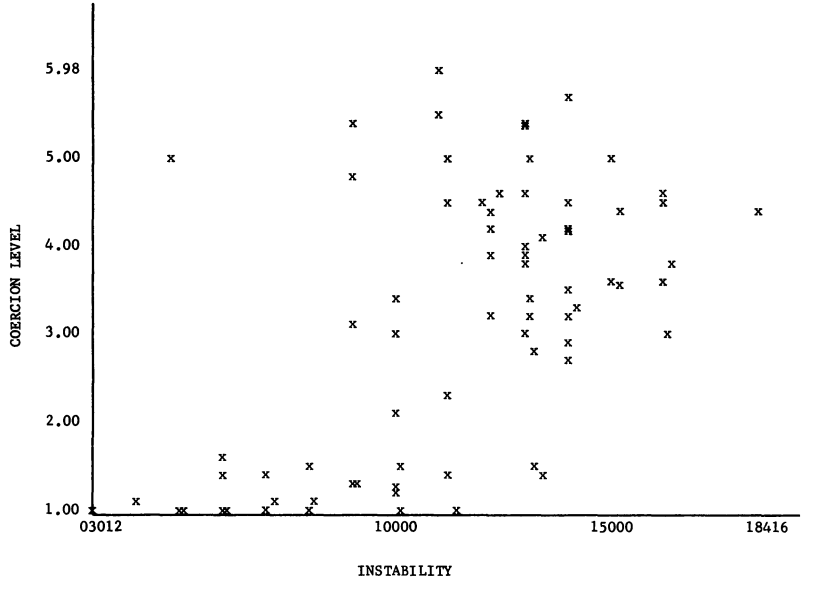

Figure 6.

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TABLE 6

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVEL AND FLUCTUATION OF COERCION AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY

	Low Fluctuation of Coercion			High Fluctuation of Coercion			Totals
	Permissive	Coercive	Moderate	Permissive	Coercive	Moderate	
Stable	Australia Austria Belgium Canada Costa Rica Finland Iceland Ireland Israel Italy Japan Luxembourg Netherlands New Zealand Norway Sweden Switzerland United Kingdom United States Uruguay (20)	Afghanistan Albania Bulgaria Saudi Arabia Spain USSR (6)	Ethiopia Liberia Libya (3)	Mexico West Germany (2)	Dominican Republic Nicaragua Romania (3)	Ceylon Chile Eduador (3)	37
Unstable	France (2) Philippines	Cambodia (4) East Germany Iraq Portugal	Cyprus (2) Morocco	(0) Egypt Indonesia	Cuba (10) Czechoslovakia Egypt Haiti Hungary Indonesia Paraguay Sudan Syria Rep. of South Africa	Argentina (17) Bolivia Brazil Colombia El Salvador India Jordan Laos Lebanon Pakistan Panama Peru Poland Thailand Tunisia Turkey Venezuela	35
	Totals: 22	10	5	(2)	13	21	72

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cell, it is difficult to draw any statistical conclusions. What is illustrated is that high fluctuation completely overwhelms the original curvilinear pattern between level of coercion and political instability. The high fluctuation countries, with the exception of the two that are at a permissive level, are significantly more unstable than the low fluctuation nations.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary of our findings, let us repeat that some support was found for the first hypothesis and considerable support for the second. A significant relationship between coerciveness level and political instability is present. However, the finding is ambiguous, since it is difficult to decide whether a linear or a curvilinear relationship obtains. Leaning on the theoretical formulations, one could reflect that the deterrent power of punishment that is predicted for the highest levels of coerciveness is considerably modified by its violence-instigating mechanism.

On the other hand, the analysis seems to indicate a striking linear relationship between inconsistency in coerciveness and violence. When combined, the two variables provide a powerful predictor of political instability. A multiple correlation of .76, accounting for 58% of the variance, is a sizeable relationship for this kind of cross-national correlational research. While this association is not perfect, and much of the variance in instability remains unexplained, it is surprising that two political variables chosen from an enormously complicated social field should exhibit this degree of association. It must be stressed that no intuitively persuasive preconditions of violence stemming from the economic, social, and international domains entered into the present analysis. The present findings could be used as an argument for the importance of political determinants of internal peace and violence.

We may interpret the relationship between level of coerciveness and violence in light of previous cross-national studies conducted by Bwy (1968), the Feierabends (1966b), Gurr (1969), and Walton (1965). For the Feierabends, as well as for Walton and the present endeavor, permissiveness-coerciveness is operationalized as a structural dimension of political regimes. In the studies by Bwy and Gurr, coerciveness is estimated in terms of the size of the army or the internal security forces. Bwy assesses defense expenditures and Gurr, manpower resources supplemented by two indices of the past loyalty of coercive forces. All these studies undoubtedly have the same theoretical variable in mind: the permissiveness-coerciveness of the political regime. All four studies find empirical support for a curvilinear relationship between the use of force and the level of overt violence within society. The Feierabends and Walton, for example, obtain a linear product moment correlation ($r = 41$) but a significantly improved eta of .72 between these two variables. Bwy, in a study of twenty Latin American republics, finds a striking curvilinear relationship between coercion and

TABLE 7

MEAN INSTABILITY AND COERCIVENESS

		Fluctuation of Coercion	
		Low	High
Level of Coercion	Low	$\bar{M}$ Instability = 08048 (n = 22)	$\bar{M}$ Instability = 08099 (n = 2)
	Moderate	$\bar{M}$ Instability = 11091 (n = 5)	$\bar{M}$ Instability = 13707 (n = 20)
	High	$\bar{M}$ Instability = 11115 (n = 9)	$\bar{M}$ Instability = 13873 (n = 15)

his category of anomic violence. However, either a linear relationship or no relationship is indicated for his category of organized violence, depending on the time lags which are employed in the analysis. Gurr also determines a nonlinear relationship between the size of coercive forces and the total magnitude of civil strife within society. He obtains a linear relationship, however, when the size of coercive forces is weighted by their loyalty to the regime. This weight of evidence from previous studies helps to interpret the present findings. It persuades us to accept the curvilinear relationship between level of coerciveness and political violence.

The second finding, concerning the relationship between inconsistency and violence, is striking and perhaps more intriguing. It would seem that the impact of an inconsistent use of force overrides the results of degree or level of force. This perhaps is not surprising if it is true that some fluctuation can occur even at the highest level of tyranny. It may well be that force as a social technique is sufficiently persuasive only if it is constantly and consistently employed. With fluctuation, the deterrent power is impaired, perhaps because inconsistency creates a credibility gap. Relaxing oppressive rule may create an expectancy of permissiveness and hence diminish the fear of reprisal.

Since this finding of a relationship between inconsistency of coerciveness and violence appears to be the first such result in the cross-national literature, it should await replication before being accepted with confidence. With the exception of the study of violence in colonial Africa by Robert LeVine (1959), no cross-national comparisons using inconsistency of policy have been attempted. In the psychological and sociological literature, however, there is more evidence of a relationship between inconsistent application of discipline and consequent aggression.[12]

Finally, let us speculate on the implications of our study both for officeholders in the political system and for protestors, conspirators, or insurgents. In permissive regimes, the protestors, conspirators, or insurgents will have the least chance of creating turmoil if the incumbents persist in their

permissive policies. However, it may also be, although our study passes no direct judgment on this point, that the legitimate use of force to "fit the crime" should be scrupulously used in the interests of internal peace. With such a policy, the incumbents may have the best chance of preserving internal peace and tranquility. The alternative of resorting to force in the face of provocation would seem only to add fuel to future unrest, unless high levels of coerciveness are involved. However, here our data offer a somewhat ambiguous answer. It is not certain whether the energetic use of force will have a pacifying effect. Undoubtedly, if high coerciveness is applied, it should be applied consistently. Probably the officeholders of a previously permissive system might find it difficult to persuade the populace that they are turning the system irrevocably to high coercion. This may be difficult unless the regime itself changes substantially. It may be successful in a country like Czechoslovakia which has previously known a coercive regime and where the imposition of new coercion is backed, or perhaps itself is coerced by the presence of foreign troops or the threat of foreign occupation. Even then it may take awhile before protest activity and turmoil subside.

Regimes with mid-levels of coerciveness must be judged as the most conducive to violent insurgent activity, while at the same time they should cause maximum anxiety for the officeholders. In view of our findings, such a statement comes close to being an ironclad rule if a high flux in coerciveness is combined with a mid-level of intensity. Without such flux, however, this implication is less certain.

Highly coercive regimes, when they lose hold for whatever reason, are likely to be subject to great turmoil. This was illustrated in the Hungarian revolution of the fifties, in the Poznan uprising in Poland, and most recently in the Czechoslovak spring revolt of 1968. Another example is the Dominican Republic after the demise of the Trujillo family.

All of these speculative reflections must be seen against the larger background of other forces stimulating, inhibiting, or facilitating violent behavior. The two main hypotheses explored in this analysis do not represent the complete dynamics governing the relationship between coerciveness and political violence, nor can coerciveness be considered the only inhibitor of political violence. Other factors, such as the legitimacy of the political system, also serve as a restraint. Furthermore, coerciveness is only one among many possible sources of systemic frustration. Thus this research does not represent the development of a comprehensive theory of the use of force and violence. Rather, it has explored a significant subset of theoretical and empirical variables.

NOTES

1. The Instability Data Bank is deposited with the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Plans are made for deposition of the Coerciveness Data Bank.

2. See, for example, the discussion of inhibition and punishment in Buss (1961).

3. For a discussion of social and political freedoms and their restraints, see Bay (1958) and Oppenheim (1961).

4. For a discussion of the validity and reliability of the data see Feierabend, Feierabend, and Boroviak (1968). It is sufficient to indicate here that several raters were employed, at different times, coding the same variables, sometimes for the same countries, and often from different sources. These ratings were compared, and the degree of agreement between raters and source materials was judged satisfactory. For example, correlation coefficients comparing the ratings from the source materials listed in the text for 73 countries on 14 variables ranged from a satisfactory level (r = .77) to a very high one (r = .97).

Comparing the ratings of 2 coders on 6 countries rated in common, of 8,428 data points there was 1 scale point difference on 1,166 data points, 2 points' difference on 146 data points, and 3 or more scale points' difference on 20 data points.

Some additional confidence in the data bank is also gained because of the independent efforts of other researchers to assess coerciveness cross-nationally. For example, press censorship profiles correlated (r = .88) with those reported in Nixon (1965). The coercive profiles calculated in Walton (1965) had a high correlation coefficient (r = .84) with our measure of press censorship. A major property of Cutright's (1963) measure is the notion of political opposition and competition. This variable was also correlated with our measure of press censorship (r = .75).

5. For the classic theoretical statement of the frustration-aggression hypothesis see Dollard et al. (1939). Also there are several more recent general restatements, among which we may name Berkowitz (1962) and Buss (1961).

6. For a comprehensive statement of theory of political violence that relies in part on the frustration-aggresion hypothesis, see Gurr (1970).

7. Several studies in the cross-national literature are available, among which are Gurr (1969), Feierabend, Feierabend, and Nesvold (1969), Gurr (1968), Bwy (1968), Feierabend and Feierabend (1966a) and Russett (1964).

8. Under certain circumstances, it should be assumed that the highest level of coerciveness, that is, a reign of terror, also creates great uncertainty and insecurity. This is not because of the high level of coerciveness, but because terror implies an arbitrary use of force. If severe punishments are meted out regardless of crimes committed, if innocent as well as guilty people are punished, the resultant situation of fear and uncertainty must give rise to high social strain.

9. This data bank is described in Feierabend and Feierabend (1965). In an initial test of source reliability, assassinations (including attempted assassinations) were coded from the *New York Times Index* for the same period of time as from *Deadline Data on World Affairs*. The scores of each country on this event were correlated from the two news sources, and this proved to be a satisfactory level (r = .80). We are now coding political instability events from daily issues of the *New York Times* (1955-1970) and will make further reliability checks. We have also compared our political instability profiles with Gurr's scores of total magnitude of civil violence. The level of agreement between the two sets of scores for the same nations and the same time period (1961-1965) ranges from .66 to .69, depending upon which scoring method for political instability we use.

10. These events are: elections, dissolution of the legislature, resignations of politically significant persons, dismissal of politically significant persons, fall of cabinet, significant change of laws, plebiscite, appointment of politically significant persons, organization of new government, reshuffle of government, severe trouble within a nongovernmental organization, organization of opposition party, governmental action against specific groups, strikes, demonstrations, boycotts, arrests, suicide of significant political persons, martial law, executions, assassinations, terrorism, sabotage, guerrilla warfare, civil war, coup d' état, revolt, and exile.

11. Intercoder reliability on these scale values was very high (r = .93). For additional discussion of the measurement of political violence, see Feierabend and Feierabend (1966a), and Nesvold (1969).

12. See, for example, Sears, Maccoby, and Levin (1957) and Whiting and Child (1953).

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