

Living by the Sword and Dying by the Sword? Leadership Transitions in and out of Dictatorships*

Comments Welcome.

Alexandre Debs[†]

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Abstract

What explains the post-tenure fate of dictators? How does the treatment of ousted dictators affect their propensity to democratize? We tackle such questions in a model, with one leader and $N - 1$ factions. First, the leader decides whether to democratize. Second, players decide whether the leader leaves office and, if so, whether he is eliminated. Third, surviving players divide a dollar. We conclude that a leader may be eliminated because he cannot commit to refrain from using his capacity for violence in the future. The greater is a leader's capacity for violence, the more likely he is to be eliminated upon his ouster. Moreover, if violence is sufficiently important in the division of the dollar, leaders with greater capacity for violence are more likely to lose office in a dictatorship and they are more likely to democratize. We provide support for our theory in the post-World War II period.

Keywords: dictatorship, regime, leader, democratization

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[†]Dept. of Political Science, Yale University. email: alexandre.debs@yale.edu.

1 Introduction

On March 22, 1971, the president of Argentina, military strongman Roberto M. Levingston, attempted to oust General Alejandro Lanusse from his position of chief of staff. Unfortunately for him, Lanusse and the leaders of the navy and air force preempted Levingston, removed him from office and sent him to jail (Lentz, 1994, 40).

As a general rule, what explains the length of tenure and the post-tenure fate of dictators? A growing literature has found systematic differences between dictatorships for a series of economic and political outcomes.¹ The explanation of such findings typically relies on rational calculations of leaders or regimes. Yet while much is known about the stability of regimes, little is known about the length of tenure of leaders (Hadenius and Teorell, 2007; Gandhi, 2008; Svulik, 2009) and even less is known about the post-tenure fate of leaders (Debs and Goemans, 2009). Taking such information into account could help us reevaluate long-standing hypotheses about systematic differences between non-democratic regimes.

Consider the finding that military regimes are the shortest-lived and that military dictators have the shortest tenure.² In her seminal work, Geddes (1999, 2003), who has inspired much of the quantitative literature on non-democracies, offers a few explanations for the short duration of military regimes. One of her arguments is that there is a relatively strong sense of unity among the leading factions in a military dictatorship. As a result, they would prefer to cede office instead of risking a struggle to remain in power, as it would undermine corporate and national unity.

While this claim is sensible, it is actually not clear that military dictatorships are distinctive because of the great sense of unity among its leading factions. In the above example, a military president was ousted by his army chief of staff. As a general rule, Hadenius and Teorell (2007, 150) explain the shorter tenure of military leaders through a high level of *disunity* in the military: ‘The relatively frequent changes of person at the top level of the military regimes reflect the tensions often found in military ranks between different branches (army, air force, and so on); and between different generations and cohorts.’ Perhaps observing patterns on the post-tenure fate of leaders could help us distinguish between these

¹There are systematic differences within dictatorships in their propensity to fall and democratize (Geddes, 1999, 2003; Ulfelder, 2005; Hadenius and Teorell, 2007), to be involved in war (Peceny, Beer and Sanchez-Terry, 2002; Lai and Slater, 2006; Weeks, 2007; Debs and Goemans, 2009), to repress (Gandhi and Przeworski, 2006; Escriba-Folch, N.d.), to create legislative parties (Gandhi and Przeworski, 2006; Wright, 2008) and stimulate investment and growth (Gandhi, 2008; Wright, 2008), to offer generous public sector wages (Gandhi and Przeworski, 2006) or affect the level or composition and public spending (Escriba-Folch, N.d.).

²See Geddes (1999, 2003) for results on military regimes. See Hadenius and Teorell (2007); Gandhi (2008) for results on the tenure of military leaders.

competing theories. Yet this pattern itself is an endogenous outcome, in need of an explanation. If it is difficult to conceptualize regimes by the strength of unity among the leading factions, then what alternative approach should we take?

In this paper, we follow a large literature in understanding dictatorship as a political regime where the threat or use of violence is relatively important in the selection of the executive (Popper, 1963; Przeworski et al., 2000; Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin, 2008; Svoboda, 2009). Non-democratic regime types, in turn, differ in their leader's capacity for violence. We argue that it is high in a military dictatorship and low in other non-democracies. The challenge for such an approach is the following: why would military dictators, who have a high capacity for violence, experience the shortest tenure? Surely, common sense argues, leaders with the highest capacity for violence should be best equipped to thwart violent threats.³

The answer, in short, is relatively simple. As a general feature, the advantage for violence is transient. President Levingston was a military strongman, but he was not impervious to any threat to his rule. Indeed, his army chief of staff gained the advantage for violence and ousted him. In turn, Lanusse had strong incentives to send Levingston to jail. Understanding that his own advantage for violence was transient, he benefited from eliminating Levingston as a political player. Perhaps Lanusse should have applied a harsher punishment, as Levingston later attempted a (failed) coup in October 1971...

We structure this argument with the help of a formal model, studying the length of tenure of dictators, their post-tenure fate and their propensity to democratize. This is a game with N players, one leader and $N - 1$ factions. First, nature determines whether there is an opportunity for democracy and the dictator decides whether to respond by democratizing or not.

Second, players decide whether to use violence against one another. More precisely, if the dictator did not democratize, nature picks one of the N players and grants him the 'advantage for violence'. A player with the advantage for violence can punish, or 'eliminate', any of the other players. If the leader has the advantage for violence, he decides whether to eliminate any of the factions. If it is a faction, he could eliminate the leader and replace him, if the leader did not peacefully offer to step down. The probability that a player has the advantage for violence is increasing in his 'capacity for violence', and we distinguish between two types of players, those with high capacity and those with low capacity for violence. If the dictator democratized, some other player becomes the leader and is granted the advantage for violence.

³Geddes (1999, 2003) actually offers a second explanation for the short tenure of military regimes: leading factions can secure high rents from leaving office. The difficulty with this explanation remains: if military regimes differ by the capacity for violence of leading factions, they should be able to secure high rents, both if they leave office and if they maintain the dictatorship. Why does a higher capacity for violence tend to increase the propensity to leave office?

Third, players divide a dollar. A player participates in the division of the dollar only if he has not been eliminated. Participants in the division of the dollar get a payoff which depends on their status in the game (or *de jure* power), as leader or faction, and on their relative capacity for violence (or *de facto* power). The importance of the capacity for violence on payoffs depends on the regime type. Following a large literature, we assume that it is significantly larger in a dictatorship than in a democracy (Popper, 1963; Przeworski et al., 2000; Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin, 2008; Svobik, 2009).

Then, we show that a player may be eliminated because the advantage for violence is transient, which creates a classic commitment problem. Indeed, a player who has lost the advantage for violence cannot commit to refrain from using his capacity for violence in the future. Therefore, there is a strict gain to eliminate a player who does not have the advantage for violence.

Several implications follow from this logic, as we consider the fate of dictators. First, the greater is the capacity for violence of the dictator, the greater is the gain from eliminating him. Therefore, a dictator with a greater capacity for violence is more likely to be eliminated, conditional on ouster. Moreover, there is no strict gain to eliminate a dictator who has no capacity for violence. Since a dictator can remain in office unless a faction is willing to eliminate him, dictators with low capacity for violence stay in power with probability one, at the limit where they have no capacity for violence. Therefore, dictators with a greater capacity for violence are more likely to be ousted in a dictatorship, if the dictator with low capacity for violence is sufficiently weak. Finally, the greater is the importance of violence, the greater is the likelihood that a dictator will be eliminated, conditional on ouster. Therefore, dictators should be less likely to be punished when they transition to a democrat. Taken together, these claims predict that dictators with the greatest capacity for violence are the most likely to democratize.

We then apply our theory to the sample of dictatorships, using the classification of the Democracy-Dictatorship (DD) dataset (Cheibub and Gandhi, 2004; Cheibub, Gandhi and Vreeland, 2009), and merging it with Archigos, which contains information on the length of tenure and post-tenure fate of leaders (Goe-mans, Gleditsch and Chiozza, 2009). The DD dataset builds on the highly influential work of Przeworski et al. (2000), classifying country-years, between 1946 and 1996, as one of three regime types, military dictatorships, civilian dictatorships and monarchies, based on biographical information about the leader in office at a single point in time during the year (December 31st). We posit that military leaders have a greater capacity for violence than the other dictators, based on their training and close connections with other groups in the military. We use the Archigos dataset to define whether a leader is ‘eliminated’ (or punished) upon leaving office. The dataset codes leaders as being either ‘Ok’, ‘Exiled’, ‘Jailed’ or ‘Killed’, a year after the loss of office. We show that, quite independently of the operational definition of punishment, and controlling for fixed effects, military

leaders are more likely to be punished upon leaving office. Looking at the effect of democratization, we have that both military and non-military leaders are less likely to be punished, should they democratize, with the effect being stronger for military dictators.

In building our explanation of the process of leadership removal, we use game-theoretic tools, placing this paper as part of an expanding literature studying dictatorships (Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin, 2008; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006; Besley and Kudamatsu, 2007; Debs, 2007*a,b,c*; Debs and Goemans, 2009; Egorov and Sonin, 2006; Gandhi and Przeworski, 2006; Myerson, 2008; Padro i Miquel, 2007; Svoblik, 2009). Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) model dictatorships as political regimes serving the economic interest of the elite and study the impact of economic variables (in particular inequality) on democratization. Acemoglu, Ticchi and Vindigni (2007) enrich the set-up by adding the military as an independent agent of the government. Svoblik (2009) documents the fact that dictators are overwhelmingly replaced by government insiders. He offers a theory explaining whether a dictator may grow impervious to the threat of removal from his ruling coalition or not (setting up an established or contested dictatorship). Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin (2008) and Egorov and Sonin (2005) are the models closest to ours. Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin (2008) model dictatorships as clubs and investigate the stability of such clubs, when members can eliminate each other. We use their terminology and discuss the differences between our set-ups in section 2.6. Egorov and Sonin (2005) study an infinitely-repeated game where a new leader decides whether to execute the departing dictator. They find a multiplicity of equilibria where the decision to kill is history-dependent: players develop a reputation for toughness from killing their predecessor, which makes them more likely to be killed upon their ouster. Cox (N.d.) analyzes the decision of dictators to hold elections, and the effect of such elections on their violent/non-violent exit. Gandhi and Przeworski (2006) study the optimal choice of a rich set of policies used by a dictator to remain in office, but subsuming all processes of leadership removal under a single header (which is due to a ‘rebellion’ by the ‘opposition’). Debs and Goemans (2009) exploit broad patterns on the processes of leadership removal to make predictions on the war-proneness of non-democratic regimes. None of these models explains the differences in the post-tenure fate of leaders by non-democratic regime type, nor draws implications of such patterns for democratization.

The rest of the paper proceed as follows. Section 2 presents our game-theoretic argument, setting up and solving the model (formal proofs are contained in the Appendix). Section 3 presents the empirical evidence, first at the quantitative level, then discussing the political history of Lesotho as an illustrative case. Section 4 concludes.

2 Our Argument

This is a game between a leader (player 1) and a set of factions (players 2 to N), who ultimately divide a dollar.

In round 0, nature determines whether there is an opportunity for democratization, which happens with probability p . We define an opportunity for democratization as an event where the leader can cede office to some faction $i \neq 1$ who would rule democratically. We are agnostic about the set of events which produce this opportunity for democratization. It could be a result of pressures from within the regime, from domestic forces outside the regime, or from the international community or a combination of these factors.⁴ The leader then picks the regime type of the country (R), which can either be a democracy (D) or a non-democracy (ND).⁵

In round 1, players determine their *status* in the regime, either through violent or peaceful means. The status of player i (written $s(i)$) is either that of a leader (l), a faction (f) or an ‘eliminated’ player (e). In round 2, players divide a dollar according to their status and the regime type of the country. Let us discuss the political dynamics, in round 1, within each regime.

2.1 Leadership Turnover in Dictatorships

If the country remains a dictatorship, nature picks one of the N players and grants him the *advantage for violence*. A player with the advantage for violence can eliminate any other player in the game. For the purposes of this paper, we abstract away from intra-factional violence.⁶ After nature has picked a player with the advantage for violence, player 1 decides whether to offer the leadership to that player, stepping down to take the role of faction. If a faction has the advantage for violence, he decides whether to eliminate player 1. If he eliminates player 1, he takes his position as leader for the rest of the game. If he does not eliminate player 1, then player 1’s offer is implemented. If player 1 has the advantage for violence, he decides whether to eliminate a faction. Eliminating player i comes at a cost c_i .

⁴To name just a few examples, Greece democratized in the mid-1970s after a crisis of the Colonels’ regime, defeat in the Cyprus conflict and pressures from the EU. Argentina democratized in 1983 after massive protests following the defeat in the Falkland wars. Countries in Eastern Europe democratized after the fall of the Berlin wall, with various levels of coordination of domestic pressure groups. We discuss below the case of Lesotho, where international factors (the end of the Cold War, the democratization of neighboring South Africa) made it more likely that democracy would be upheld.

⁵We use dictatorship and non-democracy interchangeably.

⁶In other words, a faction may only eliminate player 1.

We assume that the probability that player i has the advantage for violence is a function of his *capacity for violence* γ_i .⁷ We let a player's capacity for violence be a function of his type $t(i)$, taken from a type space $T = \{t_H, t_L\}$, where t_H refers to a player with 'high' capacity for violence and t_L refers to a player with 'low' capacity for violence. More precisely, we assume $\gamma_i = \gamma(t(i)) \in \{\gamma(t_H), \gamma(t_L)\}$, where

Assumption 1 $\gamma(t_H) > \gamma(t_L) > 0$

Call np the player picked by nature with the advantage for violence. The probability that player i is picked by nature in a non-democracy is $prob(np = i|ND) = \gamma_i / \sum_{1 \leq j \leq N} \gamma_j$.

Formally, write $d(np)$ for the player designated by player 1 to act as leader, as a function of np , the player with the advantage for violence ($d(np) \in \{1, np\}$). Let $m(np)$ be the player eliminated by np , the player with the advantage for violence ($m(1) \in \{2, \dots, N\} \cup \emptyset$ and, for $np \neq 1$, $m(np) \in \{1\} \cup \emptyset$, where $m(np) = \emptyset$ means that no player is eliminated).

2.2 Leadership Turnover out of Dictatorships

Now assume that the leader democratized. Then some faction is chosen to become the new leader. After the new leader takes office, he is given the advantage for violence. Call np the faction picked by nature to become the new leader. The probability that player i is picked by nature as the new leader in a democracy is $prob(np = i|D)$. The new leader decides whether to eliminate the departing dictator at some cost c_1 or to let him take the role of faction. Write $m(np)$ for player np 's decision to eliminate player 1 ($m(np) = 1$ means that player 1 is eliminated, $m(np) = \emptyset$ means that player 1 is not eliminated and can take the role of faction).

Whether in dictatorship or in democracy, we allow for the cost of eliminating player i , c_i , to be function of player i 's type. Let $F(c|t(i))$ be the cdf of c_i . We assume:

Assumption 2 (i) $F(c|t_H) \leq F(c|t_L)$ for any c ; (ii) $F(0|t(1)) = 0$ for any $t(1)$; (iii) $F(c|t(1)) > 0$ for any $c > 0$, for any $t(1)$.

Part (i) states that greater costs of replacement are always more likely for type t_H than type t_L (or that $F(c|t_H)$ first-order stochastically dominates $F(c|t_L)$). Parts (ii) and (iii) state that there is no positive mass on costs of elimination being zero, but that the probability that costs are lower than any positive value is greater than zero.⁸

⁷This follows the terminology of Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin (2008), who call γ_i the power of player i . We discuss the differences between our set-up and theirs below.

⁸There may be good reasons to believe that the cost of eliminating a player is greater in

2.3 Division of the Dollar

After the regime type is chosen and the status of each player is set in the game, players divide a dollar. Let the payoff received by player i , as a function of his relative capacity for violence, his status in the game, and the regime type of the country, be written $\pi\left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j)\neq e}\gamma_j}, s(i), R\right)$. We assume $\pi\left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j)\neq e}\gamma_j}, e, R\right) = L \leq 0$ and, for $s(i) \in \{l, f\}$,

$$\pi\left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j)\neq e}\gamma_j}, s(i), R\right) = \theta_R w\left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j)\neq e}\gamma_j}\right) + (1 - \theta_R)u(s(i)) \quad (1)$$

where $w(x)$ is a continuous an increasing function of x and $u(l) > u(f) \geq 0$. This payoff function captures the fact that only players who were not eliminated get some rents in the division of the dollar. It assumes that players with greater relative capacity for violence can extract greater resources (through $w(x)$) and that there is an advantage in serving as a leader when the dollar is being divided.

Finally, the regime type of the country, R , determines the importance of violence in the ultimate payoffs. We will think of the importance of violence as being larger in a dictatorship than in a democracy. More precisely, we assume $\theta_{ND} > \theta_D$. This is not to say that coups are impossible in a democracy (we are only making a relative statement), but that the threat or use of violence in the selection of the executive is a key, distinguishing, factor between dictatorships and democracies (Popper, 1963; Przeworski et al., 2000; Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin, 2008; Svoboda, 2009). Indeed, in a dictatorship, a challenger is more likely to assert his control of government through the use of force. In a democracy, challengers typically accept electoral defeat without threatening to use violence. If they were to threaten violence, they understand that they would face greater opposition in controlling the executive office.

We impose (1) so as to focus our attention on the decision to democratize and the probability that player 1 loses his status and is eliminated. It is straightforward to show, however, that a classic division-of-the-dollar game generates payoffs which are a special case of (1) (see claim 5 in the appendix). In such a game, $\theta_{ND} \geq \theta_D$ can be rationalized by the fact that using violence against the new leader will meet with greater opposition in a democracy than in a dictatorship.⁹

2.4 Timing

Summing up, the timing of the game is as follows:

a democracy than in a dictatorship, given the checks and balances inherent in this political regime. We do not include this distinction at this point, so as to simplify the distinctions between dictatorship and democracy. Yet see claim 5 as a rationale for the greater importance of the capacity for violence in dictatorships.

⁹Technically, this means that the distribution of the costs of eliminating the new leader in a democracy first-order stochastically dominates the distribution of costs in a dictatorship.

Round 0

1. Nature determines whether there is an opportunity for democracy
2. If there is an opportunity for democracy, player 1 decides whether to democratize (he picks the regime type R)

Round 1 - Dictatorship

1. Nature picks some player np to have the advantage for violence and realizes the costs of violence $\{c_i\}$
2. Player 1 designates a leader (he picks $d(np)$)
3. Player with the advantage for violence, np , picks a player to eliminate (he picks $m(np)$)

Round 1 - Democracy

1. New leader, np , is picked and cost of violence c_1 is realized
2. New leader, np , decides whether to eliminate player 1 (he picks $m(np)$)

Round 2

1. Payoffs are generated

We can now discuss the solution concept.

2.4.1 Solution Concept

We solve for a subgame-perfect Nash equilibrium. This is a vector of strategies $(R^*, \{d^*(np)\}, \{m^*(np)\})$ which form a Nash equilibrium in each subgame.

2.5 Solution of the Model

2.5.1 Leadership Turnover in Dictatorships

We solve the game by backward induction. For a formal description of strategies in each regime, see lemma 1 in the appendix. First, assume that player 1 maintained the dictatorship and has the advantage for violence. Obviously, he remains as a leader. Also, it may be profitable for him to eliminate a faction from the game. Indeed, the transient nature of the advantage for violence creates a classic commitment problem. A faction who has temporarily lost the advantage for violence cannot commit to refrain from using his capacity for violence when the dollar is

divided. Therefore, the leader may gain from eliminating a faction, leading to an increase in his relative capacity for violence and, thus, an increase in his payoffs.

Then assume that a faction has the advantage for violence. For a graphical illustration, see Figure 1. This Figure shows the fate of player 1, i.e. ‘ousted and punished’, ‘ousted and not punished’, and ‘remains in office’, as a function of the cost of replacement c_1 , when player $i \neq 1$ has the advantage for violence. The top line shows the case where the leader maintained the non-democracy and the bottom line shows the case where the leader transitioned to democratic rule.

Consider first the case where the leader maintained the dictatorship. We see, again, that violence may be used because of a classic commitment problem. If player 1 has lost the advantage for violence, he cannot commit to refrain from using his capacity for violence in the ensuing division of the dollar. Whether player i eliminates player 1 depends on the cost of violence. If the cost of violence is sufficiently high, player 1 can designate himself as leader and player i would find it optimal not to eliminate player 1. The minimal cost of violence such that i decides not to eliminate player 1, if player 1 designates himself as leader, is given by $c_1 = \theta_{ND}\Delta w_i + (1 - \theta_{ND})\Delta u$.¹⁰ This threshold is a combination of two terms. The first is the increase in payoff due to player i ’s increase in relative capacity for violence, given that player 1 is eliminated from the game. The second term is due to the advantage of acting as a leader, rather than a faction, in the ensuing division of the dollar. If the cost of violence is below that threshold, the faction would strictly prefer to eliminate player 1 if the latter does not designate him as leader. For intermediate values of the cost of violence, player i would accept to take the position of leader without eliminating player 1 (if $c_1 \in (\theta_{ND}\Delta w_i, \theta_{ND}\Delta w_i + (1 - \theta_{ND})\Delta u)$). Only if the cost of violence is extremely low would such a peaceful transfer be unacceptable ($c_1 < \theta_{ND}\Delta w_i$).

We can then compare the fate of leaders as a function of their type. First, it is clear that the benefit of eliminating player 1 is increasing in his capacity for violence, since it leads to a greater increase in the new leader’s relative capacity for violence (formally, Δw_i is increasing in γ_1). Yet this tends to increase the set of costs for which player 1 is eliminated (or punished) and also the set of cost for which he is ousted. What effect does it have on the probability that the leader is eliminated, conditional on losing office? The answer potentially depends on the distribution of the cost of violence and the configuration of capacities for violence. Yet we show that we have an unambiguous answer if there is a sufficiently large difference between the two types in their capacity for violence.

Indeed, if type t_L has no capacity for violence, relative to type t_H , then it is never credible to eliminate type t_L . A faction would not eliminate player 1, of

¹⁰We write Δw_i for the payoff of i after 1 is eliminated, due to his increase in relative strength, $\Delta w_i = w\left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j \neq 1} \gamma_j}\right) - w\left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{1 \leq j \leq N} \gamma_j}\right)$ and Δu for the increase in payoff due to gaining the status of leader, as opposed to faction, $\Delta u = [u(l) - u(f)]$.

type t_L , if he offers to step down as a leader, designating i as the new leader. Keeping type t_L as a faction has no influence on the new leader's payoff. Type t_L may still have to cede office, since there is a strict gain in becoming the leader, through the increase in de jure power ($\Delta u > 0$), but none of these ousters lead to the punishment of the leader. By continuity, the result holds for small enough values of the relative capacity for violence of type t_L . Thus, in other words, the leader's weakness secures him a relatively safe post-tenure fate. Summing up, we get the following testable implication:

Claim 1 *A leader with low capacity for violence is least likely to be eliminated, conditional on his ouster, if his relative capacity for violence is sufficiently small.*

Proof. *See the appendix.* ■

A second question we are interested in is the following: which leader is more likely to be ousted? The results above suggest that if the dictator loses the advantage for violence, then the likelihood that he is ousted is increasing in his capacity for violence. But such leaders are less likely to lose the advantage for violence, so that the net effect may be unclear. Yet, again, we obtain an unambiguous result.

Claim 2 *In a dictatorship, where violence is sufficiently important, a leader with low capacity for violence is least likely to be ousted, if his relative capacity for violence is sufficiently small.*

Proof. *See the appendix.* ■

The intuition is as follows. If violence is paramount in a dictatorship (θ_{ND} tends to one), then there is no gain for a faction to become a leader. Eliminating a leader increases a faction's payoff only to the extent that it increases his relative capacity for violence. Yet we know that if player 1 has low capacity for violence, and if that capacity for violence is vanishingly small, this gain is nil (see claim 1). Therefore, no faction can credibly threaten to eliminate player 1 if he offers to remain as a leader. In this extreme case, a faction extracts as much resources as if player 1 were a faction.¹¹ In some sense, the leader's low capacity for violence is his blessing.

In contrast, the leader with high capacity for violence is ousted (and eliminated) with strictly positive probability when he loses the advantage for violence. Factions understand the transient nature of the advantage for violence and do eliminate such a leader when they have a chance. Herein, we argue, lies the answer to the puzzle that leaders with high capacity for violence are most likely to lose office.

¹¹We note a minor technical point here. At the limit where the importance of the capacity for violence is one (θ_{ND} tends to one) and the relative capacity for violence of type t_L tends to zero (t_L/t_H tends to zero), then the leader of type t_L stays in office with probability one. In that case, the conditional probability that such a leader is eliminated upon his ouster is not well defined. We are careful to avoid this problem in the statement of the claim here and in the appendix, letting the threshold on the relative capacity for violence of type t_L be a function of the importance of violence θ_{ND} .

2.5.2 Leadership Turnover out of Dictatorships

Now consider the subgame of democracy. By the same logic that we outlined above, the new leader has an incentive to eliminate the departing dictator, who would otherwise pose a threat in the division of the dollar. Yet it is clear that, for any faction i , the incentive to eliminate player 1 is lower in a democracy than in a dictatorship, given the lower importance of violence in democracy ($\theta_D < \theta_{ND}$).

Calculating the expected probability that the dictator is eliminated, we should worry that the process that generates the advantage for violence in a dictatorship may differ from the process that generates a democratic successor (i.e. $\text{prob}(np = i|ND) \neq \text{prob}(np = i|D)$). Yet it is clear that at the limit where the importance for violence is nil in a democracy, no player i uses violence to replace the departing dictator. Hence we get an unambiguous result:

Claim 3 *In a democracy, as the importance of violence becomes vanishingly small, the probability that departing dictators are eliminated becomes vanishingly small.*

Proof. *See the appendix.* ■

Moving up, we consider the choice by the leader to take advantage of an opportunity to democratize. We impose the following condition, which assumes that a dictator fares better as a leader, than as a faction, if he is guaranteed to remain in office.

Assumption 3 $w(0) \geq u(f)$

Then we get the following result:

Claim 4 *If the importance of violence is sufficiently high in a dictatorship and sufficiently low in a democracy, then if the consequences of elimination are sufficiently harsh, leaders with the highest capacity for violence are most likely to democratize.*

Proof. *See the appendix.* ■

The logic for this result is as follows. From claim 3, both dictators expect the same payoff from democratization, i.e. $u(f)$, as the importance of violence tends to zero in a democracy (θ_D tends to 0). From claims 1 and 2, the leader with high capacity for violence is more likely to be eliminated, should he maintain the dictatorship. Therefore, if the consequences of elimination are sufficiently harsh (i.e. if L is sufficiently low), the leader with high capacity for violence faces the worst outcome if he maintains the dictatorship. The leader with high capacity for violence is then most tempted to democratize. Given assumption 3, the leader with low capacity for violence prefers not to take advantage of an opportunity for democracy, so that the leader with high capacity for violence is strictly more likely to democratize.

2.6 The Importance of Commitment Problems

In our set-up, dictators are eliminated because of a commitment problem, due to the transient nature of the advantage for violence: a leader may be temporarily vulnerable, but he cannot commit to refrain from using his capacity for violence in the future. We now want to make two points about the particular mechanism through which dictators are violently removed in our set-up.

First, it provides an answer to the initial puzzle, which is that military dictators, who have the highest capacity for violence, have the shortest tenure. Surely, common sense would argue, leaders with the highest capacity for violence should be best equipped to thwart a violent threat to their rule.¹²

While this intuition is certainly correct if the threat to a leader is exogenous, we have showed that it is not correct if the threats to a leader are endogenous and if we recognize the transient nature of the advantage for violence. We now argue that if we endogenize the threat to a dictator, but ignore the commitment problem, created by the transient nature of the advantage for violence, then we may be unable to solve our initial puzzle.

To discuss this claim, consider the framework of Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin (2008). They build a game where players can eliminate each other in a possibly infinite number of rounds, anticipating a future division of a dollar. Each player is assigned a power index (γ_i). In any round, a set of players can eliminate another set of players if the sum of the power indices in the first set is greater than in the second set. The cost of eliminating a player is infinitesimally small and the payoff of any individual is increasing in his relative power within the final set of players. A coalition is defined as stable if, in equilibrium, no player is eliminated from the coalition.

Translating their set-up into the language of our model, we note that the power index in Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin (2008) plays the same role as the capacity for violence in our model. The difference, and it is a crucial difference, is that greater power in Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin (2008) always confers the advantage for violence. In our set-up, greater capacity for violence only translates into a greater *probability* of having the advantage for violence. In other words, a player with greater capacity for violence may be temporarily unable to eliminate another player, given the transient nature of the advantage for violence.

¹²Likewise, Svobik (2009) argues that leaders have a shorter tenure if they are weaker, relative to their ruling coalition. He suggests that his model could explain the shorter tenure of military dictators, arguing that ruling coalitions in such regimes are more likely to mount a successful coup against the dictator. We argue that the military always has a high capacity for violence. If anything, military regimes should be characterized with the relatively greater strength of the leader, especially in the DD dataset, where regimes are defined by characteristics of the leader. With this classification, military regimes are characterized by leaders with relatively high capacity for violence, and the puzzle remains.

We now want to compare the probability that a ‘leader’ is eliminated in both models. Note first that there is no distinction in the Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin (2008) framework between the leader and the factions. Yet we can still, without loss of generality, label a player ‘the leader’ and study the probability that he is eliminated. Indeed, payoffs in Acemoglu, Egorov and Sonin (2008) are a special case of the payoffs in our model, taking the importance of violence to its maximum value $\theta_{ND} = 1$ (so that there is no -de jure- advantage to act as a leader rather than a faction).

Then, we conclude that, in the simplest version of their game (with 2 or 3 players), a leader’s tenure is increasing in his power. Consider a 2-person coalition. Given that the cost of violence is infinitesimally small, such coalitions are (generically) unstable. The player with greater power eliminates the other player. Therefore, the leader’s tenure is increasing in his power.

Now consider the more interesting case where there are 3 players. First assume that the leader’s power is extremely small, relative to the two factions. If one of the factions has greater power than the sum of the power of the leader and the other faction, then he eliminates the other two players. If not, then there is a player who blocks the elimination of another player as he would expect to be eliminated next. Now increase the power of the leader, holding fixed the power of the two factions. We first enter a situation where no player is eliminated (as the surviving player of a first elimination, who has the least power, expects to be eliminated next) and, when the leader’s power is sufficiently high, a situation where he eliminates the two factions. Thus, the leader’s tenure is increasing in his power.

Next, we argue that the assumption that the advantage for violence is by nature transient is standard in the literature and represents one of the main explanations for the inefficient use of violence in a variety of contexts.¹³ This provides us with a robust explanation for the violent exit of dictators, which would hold even if the dictator could bribe the faction to avoid his elimination.

To see this point, note the following. In our set-up, the payoff of each player, in a dictatorship, is fixed to a single value, if no violence is used (it is determined by his relative capacity for violence and his status in the game). Now instead of fixing these payoffs, let the leader consider any bribe to avoid elimination, and consider the simple case where the leader interacts with one faction. Then we

¹³To name a few references, note Fearon (1995), which explains the incentives of a declining state to wage war, as it expects to receive unfavorable terms in the future if it does not strike now. Also, Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) study the economic origins of democracy with the same argument. They assume that the poor can overthrow the rich whenever they solve their collective action problem, but that the circumstances under which they solve their collective action problem are very rare. Understanding the transient nature of their advantage for violence, the rich may not be able to placate them with pure redistribution. Powell (2004) presents the general argument that large, rapid, shifts in relative power create a commitment problem which leads to the inefficient use of power in a wide range of contexts.

argue that if it is known that the faction would win any violent interaction, the leader should never be eliminated. Indeed, there is a peaceful division of any pie that the faction prefers to eliminating the leader, since using violence is costly. However, if the advantage for violence is transient, then the leader may not be able to avoid elimination, even if he can bribe the faction. If the faction currently has the advantage for violence, but expects to lose it with high probability in the future, then it may not be sufficient for the leader to offer him the full pie in the current period. The faction may prefer to use violence now to lock in a high division of the pie in all future periods. Therefore, we argue, dictators would still be violently removed, even if the dictator could bribe the faction to avoid his elimination. Moreover, leaders with high capacity for violence would still be eliminated with the highest probability, as they face the greatest commitment problem.¹⁴

In our minds, therefore, it is important to endogenize the threats to a dictator’s tenure while recognizing the transient nature of the advantage for violence. Such a set-up provides a robust explanation for the violent exit of dictators and for the fact that military dictators, with the highest capacity for violence, have the shortest tenure (Hadenius and Teorell, 2007; Gandhi, 2008). A marginally smaller tenure for military dictators, should they maintain the dictatorship, gives them very strong incentives to democratize, given the consequences of losing office in a dictatorship and the relatively safe prospects from democratization. We now turn to the empirical evidence, investigating the full range of predictions in the model.

3 Empirical Evidence

3.1 Quantitative Evidence

We take our theory to the data, merging the ‘DD’ dataset (Cheibub and Gandhi, 2004; Cheibub, Gandhi and Vreeland, 2009) with the Archigos dataset. The DD dataset is a country-year dataset which separates dictatorships from democracies using the criteria of Przeworski et al. (2000). Then, within dictatorships, it identifies three regime types: military dictatorships, civilian dictatorships and monarchies. The classification is based on information about the leader in office a particular point in time (31st December) in the country and year in question. The country-year is labeled a military regime if the leader is or was a member of the institutionalized military prior to taking office. It is a monarchy if the leader bears a hereditary title and takes power or is replaced by rules of hereditary succession. It is a civilian dictatorship if neither of these conditions holds.¹⁵ As we are in-

¹⁴Essentially, leaders with low capacity for violence face no commitment problem, at the limit where they have no capacity for violence. They are expected to lose any violent interaction, so that they should be able to survive in any period by offering the full pie, minus the cost of elimination.

¹⁵Since the dataset produces a country-year variable, we took care to recode it so as to include leaders who enter and leave the dataset within a given year.

terested in the treatment of leaders who are removed through domestic forces, we treat leaders who die of natural deaths or who are removed through foreign intervention as censored observations.¹⁶ The merged dataset contains 481 dictators in office between 1946 and 1996.

We then proxy the capacity for violence by the regime type of the leader, arguing that military dictators correspond to leaders with high capacity for violence, relative to the other leaders. Indeed, military leaders, through their training, learn methods to use violence effectively and build a relatively direct network within the military. Low levels of involvement in the military do not qualify a leader as ‘military’. For example, if a leader is involved in World War II, but not thereafter, he is not coded as a military leader. We understand that this is a relatively crude measure of the capacity for violence of a leader, but argue that, on average, they have a lower capacity for violence, perhaps because their support within the military is more indirect.¹⁷

For our dependent variable, we use the Archigos dataset, which contains information on the length of tenure of leaders and their post-tenure fate. Archigos has four categories for leaders who are removed from office (i.e. for leaders who do not die of a natural death while in office), based on their status a year after their ouster: Ok, Exiled, Jailed and Killed. For our purposes, we want to know whether a leader is eliminated from political life (or punished). We construct our dependent variables in two different ways. First, we code a leader as eliminated if and only if he is Killed. Killing a leader, we argue, is a relatively foolproof method to ensure that the departing dictator is no longer a political threat. Second, we code a leader as eliminated if and only if he is either Jailed or Killed. Sending a leader to jail is a costly action which also reduces the likelihood that the departing dictator is a political threat. Leaders who are Ok or Exiled can relatively easily mount a challenge to the new regime.¹⁸

Tables 1 and 2 give summary statistics on the post-tenure fate of dictators who were ousted through domestic means, as a function of their regime type and the regime type of the next leader. We see that military dictators fare relatively worse than non-military dictators when the next leader is a dictator and that both types of leaders fare better when the leader is a democrat.

We then run a conditional (fixed-effect) logistic model, testing whether these differences are significant, controlling for unobserved country-specific heterogeneity. Tables 3 and 4 reports such results. In Table 3, we define punishment as the

¹⁶We also consider observations where the leader democratizes and remains in office as censored. Results remain unchanged if we treat them as cases where the leader is ‘ousted’ and ‘not punished’ upon ouster.

¹⁷As some piece of evidence, indirectly supporting this claim, about 73% of military dictators entered ‘irregularly’, as defined in Archigos, ie with some display of violence, compared to only 27% for non-military dictators.

¹⁸We also treated the four categories as ordered levels of punishment, ran an ordered-logit and a fixed-effect ols regression and found similar results.

outcome of being ‘Killed’. In Table 4, we define punishment as the outcome of being ‘Jailed’ or ‘Killed’. Our variables of interest on the right-hand side are a dummy on whether the type of the departing leader is ‘military’ or not, interaction terms between the type of the departing dictator and a dummy variable, equal to 1 if the new leader is a democrat. The excluded category is then a non-military dictator who is succeeded by another dictator.

Based on claim 1, we expect the coefficient on Military to be positive, i.e. military leaders are more likely to be punished upon their ouster. Based on claim 3, we expect the coefficient on the interaction terms to be negative, with the magnitude of the interaction term being larger (in absolute value) for the military dictator.

We also add controls for the Age of the departing dictator (in years) and the Length of his Tenure (the log of the number of years in office). Presumably, older dictators, everything else being equal, should pose less of a threat (have lower capacity for violence), while a longer tenure may be an indication of a greater capacity for violence.¹⁹

We find support for our hypotheses. Consider Table 3. A dictator who loses office to another dictator is significantly more likely to be Killed if he is a military dictator rather than a non-military dictator (the coefficient is significant at the .01 level). Any dictator is less likely to be Killed if he leaves office to a democrat, rather than another dictator. Transitioning to a democrat leads to a greater reduction of the probability of being Killed, in absolute value, for a Military dictator, relative to a Non-Military dictator (the effect is significant at the 0.10 level for a non-military dictator). Including the controls for Age and Length of Tenure, we see that the results are unchanged. The sign of the additional controls also conforms to our expectation, with the Length of Tenure having a positive and significant effect at the .05 level.

Now consider Table 4. A dictator who loses office to another dictator is significantly more likely to be Jailed or Killed, if he is a military dictator rather than a non-military dictator (the coefficient is significant at the .05 level). Any dictator is less likely to be Jailed or Killed if he transitions to a democrat. Again, the effect is greater, in absolute value, for a military dictator rather than a non-military dictator (the effect is significant at the 0.01 level for a non-military dictator). Adding controls for Age and Length of Tenure, the results again remain unchanged. The variables of Age and Length of Tenure have the correct sign, with the coefficient on Length of Tenure being significant.

We then consider the length of tenure of the dictators. While it has recently been documented that military dictators tend to have the shortest tenure (Hade-

¹⁹Dictators with a long tenure may represent entrenched personalist dictators, to follow Geddes (1999)’s terminology, who have concentrated power in their own hands and accumulated enemies over time.

nius and Teorell, 2007; Gandhi, 2008), we do not know of a statistical test which allows for transitions both to a democratic and non-democratic successor. We present such results in Table 5, using a simple multinomial logistic regression. The unit of analysis is a leader-country-year observation. The baseline category consists of all the dictators who remain in office at the end of the year. Following Carter and Signorino (2009), we include a third-degree polynomial for time (demeaned) to allow for temporal dependence.²⁰

Consistent with claim 4, we find that military dictators are most likely to fall to a democrat, controlling for their Length of Tenure, Growth, and the level of income in the country. Consistent with claim 2, they are more likely to lose office to another dictator, though the statistical significance of the result is not very robust.²¹

3.2 Lesotho: An Illustrative Case

Looking beyond the general pattern in the data, we discuss the political history of Lesotho, as it illustrates well the logic of our model. At the time of independence (1966), Lesotho chose a constitution where executive power rested in the office of the prime minister, with limited power to the king. Between gaining independence and democratization (1993), the African country was ruled by three dictators. The first was Chief Leabua Jonathan, a civilian who was in office throughout most of this period (1966-86). Leader of the Basotho National Party, he refused to recognize his defeat in the 1970 elections, lifting the constitution and declaring a state of emergency. He increasingly wanted to concentrate power in his own hands, but lost the advantage for violence to members of the military, who were fearful of dismissal from military service (Machobane, 2001, 52).

Jonathan's long tenure should not be interpreted as a sign of his high capacity for violence. As Kabemba (2003, 5) puts it: 'Both the period of one-party government and the period of military rule were marked by factionalism and instability within the governing elite, and neither arrangement was able to centralize power in the hands of a strong executive.' Jonathan spoke against the new regime, to the annoyance of the military council, who 'could not understand why Jonathan and associates did not feel fortunate that they were not killed in the coup d'etat' (Machobane, 2001, 85).

²⁰The coefficient for such variables is omitted.

²¹The sign for the coefficient of the Military variable remains negative throughout all the specifications. With the current controls, it has a p-value of 0.123. Without any control for Length of Tenure, Growth, Log(GDP per capita), it is significant at the 0.01 level. Given the differences in the rate of punishment (elimination) conditional on ouster, and given the consequences of punishment (elimination), even a small difference on the rate of ouster translates into large differences in expected utility from maintaining the dictatorship. We treat this evidence as supporting our argument.

Violence between members of the military council was a clear possibility. As Machobane (2001, 107) puts it: ‘A serious case of paranoia engulfed the military council. The fear of mutual assassination pervaded the corridors of power and crept through the military ranks.’ The regime was first led by Major-General Lekhanya (1986-1991). Lekhanya dismissed his most serious rival, sending Col. Joshua Letsie to a 15-year prison sentence, for the three-year-old murder of political opponents of the military regime. However, in May 1991, he lost the advantage for violence to junior officers in his regime, who forced him to announce his resignation to the national radio at gunpoint. Lekhanya still commanded the loyalty of many officers, and a few of them attempted a coup only a few weeks after he was removed, but this attempt failed. Lekhanya was then kept under house arrest, for fear of his continuing popularity with segments of the military (Southall, 1995, 29).

The regime was then led by Major-General Ramaema (1991-1993), who was committed to transferring power to a civilian. The early 1990s presented a clear opportunity for democratization, notably because of the end of the Cold War and the situation in neighboring South Africa, with negotiations underway to end apartheid and install a democratic government. As a result, it could be relatively certain that the executive office would be gained through democratic means, not through the use of force. Elections were held in March 1993 and won by the Basutoland Congress Party. In 1994, Lesotho’s young king, Letsie III, attempted a coup, only to fall to international pressures, notably from South Africa, which ensured that the election results would be recognized.

4 Conclusion

We provide an explanation for the post-tenure fate of dictators and investigate the implication of such patterns for democratization. Given the transient nature of the advantage for violence, dictators with high capacity for violence are more likely to be punished upon their ouster, as they represent a greater threat to the new leader. Given that violence is more important in a dictatorship than in a democracy, dictators are more likely to be punished if they do not democratize, should they lose office. As a result, leaders with high capacity for violence are most likely to democratize.

We would now argue that these results should lead to a reevaluation of some of the standard hypotheses in the literature on regime transition. Consider the seminal work of Geddes (1999, 2003), which has inspired much of the recent quantitative work on dictatorship. She codes regimes in the post-World War II period based on the constituency which determines access to office, the fruits of office and influence over policy. It is a group of military officers in a ‘military’ regime, a single party in a ‘single-party’ regime or a single person in a ‘personalist’ regime.²² A regime enters her sample if it lasts three years or more and exists or begins

²²The classification scheme is explained in detail in Geddes (2003, 225-227).

between 1946 and 1996, in countries with a population of more than a million that became independent before 1990 (Geddes, 2003, 69).

Geddes posits that the interests of the ruling clique affect the stability of the regime. She then shows that military regimes fall faster than other dictatorial regimes and suggests a few explanations. One explanation, noted above, is that there is a particularly strong sense of (national and corporate) unity among members of the military, so that they prefer to return to the barracks instead of fighting for political leadership.

We already made a few points above (see section 1). First, it is unclear whether a high sense of unity among leading factions should help or hurt the tenure of leaders. It would be sensible to argue that a low sense of unity translates into many conflicts and, hence, the short tenure of leaders. Second, it is difficult to determine whether military dictatorships have a high or a low sense of unity among their leading factions.

We now want to add the following points. First, the treatment of ousted leaders could provide some evidence, albeit indirect, of the sense of unity in dictatorships. If it is high, then a leader should expect a relatively attractive fate upon leaving office. Table 6 shows the post-tenure fate of leaders, ousted domestically, when the next leader is part of the same regime, using the Geddes classification of regimes. There are very few entries, yet the data suggest that, if anything, leaders within military regimes tend to be punished more severely than the leaders of single-party regimes.²³

Yet we believe that it is possible to reconcile our approach with the work of Geddes (1999, 2003): military leaders are quick to step down because they have an especially difficult time maintaining unity in a dictatorship. For example, reflecting on the trend of military leaders stepping down in South America in the

²³Thus, there may be more unity among leading factions in single-party regimes than in military regimes. It is less straightforward, however, to derive any conclusion from the differences between military and personalist regimes. A country may be ruled by a member of the military, but the military may not be considered to select the executive, if the ruler concentrated sufficient power in his hands or if the military itself is divided into factions. In the Geddes dataset, the following counts against a country being coded as military, and towards being coded as personalist: ‘Have dissenting officers or officers from different regions, tribes, religions, or ethnic groups been murdered, imprisoned, or forced into exile? Has the officer corps been marginalized from most decision making?’ For example, Rafael Trujillo (Dominican Republic, ousted and killed in 1961) and Karrim Kassem (Iraq, ousted and killed in 1963) were both killed by another member of the military. They are coded as military dictators in the DD dataset, but not in the Geddes dataset. Trujillo is coded as personalist, probably because he personally exercised a strong control of the military. Kassem is also coded as personalist, probably because the military was divided among Baathist and anti-Baathist factions while he was in function. Therefore, factions in ‘military’ regimes may have a relatively strong sense of unity, but part of the reason may come from the decision to code regimes based on the constituency selecting the executive, rather than anything particular about military organizations.

late 1970s, Lieut. Col. Gary Prado from Bolivia suggested: ‘Officers acknowledge that their direct presence in government has made them unpopular and weakened professional unity, particularly when military cabinet ministers become rivals for power or promoters of lucrative governments. “When the unity of the armed forces is affected, this calls for a return to basic military tasks. We are not a political party [...]” (de Onis, 1979).

Ultimately, we believe that our approach has a relatively high degree of empirical promise, as it lets us ground the preferences of leaders on the observed pattern of their post-tenure fate. In future work, it would be interesting to apply the current framework to the study of semi-democratic institutions in dictatorships (Lust-Okar, 2004; Cox, N.d.; Gandhi, 2008).

5 Appendix

Lemma 1 *There is a unique subgame perfect Nash equilibrium of this game, after the regime type R has been chosen.*

Consider the non-democratic subgame ($R = ND$).

Assume that player 1 has the advantage for violence ($np = 1$). Then $d^(1) = 1$, $m^*(1) \in \arg \max_{k \in \{2 \dots N\} \cup \emptyset} -c_k + \theta_{ND} w \left(\frac{\gamma_1}{\sum_{j \neq k} \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_{ND}) u(l)$ where $c_\emptyset \equiv 0$.*

Assume that player $i \neq 1$ has the advantage for violence ($np = i \neq 1$). Then

$$d^*(i) \begin{cases} = 1 & \text{if } c_1 > \theta_{ND} \Delta w_i + (1 - \theta_{ND}) \Delta u \\ = i & \text{if } \theta_{ND} \Delta w_i \leq c_1 < \theta_{ND} \Delta w_i + (1 - \theta_{ND}) \Delta u \\ \in \{1, i\} & \text{if } 0 \leq c_1 < \theta_{ND} \Delta w_i \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

where

$$\Delta w_i = w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j \neq 1} \gamma_j} \right) - w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{1 \leq j \leq N} \gamma_j} \right) \quad (3)$$

$$\Delta u = u(l) - u(f) \quad (4)$$

$m^*(i) = \emptyset$ if either a) $c_1 \geq \theta_{ND} \Delta w_i + (1 - \theta_{ND}) \Delta u$ or b) $d(i) = i$ and $c_1 \geq \theta_{ND} \Delta w_i$, $m^*(i) = 1$ otherwise.

Consider the democratic subgame ($R = D$). For any $i \neq 1$, $m^(i) = \emptyset$ if $c_1 \geq \theta_D \Delta w_i$, $m^*(i) = 1$ otherwise.*

Proof. *Consider the non-democratic subgame ($R = ND$).*

The proof is obvious when player 1 has the advantage for violence.

Assume that $i \neq 1$ has the advantage for violence ($np = i \neq 1$).

He does not eliminate player 1, who designates himself as leader ($d(i) = 1$), if and only if

$$-c_1 + \theta_{ND} w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j \neq 1} \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_{ND}) u(l) \leq \theta_{ND} w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{1 \leq j \leq N} \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_{ND}) u(f) \quad (5)$$

or if and only if $c_1 \geq \theta_{ND} \Delta w_i + (1 - \theta_{ND}) \Delta u$, using (3) and (4). He does not eliminate player 1, who designates player i as the leader ($d(i) = i$), if and only if

$$-c_1 + \theta_{ND} w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j \neq 1} \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_{ND}) u(l) \leq \theta_{ND} w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{1 \leq j \leq N} \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_{ND}) u(l) \quad (6)$$

or if and only if $c_1 \geq \theta_{ND} \Delta w_i$, using (3).

Moving up, it is clear that player 1 prefers to designate himself as leader, whenever possible (since $u(l) > u(f)$), and that he prefers to remain as a faction rather than be eliminated (since $L < 0$). Therefore, decision $d^(i)$ as given in (2) follows.*

Consider the democratic subgame ($R = D$). Assume that i is the new leader and has the advantage for violence ($np = i$). He decides not to eliminate player 1 if and only if

$$-c_1 + \theta_D w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j \neq 1} \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_D) u(l) \leq \theta_D w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{1 \leq j \leq N} \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_D) u(l) \quad (7)$$

or if and only if $c_1 \geq \theta_D \Delta w_i$, using (3). ■

Proof. (Proof of claim 1) Formally, let O stand for the event of the leader is ousted, E for the event where he is eliminated. Let $\text{prob}(A_1|A_2, R)$ be the probability that event A_1 happens, conditional on event A_2 , in regime type R . For any $\theta_{ND} > 0$, there is a threshold $\frac{\gamma(t_L)}{\gamma(t_H)}$ such that for any $\frac{\gamma(t_L)}{\gamma(t_H)} \in \left(0, \frac{\gamma(t_L)}{\gamma(t_H)}\right)$,

$$\text{prob}(E|O, t(1) = t_L, ND) < \text{prob}(E|O, t(1) = t_H, ND)$$

To see this, note that

$$\text{prob}(E|O, t(1) = t', ND) = \sum_{i \neq 1} \text{prob}(E|O, t(1) = t', np = i, ND) \text{prob}(np = i|O, ND) \quad (8)$$

where, for $i \neq 1$,

$$\text{prob}(np = i|O, ND) = \frac{\gamma_i / \gamma(t_H)}{\sum_{2 \leq j \leq N} \gamma_j / \gamma(t_H)} \quad (9)$$

$$\text{prob}(E|O, t(1) = t', np = i, ND) = \frac{F(\theta_{ND} \Delta w_i | t')}{F(\theta_{ND} \Delta w_i + (1 - \theta_{ND}) \Delta u | t')} \quad (10)$$

Let us show that

$$\lim_{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0} \text{prob}(E|O, t(1) = t_L, ND) = 0 \quad (11)$$

Indeed, we note that

$$\lim_{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0} \Delta w_i = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } t(i) = t_L \text{ or } t(1) = t_L \\ w\left(\frac{1}{N_H}\right) - w\left(\frac{1}{N_H+1}\right) & \text{if } t(i) = t(1) = t_H \end{cases} \quad (12)$$

where $N_H = |\{i > 1 : t(i) = t_H\}|$. Therefore, for any i ,

$$\lim_{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0} \text{prob}(E|O, t(1) = t_L, np = i, ND) = \frac{F(0|t_L)}{F((1 - \theta_{ND}) \Delta u | t_L)} \quad (13)$$

so that, given $F(0|t_L) = 0$, $F(c|t_L) > 0$ for any c , (11) follows.

Next we show that

$$\lim_{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0} \text{prob}(E|O, t(1) = t_H, ND) > 0 \quad (14)$$

We note that

$$\lim_{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0} \text{prob}(np = i | O, ND) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } t(i) = t_L \\ \frac{1}{N_H} & \text{if } t(i) = t_H \end{cases}$$

so that

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0} \text{prob}(E | O, t(1) = t_H, ND) &= \frac{F\left(\theta_{ND} \left(w\left(\frac{1}{N_H}\right) - w\left(\frac{1}{N_H+1}\right)\right) | t_H\right)}{F\left(\theta_{ND} \left(w\left(\frac{1}{N_H}\right) - w\left(\frac{1}{N_H+1}\right)\right) + (1 - \theta_{ND}) [u(l) - u(f)] | t_H\right)} \end{aligned} \quad (15)$$

Therefore, given $F(c|t(i)) > 0$ for any $c > 0$, for any $t(i)$, (14) follows.

By continuity of $F(c|t(i))$ and $w(\cdot)$, the conclusion follows. ■

Proof. (Proof of claim 2). Formally, there are thresholds $\underline{\theta}$ and $\frac{\gamma(t_L)}{\gamma(t_H)}(\theta_{ND})$ such that for any $\theta_{ND} \in (\underline{\theta}, 1)$, $\frac{\gamma(t_L)}{\gamma(t_H)} \in \left(0, \frac{\gamma(t_L)}{\gamma(t_H)}(\theta_{ND})\right)$

$$\text{prob}(O | t(1) = t_L, ND) < \text{prob}(O | t(1) = t_H, ND)$$

To see this, note that

$$\text{prob}(O | t(1) = t', ND) = \sum_{i \neq 1} \text{prob}(O | t(1) = t', np = i, ND) \text{prob}(np = i | t(1) = t', ND) \quad (16)$$

where, for $i \neq 1$,

$$\text{prob}(O | t(1) = t', np = i, ND) = F(\theta_{ND} \Delta w_i + (1 - \theta_{ND}) \Delta u | t') \quad (17)$$

$$\text{prob}(np = i | t(1) = t', ND) = \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{1 \leq j \leq N} \gamma_j} \quad (18)$$

First, let us show that

$$\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \text{prob}(O | t(1) = t_L, ND) = 0 \quad (19)$$

To see this, note by (12) and (17) that, for any $i \neq 1$,

$$\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \text{prob}(O | t(1) = t_L, np = i, ND) = F(0 | t_L)$$

and (19) follows, given $F(0 | t_L) = 0$.

Second, let us show that

$$\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \text{prob}(O | t(1) = t_H, ND) > 0 \quad (20)$$

Using (18), we have, for $i \neq 1$, that

$$\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \text{prob}(np = i | t(1) = t', ND) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } t(i) = t_L \\ \frac{1}{N_H} & \text{if } t(i) = t_H, t(1) = t_L \\ \frac{1}{N_H+1} & \text{if } t(i) = t(1) = t_H \end{cases}$$

Therefore, given (12),

$$\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \text{prob}(O | t(1) = t_H, ND) = \frac{N_H}{N_H + 1} F \left(w \left(\frac{1}{N_H} \right) - w \left(\frac{1}{N_H + 1} \right) | t_H \right)$$

Since $F(c|t_H) > 0$ for any $c > 0$, we have (20).

By continuity of $F(\cdot|t')$ and $w(\cdot)$, the conclusion follows. ■

Proof. (Proof of claim 3). The claim states $\lim_{\theta_D \rightarrow 0} \text{prob}(E|t(1) = t', D) = 0$.

Given lemma 1, we have, for any $i \neq 1$,

$$\text{prob}(E|t(1) = t', np = i, D) = F(\theta_D \Delta w_i | t(1))$$

so that, using (12),

$$\lim_{\theta_D \rightarrow 0} \text{prob}(E|t(1) = t', np = i, D) = F(0|t(1)) = 0$$

and

$$\lim_{\theta_D \rightarrow 0} \text{prob}(E|t(1) = t', D) = \lim_{\theta_D \rightarrow 0} \sum_{i \neq 1} \text{prob}(np = i | D) \text{prob}(E|t(1) = t', np = i, D) = 0$$

■

Proof. (Proof of claim 4). Let us first specify the condition under which the leader of type $t(1)$ chooses to democratize. Let $Eu_1(R|t(1))$ be the expected payoff of player 1 from picking regime type R , if his type is $t(1)$. Obviously, the leader chooses to democratize when there is an opportunity for democratization ($R^* = D$) if and only if

$$Eu_1(D|t(1)) > Eu_1(ND|t(1))$$

Let $\text{prob}(R^* = D|t(1) = t')$ be the equilibrium probability that the leader of type $t(1) = t'$ democratizes. The claim states

$$\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_D \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \text{prob}(R^* = D|t(1) = t_L) < \lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_D \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \text{prob}(R^* = D|t(1) = t_H)$$

To see this, note that given claim 3,

$$\lim_{\theta_D \rightarrow 0} Eu_1(D|t(1)) = u(f)$$

since the departing dictator is eliminated with probability close to zero as the importance of violence becomes vanishingly small in a democracy.

If the leader does not democratize, there are four possible events. First, he can receive the advantage for violence, in which case his payoff is $Eu_1(ND|t(1), np = 1) = \max_{k \in \{2 \dots N\} \cup \emptyset} -c_k + \theta_{ND}w \left(\frac{\gamma_1}{\sum_{j \neq k} \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_{ND})u(l)$. Second, he could be eliminated, in which case his payoff is $Eu_1(ND|O \cap E, t(1)) = L$. Third, he could be ousted but not eliminated, in which case his payoff $Eu_1(ND|O \cap E^c, t(1)) = \theta_{ND}w \left(\frac{\gamma_1}{\sum_j \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_{ND})u(f)$ (where E^c stands for the event where he is not eliminated). Fourth, he could remain in office despite losing the advantage for violence to some faction i , in which case his payoff $Eu_1(ND|O^c, t(1)) = \theta_{ND}w \left(\frac{\gamma_1}{\sum_j \gamma_j} \right) + (1 - \theta_{ND})u(l)$ (where O^c is the event where he is not ousted). Writing in full, we have:

$$\begin{aligned}
Eu_1(ND|t(1)) &= \frac{\gamma_1}{\sum_j \gamma_j} Eu_1(ND|t(1), np = 1) \\
&+ \sum_{i \neq 1} \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_j \gamma_j} [prob(O \cap E|t(1), np = i, ND)] L \\
&+ \sum_{i \neq 1} \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_j \gamma_j} [prob(O \cap E^c|t(1), np = i, ND)] Eu_1(ND|O \cap E^c, t(1)) \\
&+ \sum_{i \neq 1} \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_j \gamma_j} [prob(O^c|t(1), np = i, ND)] Eu_1(ND|O^c, t(1))
\end{aligned} \tag{21}$$

Given strategies in lemma 1, we conclude that a leader with low capacity for violence remains in power with probability one, as the importance of violence goes to 1 in a dictatorship and as his capacity for violence goes to zero (see 19). In other words, $\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \sum_{i \neq 1} \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_j \gamma_j} [prob(O^c|t(1), np = i, ND)] = 1$, so that

$$\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} Eu_1(ND|t(1) = t_L) = \lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} Eu_1(ND|O^c, t(1) = t_L) = w(0)$$

Therefore, by assumption 3, we get $\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} prob(R^* = D|t(1) = t_L) = 0$.

Next we conclude that the leader with high capacity for violence is eliminated with strictly positive probability if he does not democratize. Indeed,

$$\begin{aligned}
&\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} prob(O \cap E|t(1) = t_H, ND) \\
&= \lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} prob(O|t(1) = t_H, ND) prob(E|O, t(1) = t_H, ND) \\
&> 0
\end{aligned}$$

where the inequality follows from claims 1 and 2 (in particular 14 and 20).

We can replace in (21), given that $\sum_{i \neq 1} \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_j \gamma_j} \text{prob}(O \cap E | t(1) = t_H, np = i, ND) = \text{prob}(O \cap E | t(1) = t_H, ND)$. Therefore, holding everything else fixed, there exists a value \bar{L} such that for any $L < \bar{L}$, $\lim_{\substack{\gamma(t_L)/\gamma(t_H) \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} E u_1(ND | t(1) = t_H) < u(f)$ and $\lim_{\substack{\theta_D \rightarrow 0 \\ \theta_{ND} \rightarrow 1}} \text{prob}(R^* = D | t(1) = t_H) = p$. ■

Claim 5 (a) *The payoff function given in (1) can be generated by a standard division of the dollar game, where the cost of eliminating player i in regime R is distributed according to $F'(\cdot | t(i), R)$ with $F'(0 | t(i), R) = 0$ for any $t(i), R$.*

(b) *In such a game, $\theta_{ND} \geq \theta_D$ obtains if $F'(\cdot | t(i), D)$ first-order stochastically dominates $F'(\cdot | t(i), ND)$.*

Proof. Consider part (a). Let player i be the leader in function at the start of round 2. First, nature picks a player with the advantage for violence, np , and fixes the cost of eliminating player j at c'_j , drawn from distribution $F'(\cdot | t(i), R)$. If the leader is picked with the advantage for violence ($np = i$), he can eliminate any player j . If a faction is picked with the advantage for violence ($np \neq i$), then he can eliminate player i . After nature has picked a player with the advantage for violence, player i offers a division of the dollar. The player with the advantage for violence (np) then makes his elimination decision. If np eliminates player k , then he gets the whole dollar, after paying cost c'_k . If np eliminates no other player, then player i 's offer is implemented. We assume that indifference between eliminating and not eliminating player k is broken in favor of not eliminating player k .

Now let us solve the game by backwards induction. If the leader has the advantage for violence ($np = i$), he knows that any offer is accepted. Since eliminating a player is costly, he does not eliminate any player and offers to keep the full dollar. If a faction has the advantage for violence ($np \neq i$), he accepts the offer if and only if he receives at least $1 - c'_i$. Moving up, the leader strictly prefers for his offer to be accepted. Therefore, he offers $v = \max\{0, 1 - c'_i\}$ to player np , $1 - v$ to himself, and 0 to everybody else. This offer is accepted in equilibrium. Calculating the expected payoff, we have

$$\pi \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j) \neq e} \gamma_j}, l, R \right) = \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j) \neq e} \gamma_j} + \left(1 - \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j) \neq k} \gamma_j} \right) \left(\int_0^1 c'_i dF'(c'_i | t(i), R) + (1 - F'(1 | t(i), R)) \right) \quad (22)$$

$$\pi \left(\frac{\gamma_k}{\sum_{j:s(j) \neq e} \gamma_j}, f, R \right) = \frac{\gamma_k}{\sum_{j:s(j) \neq e} \gamma_j} \left(\int_0^1 (1 - c'_i) dF'(c'_i | t(i), R) \right) \quad (23)$$

so that (22) and (23) reduce to (1) with $u(l) = 1$, $u(f) = 0$, $w \left(\frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j) \neq e} \gamma_j} \right) = \frac{\gamma_i}{\sum_{j:s(j) \neq e} \gamma_j}$ and $\theta_R = \int_0^1 (1 - c'_i) dF'(c'_i | t(i), R)$.

Now consider part (b). By definition, $F'(\cdot|t(i), D)$ first-order stochastically dominates $F'(\cdot|t(i), ND)$ if and only if, for every non-decreasing function $u : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$,

$$\int u(c) dF'(c|t(i), D) \geq \int u(c) dF'(c|t(i), ND) \quad (24)$$

Therefore, $\int_0^1 (c'_i - 1) dF'(c'_i|t(i), D) \geq \int_0^1 (c'_i - 1) dF'(c'_i|t(i), ND)$, or $-\theta_D \geq -\theta_{ND}$ and the conclusion follows. ■

Table 1: The Fate of Domestically Ousted Leaders - Transitions in Dictatorships

	Ok	Exiled	Jailed	Killed	Total
Military	68 (40%)	46 (27%)	29 (17%)	25 (15%)	168
Non-Military	126 (53%)	59 (25%)	34 (14%)	17 (7%)	236

Table 2: The Fate of Domestically Ousted Leaders - Transitions out of Dictatorships

	Ok	Exiled	Jailed	Killed	Total
Military	37 (84%)	2 (5%)	4 (9%)	1 (2%)	44
Non-Military	24 (77%)	2 (6%)	4 (13%)	1 (3%)	31

Table 3: Probability of Being Killed. Domestic Ousters^a

	b	Std.Err	b	Std.Err
Military	1.374**	0.481	1.415**	0.491
Military*Next Democrat	-1.873 [†]	1.085	-2.026 [†]	1.099
Non-Military*Next Democrat	-0.750	1.240	-0.703	1.327
Age			-0.008	0.022
Length of Tenure			0.255*	0.129
No. Obs	202		193	
Pseudo R ²	0.1001		0.139	
Log-likelihood	-57.9		-53.42	
Wald/LR/Wald Chi ² -test	12.88	$p < 0.005$	17.19	$p < 0.004$

^a Results from a Conditional (Fixed-Effects) Logistic Regression **p < .01, *p < .05, [†]p < .1.

Table 4: Probability of Being Jailed or Killed. Domestic Ousters^a

	b	Std.Err	b	Std.Err
Military	0.607*	0.307	0.620 [†]	0.323
Military*Next Democrat	-1.497**	0.546	-1.562**	0.566
Non-Military*Next Democrat	-0.211	0.707	-0.540	0.828
Age			-0.012	0.014
Length of Tenure			0.197*	0.081
No. Obs	351		339	
Pseudo R ²	0.0424		0.067	
Log-likelihood	-125.4		-117.22	
Wald/LR/Wald Chi ² -test	11.09	$p < 0.011$	16.84	$p < 0.005$

^a Results from a Conditional (Fixed-Effects) Logistic Regression **p < .01, *p < .05, [†]p < .1.

Table 5: Likelihood of Domestic Ousters^a

	To Democrat		To Dictator	
	b	Std.Err	b	Std.Err
Military	0.978**	0.247	0.176	0.114
Log(Tenure)	-0.426**	0.067	-0.462**	0.032
Growth	-0.738	1.433	-3.367**	0.635
Log(Per Capita GDP)	0.276*	0.139	0.036	0.066
Constant	-35.09	42.92	3.277	19.35
No. Obs	4264			
Pseudo R ²	0.102			
Log-likelihood	-1527.83			
Wald/LR/Wald Chi ² -test	346.45	$p < 0.000$		

^a Results from a Multinomial Logistic Regression **p < .01, *p < .05, [†]p < .1.

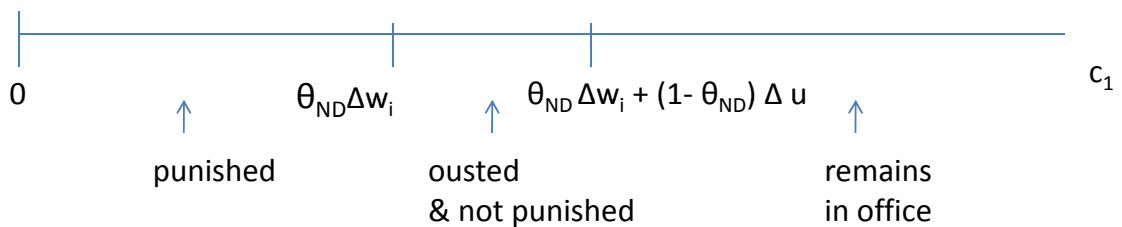
Table 6: The Fate of Domestically Ousted Leaders (last leaders excluded) - Geddes dataset

	Ok	Exiled	Jailed	Killed	Total
Military	25 (61%)	6 (15%)	6 (15%)	4 (10%)	41
Single-Party	49 (83%)	6 (10%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)	59
Personalist	4 (44%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)	3 (33%)	9
Hybrid	14 (50%)	8 (29%)	4 (14%)	2 (7%)	28

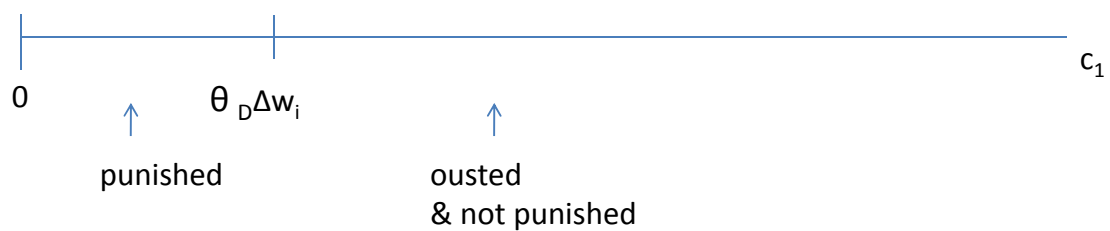
Figure 1: Cost of violence and the Fate of a Dictator

(player $i \neq 1$ has the advantage for violence)

Leader maintained the non-democracy



Leader transitioned to democratic rule



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