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Cooptation and Coalition Mobilization

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Keywords
revolutionary action, cooptation strategy, subordinate revolts

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Abstract

The question addressed by this research was, “When structural circumstances make revolutionary action likely, under what conditions will a cooptation strategy prevent subordinate revolts?” Experimental procedures established a group status hierarchy consisting of a leader and two subordinates. Groups earned collective outcomes, and the leader usurped an inequitable portion of these outcomes. In this context, the first experiment shows that a cooptation strategy (i.e., offer of a promotion to one of two subordinates) inhibits subordinate revolts. Two additional experiments indicate that the cooptation strategy is most effective (a) if the offer (strategy) provides the target of cooptation a source of personal gain; (b) if the offer (strategy) is a result of the leader’s own volition, rather than situational constraints; and (c) if the leader conveys a strong commitment to follow through on the promotion offer. The results are interpreted with reference to subjective-expected-utility and reciprocity theories.

Research on coalition formation reveals two distinct foci—*coalition-choice* and *coalition-mobilization*. Coalition-choice research is illustrated by studies of how persons in competitive settings choose between alternative coalitions (for reviews see Chertkoff, 1970; Gamson, 1964; Komorita & Chertkoff, 1973; Vinacke, 1969). In such research, coalitions are usually necessary for persons to obtain outcomes; consequently, the major research question is, "Which coalitions will form if three or more parties are confronted with various coalition options?"

The present research falls within the coalition-mobilization rubric. Coalition-mobilization research is different from coalition-choice research in that it focuses on the mobilization of revolutionary coalitions in cooperative group settings (e.g., Lawler, 1975a, 1975b; Michener & Lawler, 1971; Michener & Lyons, 1972; Webster & Smith, 1978). Revolutionary coalitions are *broadly* defined as any revolt involving joint action by two or more subordinates against a leader (e.g., Caplow, 1968; Lawler, 1975a, 1975b; Michener & Lawler, 1971). The basic research question in coalition-mobilization research is, "Under what conditions will subordinates coalesce against a group leader?"

Studies of subordinate revolts have identified several factors, such as inequitable pay rates and group failure, that engender insurgent action (Hamblin, 1958; Lawler, 1975a, 1975b; Michener & Lawler, 1971; Michener & Lyons, 1972; Ross, Thibaut, & Evenbeck, 1971). However, little attention has been directed at the conditions under which a leader's use of particular strategies can prevent a revolt. While leaders usually have a range of strategy options, one common strategy is for leaders to offer inducements (e.g., promotions, pay raises, political patronage) to some, but not all, subordinates. This inducement strategy, often termed *cooptation*,

is the focus of the present research.[3] The present study creates circumstances (i.e., inequitable pay rates) that are favorable to subordinate revolts and examines whether (and under what conditions) a cooptation strategy will forestall insurgent behavior.

The cooptation strategy should inhibit coalitional action, because in response subordinates are likely to attribute divergent rewards or costs to an insurgent coalition (Gamson, 1968; Simmel, 1950). Specifically, the recipient of the inducement offer (the *target*) should expect less personal gain from the coalition than the other subordinate (the *nontarget*). This is important because a central tenet of both macrosociological and social psychological theories is that potential allies must have sufficiently common interests in order to mobilize joint action. This is suggested by Dahrendorfs (1959) macrosociological analysis of conditions under which subordinate "quasi groups" develop "interest groups" (i.e., coalitions explicitly organized to influence leaders), and also by Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) notion that a "correspondence of outcomes" (i.e., similar rewards and costs) is necessary for coalitional action. Moreover, experimental evidence demonstrates that common interests and opinions facilitate coalition mobilization (Lawler, 1975a, 1975b; Lawler & Youngs, 1975; Michener & Lyons, 1972; Nitz & Phillips, 1969). Based on this diverse literature, the cooptation strategy should weaken

[3] 3While the term "cooptation" has been used in various ways, that it is an inducement, rather than a constraint or persuasion, tactic is a commonality of prior treatments (see Gamson, 1968; Mills, 1956; Selznick, 1949). Case study material further suggests that this strategy can take two major forms (Coleman, 1957; Gamson, 1968; Selznick, 1949; Simmel, 1950). First of all, it may refer to attempts to absorb all dissident individuals or groups into an organization. Gamson (1968) has labeled this *nonselective* cooptation. Alternatively, cooptation may be a "divide and rule" tactic involving inducement offers to only some of the dissident individuals or groups. Gamson (1968) terms this *selective* cooptation. The present research examines the latter form of cooptation, and is concerned primarily with the reaction of the target (i.e., person) to whom the cooptation strategy is directed.

subordinates' common interests (i.e., produce divergent expectations of individual gain) and reduce coalitional action against the leader.

Three experiments are reported below. In all experiments, the cooptation strategy is a promotion offer to one of two subordinates. The first experiment provides an initial test of the cooptation effect on subordinate coalitions. The second and third experiments focus on the target of cooptation in order to identify conditions under which cooptation varies in effectiveness. Specifically, the second experiment examines whether the perquisites provided by the promotion and the reciprocity norm affect cooptation success. The third experiment examines the target's response to a strong vs. a weak leader commitment to follow through on the promotion offer.

Experiment I

This experiment tests the effect of cooptation by comparing a cooptation- strategy condition with a control group. The leader establishes inequitable pay rates in both conditions, and the control group is virtually identical to the inequity condition in a prior experiment showing high coalition rates (Lawler, 1975a). Questionnaire data on expected gain from the coalition and promotion as well as data from subordinates' negotiations will examine the interest-weakening interpretation.

Method

Subjects and Setting

Forty triads, each consisting of two subjects (i.e., subordinates) and one confederate (i.e., leader), were randomly assigned to either the control or cooptation condition (20 groups/cell). Male volunteers at the University of Iowa served as subjects and confederates.

The setting for this research is similar to that used in prior research on revolutionary coalitions (Lawler, 1975a, 1975b; Michener & Lawler, 1971; Michener & Lyons, 1972). The instructions portrayed the research as a study of group problem-solving in which the amount of money a group earns depends on its task performance. Subjects were told that their group's success would be enhanced by placing the person with the greatest task ability in a high status (leader) position, and by giving that person prerogatives like those available to leaders in natural settings (e.g., greater influence over task decisions and the discretion to set pay rates). The prerogatives of the leader provided a justification for giving subordinates a coalition option.

Procedures

Subjects and confederates were initially placed in separate rooms and given Part One of the written instructions, introducing the experiment as a study of how problems are solved when there is limited communication between group members. The task confronting subjects was to estimate the proportion of darkened area on black and white cards. To facilitate subjects' task involvement, the instructions noted that performance on the task was a good indicator of a

person's cognitive and analytic ability. Prior research suggests that this task is ambiguous enough to permit fictitious feedback (Lawler, 1975a, 1975b; Michener & Lawler, 1971; Michener & Lyons, 1972).

The instructions told subjects that their group could earn money depending on their overall task performance, and explained that in many settings groups do poorly simply because those persons with the most status and influence over group decisions are not the most qualified persons in the group. Therefore, to facilitate the group's success, subjects would take a judgment test to assess their task ability and to assign status levels to group members.

After reading Part One of the instructions, subjects (and the confederate) were placed in one room to take the test. This was the only face-to-face contact subjects had with each other or with the confederate. After completing the test, they returned to their private rooms and awaited the test results. At this point, the confederate secretly departed, and all further communication from the confederate (i.e., leader) was fabricated by the experimenter. The brief presence of the confederate served to verify for subjects the existence of three group members.

Spurious test feedback assigned each person a status weight which allegedly symbolized their relative task ability. The status weights were presented as percents and totalled 100%. In both conditions, the confederate achieved the highest status weight (40%) while subjects achieved lower status. The status weights ostensibly represented the weight to be given each person's judgment when group scores were computed. Consistent with other research using these procedures (Lawler, 1975a, 1975b), subordinates felt they should receive less of the group winnings than the leader ($p < .001$) and that the leader's share should approximate the leader's status weight (40%).

While awaiting test results, subjects read additional instructions which explained the prerogatives of the leader. The instructions indicated that the leader had the greatest influence over the group decisions as well as the prerogative of setting pay rates. The leader had complete discretion over the reward distribution, meaning the leader could conceivably give all of the winnings to other group members or even keep all of the winnings.

These prerogatives of the leader placed subordinates in an inferior power position, and this served as a rationale for including a coalition option. The instructions informed subjects that they had less influence than the leader over the task decisions and little influence over the distribution of the collective rewards. The instructions suggested that given the leader's power, the availability of a coalition option might assure subordinates of some influence in the group.

A coalition was a formal agreement which could destroy up to 50% of the leader's winnings, but could not change the leader's status or deprive him of the prerogative of allocating the group winnings in the future. The coalition was an outcome-blockage tactic (Michener & Suchner, 1972); thus, money destroyed by the coalition was not transferred to the subordinates.[4]

In the cooptation condition, the instructions presented an additional prerogative of the leader—the discretion to promote either subordinate to the position of advisor. Appointment of an advisor transferred part of the leader's control over the group winnings to the advisor, by giving the promoted person an additional portion of the group's earnings which he could distribute among group members. The advisor position provided one subordinate access to

[4] Strikes, work slowdowns, and "sick-ins" exemplify the use of blockage coalitions in natural settings, because such alliances typically block the outcomes of authorities without assuring subordinates a redistribution of relevant resources. The effect of such coalitions on subordinates' outcomes depends on how authorities respond to the tactic, and this response may involve making concessions to insurgents, retaliating against them, or simply ignoring them. The blockage coalitions in this experiment are generally isomorphic with such "natural setting" alliances.

greater personal rewards as well as greater influence over reward allocations. (This section of the instructions was deleted in the control condition.)[5]

Trial Sequence

The experiment consisted of one trial, but subjects believed there were four. Telling subjects there were more trials was important because it encouraged them to consider the long-term consequences of coalitional action including the prospect of leader retaliation. The experimenter remained unaware of the treatment until just before the trial and, throughout the experiment, communication to the subjects followed a standard script.

The trial began with subjects judging five black and white cards, while in separate rooms. Next, the experimenter collected these individual judgments and ostensibly combined them into a group score allocating influence proportional to the status weights (i.e., task ability).

Four minutes later, the experimenter announced (over the intercom) that the group achieved a high level of success (i.e., $1.65 out of a possible $1.85). At this point, the experimenter told the leader (over the intercom so subjects could hear) to complete the "money distribution form." After waiting a few minutes, the experimenter then gave this prefabricated

[5] The control group, therefore, did not provide a promotion capability to the leader. This is appropriate for a number of reasons. First, the control group is virtually identical to the inequity condition in the Lawler (1975a) study and thereby provides a direct link with that study. Second, another experiment on cooptation shows that the rate of coalition formation in a control group with the promotion capability is nearly the same as in the present study's control group (Lawler & Thompson, 1976). Third, in any case, the clearest baseline for the present study is a condition without the promotion capability, because coalition formation in the control group should be clearly attributable to the inequity. If the control condition provided a promotion capability, coalition formation in this condition might be partly attributable to the mere fact that the leader failed to use the promotion capability.

form to subordinates. Across all conditions, the leader expropriated 60% of the winnings, compared with 40% legitimized by his status weight, and gave each subordinate 10% less than legitimized by their status.

The "money distribution form" also contained the cooptation manipulation. In the cooptation condition, the following message (written in longhand) was at the bottom of the money distribution form: "I'll pick [target] if you don't form a coalition." Both subordinates received the message and understood that any offer on this form was not binding and could be withdrawn. The leader allegedly made the final decision on whether to appoint an advisor at the end of the trial. If the leader promoted someone, he would have to give the advisor between 35^ and 554 of the next trial's winnings which that person could distribute on the next (nonexistent) trial. An advisor appointment did not take effect until the next trial, so the target could not alter the trial one distribution of winnings via the advisor position.

Questionnaire and interaction data. After subjects digested the information on the money distribution form, they completed the mid-questionnaire which contained items on a variety of topics and included measures of expected gain from the coalition and from the prospective promotion. Upon completion of this questionnaire, subordinates could discuss the progress of the group and negotiate a coalition agreement. Unbeknownst to subjects, the discussions were taped. The length of the discussion was recorded, and two persons who were unaware of the hypothesis coded the proposals made by each subordinate with high intercoder reliability (i.e., coders' data correlated from .95 to 1.0).

Coalition formation. To establish a coalition, subjects had to sign a "coalition form" and specify the percent reduction in the leader's winnings. The frequency of coalition formation is

the major dependent variable. After the discussion period, subjects were debriefed and paid $2.00.

Results

The modified 2-test for proportions, suggested by Langer and Abelson (1972), is used to analyze the binary formation data. This procedure essentially involves a Z-test on the arcsine-transformed proportions. As predicted, the cooptation strategy forestalls insurgent coalitions. In the control condition, 80% of the groups formed coalitions; while only 20% formed in the cooptation condition, $Z = 4.07, p < .001$, two-tailed.

Expectations of Gain

Questionnaire data support the notion that cooptation weakened the common interests of subordinates. A questionnaire item asked subjects how much they would personally expect to gain or lose from a coalition (response scale: 1 to 9). As predicted, the cooptive strategy reduced the target's expected gain from a coalition, $F(1,39) = 6.15, p < .025$ ($Ms = 6.1$ vs. 4.6) but not the nontarget's, $F < 1$ ($Ms = 6.4$ vs. 6.1).

In the cooptation condition, an additional question asked subjects to estimate their personal gain from the leader's promotion offer, and this allows a comparison of *expected gain from coalition* vs. *expected gain from promotion* for each subordinate. These results indicate that the target expected more gain from the promotion ($M = 6.2$) than from a coalition ($M = 4.6$), $t = 2.69, p < .02$, two-tailed; in contrast, the nontarget expected more gain from a coalition ($M = 6.1$) than from the target's promotion ($M = 4.2$), $t = 3.64, p < .01$, two-

tailed. Thus, in the cooptation condition, the target viewed the coalition as contrary to his own interests, while the nontarget saw the coalition option as more favorable to his interests.

Interaction Data

Data from the subordinate discussions provide information on the decisionmaking processes preventing (or leading to) coalitions. Consistent with the interest-weakening interpretation, (a) it took longer for subordinates to reach agreement in the cooptation condition than in the control condition, $t = 2.20, p < .05$, two-tailed ($Ms = 2{:}17$ minutes vs. $1{:}29$ minutes); and, (b) within the cooptation condition, the target played the major role in preventing coalitions.

The role of the target is shown by data on the first proposal (anti- vs. pro-coalition) in the discussions within the cooptation condition. When the target made the first proposal, it was always anti-coalition, while it was more likely to be pro-coalition if made by the nontarget, Fischer's exact $p < .025$. The decision-making pattern in two-thirds of the cases where coalitions did *not* form was that the target made an initial anti-coalition proposal, and the nontarget acquiesced usually after some resistance (i.e., questioning the proposal or overt disagreement). In contrast, the decision-making pattern in all four cases of coalition formation was that the nontarget made an initial pro-coalition proposal, and the target acquiesced after some resistance. In sum, it was primarily the target who was responsible for preventing coalitions in the cooptation condition.

Discussion

The first experiment demonstrates that the cooptation strategy prevents subordinate revolts under circumstances (i.e., inequity) that normally produce such action (Lawler, 1975a; Ross, Thibaut, & Evenbeck, 1971). Questionnaire and interaction data tend to support an interest-weakening interpretation and suggest that the response of the target was the major basis for cooptation success. In contrast to the nontarget, the target expected more personal gain from the promotion than from a revolt. Furthermore, the target generally prevented the coalition by making anti-coalition proposals and persuading the nontarget to accept his view. The target's influence might be attributed to the fact that the promotion offer gave him, but not the nontarget, an alternative outcome source. Research shows that outcome alternatives are a source of power and influence (e.g., Bacharach & Lawler, 1976; Burgess & Nielson, 1974).

Experiment II

The second experiment focuses on the reaction of the target and investigates further issues raised by the first experiment. The first issue concerns the *perquisites* attached to the advisor position. In Experiment I, the promotion provided monetary outcomes to the target as well as a structural opportunity for the target to share these outcomes with the nontarget. These perquisites raise two specific questions: (1) Will the cooptation strategy still be effective if the promotion does not entail an increase in outcomes? This is important because it is conceivable that the symbolic (i.e., token) aspects of the promotion are sufficient to induce the target to

oppose an insurgent coalition. (2) If there is no structural opportunity for the target to share the advisor outcomes with the nontarget, will the cooptation strategy be less effective? This is important because the target's receptivity to the cooptation offer may be lodged in the fact that the promotion provides an opportunity to allocate outcomes to both himself and the nontarget.

To investigate these questions, three *advisor-perquisite* conditions are included in the second experiment: a no-gain *control* group where the advisor position is only symbolic; a *share* condition where the advisor position provides an opportunity for the target to share the outcomes with the nontarget as in Experiment I; and, a *bonus* condition where the advisor outcomes cannot be shared by the target. If the symbolic aspects of a promotion are insufficient to engender cooptation success, then the target should make more coalition proposals in the control than in the combined bonus and share conditions. If the opportunity to share outcomes is important for cooptation success, then the target should make fewer coalition proposals in the share than in the bonus condition.

The second issue addressed by Experiment II is whether the reciprocity norm facilitates cooptation success. The target of cooptation may see the promotion offer as a conciliatory gesture and feel some obligation to reciprocate by not forming a coalition. This is plausible given that research in other settings documents the tendency of persons to reciprocate concessions, particularly when the recipient (target) of a concession is in an inferior power position (Komorita & Esser, 1975; Michener, Vaske, Schlenker, Plazewski, & Chapman, 1975).

Based on bargaining research, the cooptation condition of the first experiment contains two elements which may heighten reciprocity: (1) The promotion offer was allegedly a result of the leader's own volition. Research shows that reciprocity is more likely to occur when the conciliatory behavior (offer) of another reflects that person's own volition (Nemeth, 1972). (2)

The cooptive offer made the promotion contingent on the target's opposition to a revolt. Gouldner (1960) suggests that contingent benefits or exchanges increase the salience of the reciprocity norm, and this notion is supported by prisoner's-dilemma research indicating that contingent cooperation induces more cooperation from another than noncontingent cooperation (e.g., Solomon, 1960). Thus, the leader in the first experiment had discretion to determine whether an advisor is appointed and to make the promotion contingent on the target's compliance.

To examine this, the second experiment will include a *discretion* condition identical to the cooptation condition in the first experiment, and a *no-discretion* condition in which the experiment (a) requires an advisor appointment and (b) does not allow the leader to make the promotion contingent on the target's compliance. This admittedly gross comparison should provide the strongest possible indication of reciprocity, given prior theory and research (Gouldner, 1960; Nemeth, 1972). If the reciprocity norm enhances cooptation success, then the target should propose fewer coalitions in the discretion than in the no-discretion condition.

Method

A 3 X 2 factorial design manipulated *advisor perquisites* (no-gain, bonus, share) and *leader discretion* (no-distretion, discretion). Ninety undergraduate subjects, half males and half females, were randomly assigned to experimental conditions. Subjects were run in same-sex groups of three.

Procedures

A few changes were made in the procedures. First, the experiment was extended to two trials, keeping both trials identical to the first experiment. On Trial 1, the leader set the pay rates for both Trials 1 and 2 and made the cooptive offer, but the target could not assume the advisor position until the third trial. Second, all subjects were assigned to the target role and could ostensibly communicate with the nontarget via written messages during the discussion period on each trial. The target was allowed (allegedly by chance) to send the first message on both trials. The message forms were standardized, such that the target could propose *to form* or *not form* a coalition for that trial. The mythical nontarget's reply to these messages was always agreement. The dependent variable is the frequency of formation proposals by the target summed over the two trials (range: 0 to 2).

Manipulations

Advisor perquisites. The instructions attached different perquisites to the advisor position (i.e., the leader did not decide what perquisites were provided by the promotion). In the control condition, an advisor could make suggestions to the leader but received no gain; in the bonus condition the advisor also got a 504 bonus added to his personal winnings (i.e., could not be shared); while in the share condition, the advisor would get 504 which could, at his option, be shared with other group members.

Leader's discretion. The no-discretion condition *required* the leader to promote one of the subordinates with the choice of who to promote being based on chance. The discretion

condition gave the leader complete discretion regarding the appointment of an advisor as in Experiment I.[6]

Insert Table 1 Here

Results

Table 1 contains the mean number of formation proposals made by the target. The results reveal a main effect for advisor perquisites, $F(2,84) == 3.96, p < .023$, and leader discretion, $F(1,84) = 11.10, p < .001$. Regarding advisor perquisites, orthogonal (-tests further show that the rate of coalition proposals is significantly lower in the combined bonus and share conditions than in the control (no-gain) condition, $t = 2.49, p < .01$, two-tailed; while the bonus and share conditions do not significantly differ, $f < 1$. These results indicate that (a) the symbolic aspects of the promotion are not sufficient for cooptation success, and (b) the cooptation strategy is equally effective regardless of whether the target has the option of sharing his gain as advisor with the nontarget subordinate.

[6] The leader-discretion manipulation is concerned with the leader's choice *in making an offer*, however, it is conceivable that the probability of the target actually being promoted (i.e., leader following through on the offer) could contaminate the discretion vs. no-discretion comparison. In the no-discretion condition, there was a 100% probability that the target would be promoted; while the chance of being promoted (given an offer) in the first experiment may be somewhat less than 100% because the leader was not bound by the offer and could withdraw it. To assure that this did not create an artifact, two variants of the discretion condition were included-one in which the contigent offer was binding on the leader (meaning that the leader had to follow through if the target complied) and one where the contingent offer was not binding. In both discretion conditions, the leader had complete discretion regarding whether to make an offer. These two discretion conditions are combined in the analysis because they do not produce any differences and the artifact is therefore not a problem.

The main effect for leader discretion supports the reciprocity hypothesis. The rate of coalition proposals is lower when the prospective promotion is a result of the leader's own volition (discretion) than when the promotion can be attributed to situational constraints.

The interaction between advisor perquisites and leader discretion does not reach statistical significance ($F = 1.69, ns$), although Table 1 suggests that the effect of advisor perquisites is strongest in the discretion condition. An analysis by sex reveals no sex main effects or interactions by sex (all $Fs < 1$).

Discussion

The effect of advisor perquisites has two major implications. First, the cooptation strategy is more effective if it provides the target a source of individual gain. Symbolic (no-gain) aspects of the promotion inhibit insurgent action less than the prospective outcomes (bonus and share) provided by the promotion offer. Second, a structural opportunity for sharing the outcomes with fellow subordinates is not essential to coopt the target. If this opportunity for sharing outcomes was important, then the target should have opposed a coalition more often in the share than in the bonus condition. The results not only show no difference between the bonus and share conditions but also reveal a pattern opposite to that suggested by this notion. Overall, it appears that the opportunity for sharing outcomes is irrelevant and that the important determinant of cooptation success is the prospective gain provided the target. With or without the opportunity to share the advisor outcomes, the target is likely to oppose an insurgent coalition if the leader offers a promotion that provides a source of meaningful gain. Future research should examine the effects of different levels of gain on cooptation success.

The effect of the leader discretion supports the hypothesis derived from the reciprocity notion. Prior literature suggests that reciprocity is most likely when offers propose a contingent exchange of benefits and flow from the person's own volition (e.g., Gouldner, 1960; Nemeth, 1972). The present study used this notion to determine whether a cooptation strategy is more effective under these circumstances that ostensibly increase reciprocity. In accord with the hypothesis, a cooptive offer is more effective when it reflects the leader's choice rather than situational constraints.

However, while the effect of discretion vs. no-discretion suggests that reciprocity enhances cooptation success, this manipulation does not provide information on the relative ability of various components of the leader's discretion to enhance cooptation success. It appears that reciprocity is operating, but we can't determine precisely what produces it. The reason is that the reciprocity effect could be due to (a) leader's discretion to appoint or not appoint an advisor, (b) leader's discretion to decide which subordinate is promoted, and/or (c) leader's discretion regarding the nature of the message. Based on prior research, these components were combined to provide the strongest indication of whether reciprocity may facilitate cooptation success. The relative contribution of these separate components of leader discretion should be considered in future research.

Experiment III

Another issue suggested by the first experiment is whether the strength of the leader's commitment affects cooptation success. The cooptation message in Experiment I conveyed a relatively strong commitment to actually promote the target (i.e., "I'll appoint target, if..."); and this experiment will test the hypothesis that messages which convey a strong (deterministic) commitment will be more likely to reduce the target's coalition proposals than messages which convey a weaker (probabilistic) commitment (e.g., Schelling, 1960; Tedeschi, 1970).

Method

Thirty-six male subjects were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (12/cell): strong commitment ("If you don't form a coalition, I'll *definitely* appoint. . ."); weak commitment ("If you don't form a coalition, I *might* appoint. . ."); or a control group (identical to the control group in the first experiment). All subjects were placed in the target role, and the procedures were the same as the second experiment except that this was a one-trial experiment.

Results and Discussion

The results replicate and extend the first experiment. Ninety-two percent of the control subjects proposed a revolt, while 75% of targets receiving the weak (probabilistic) message and 42% of the targets receiving the strong (deterministic) message proposed a revolt. A comparison of each commitment condition with the control group, using the Langer and Abelson (1972)

modified Z-test (for binary dependent variables), shows that the strong commitment significantly reduced coalition behavior, $Z = 2.84, p < .01$, two-tailed, but the weak commitment did not, $Z < 1$. A direct comparison of the strong and weak messages reveals a marginally significant tendency for strong messages to produce less coalition behavior than weak messages, $Z = 1.68, p < .10$, two-tailed.

Overall, the third experiment shows that the cooptation strategy is effective primarily when the leader conveys a strong commitment to follow through on the offer. The finding are consistent with theoretical treatments of probabilistic vs. deterministic messages and suggest that the likelihood of actually receiving the promotion affects the target's response to the strategy (Schelling, 1960; Tedeschi, 1970).

Conclusion

Theory and research on subordinate revolts has identified various structural conditions that engender insurgent behavior (e.g., Dahrendorf, 1959; Hamblin, 1958; Lawler, 1975a, 1975b; Ross et al., 1971). The initial hypothesis of the present research was that a cooptation strategy (involving a promotion offer) would forestall revolts. The research supports this hypothesis and suggests that the cooptation strategy is most effective under the following conditions: (1) if the perquisites associated with the promotion provide the target a source of personal gain (with or without the opportunity to share the outcomes with a fellow subordinate); (2) if the offer conveys a strong leader commitment to follow through on the promotion; (3) if the promotion reflects the choice or discretion of the leader rather than situational constraints. Thus, a leader who wants to prevent a revolt via a promotion strategy can maximize success by offering a position which has

more than symbolic import, communicating a strong commitment to the promotion, and emphasizing or exaggerating his personal responsibility for the promotion.

The implications of the research can be further elaborated by placing the findings within a larger theoretical context. Two theoretical constructs appear to be important: subjective-expected-utility (SEU) and reciprocity. The impact of advisor perquisites and the leader's commitment can be interpreted within the SEU framework. The SEU model posits that any choice is a function of the magnitude of gain, weighted by the probability, attached to the choice (Tedeschi, Schlenker, & Bonoma, 1973). Applied to the present research, the likelihood of the target opposing the insurgent coalition should depend on the magnitude X the probability of gain from the promotion minus the magnitude X the probability of gain from the coalition. While the present research did not explicitly manipulate these variables, the findings demonstrate that targets attributed more gain to the promotion than to the coalition (Experiment 1), and suggest that the magnitude of gain from the promotion (advisor perquisites) as well as the probability (leader commitment) of receiving the promotion affect cooptation success in a manner consistent with the SEU model. Future research should extend the implications of SEU by manipulating the nature of the coalition option. The SEU model suggests that different types or levels of coalition power will also bear on cooptation success.

The impact of leader discretion regarding promotion can be interpreted by reciprocity "theory." As a theory, reciprocity is relatively undeveloped, but extant treatments of it suggest that reciprocity would be more likely in circumstances encompassed by the leader-discretion condition (Gouldner, 1960; Nemeth, 1972). In this sense, reciprocity provides a plausible interpretation for lower coalition proposals under leader discretion. The results support the

notion that the reciprocation of conciliatory behavior is more likely when the other's behavior or offer is contingent and freely undertaken (Gouldner, 1960; Nemeth, 1972).

To conclude, this research experimentally tested the impact of a cooptation strategy on insurgent behavior and identified some conditions under which the strategy varies in effectiveness. Based on the research, it appears that two separate theoretical constructs provide a useful foundation for future research: subjective-expected-utility and reciprocity. Research should further examine the implications of these theoretical constructs for cooptation success and consider the interrelationship between them. Reciprocity can have either (or both) normative and utilitarian implications, and future research should ferret out these disparate implications.

Table 1

TABLE 1

MEAN COALITION PROPOSALS (SUMMED OVER TWO TRIALS) BY EXPERIMENTAL CONDITION

Leader's discretion	Advisor perquisites			
	Control	Bonus	Share	
No-discretion	1.30	1.10	1.50	1.30
Discretion	1.15	.35	.55	.68
	1.20	.60	.87	

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