On the Eve of War: Authoritarianism, Social Dominance, and American Students' Attitudes Toward Attacking Iraq

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In the week before the 2003 American attack on Iraq, the effects of authoritarianism and the social dominance orientation on support for the attack were examined. Based on prior research on the nature of these constructs, a structural model was developed and tested. As predicted, authoritarianism strengthened support for the attack by intensifying the perception that Iraq threatened America. Social dominance increased support by reducing concern for the likely human costs of the war. Both also increased blind patriotism, which in turn reduced concern for the war's human costs and was reciprocally related to the belief that Iraq threatened America.

Keywords: authoritarianism; social dominance; patriotism; war; threat

Authoritarianism and the social dominance orientation have both been shown to strengthen support for America's wars, and both seemed likely to do so as the United States prepared to attack Iraq. These two constructs have been labeled the *lethal union* (Altemeyer, 1998) because of their combined effects on an array of ethnocentric and militant attitudes. But these constructs are quite different, so the means by which they strengthen support for war seem likely to differ as well. The impending attack on Iraq provided an opportunity, albeit a tragic one, to develop and test a model of how they might bolster war support. The construction of this model was guided by recent research and theory on the two constructs.

Authoritarianism and War Support

Altemeyer (1988) defined authoritarianism as the confluence of

> a high degree of submission to authorities who are perceived as established and legitimate . . . a general aggressiveness . . . that is perceived to be sanctioned by estab-

lished authorities . . . [and] a high degree of adherence to the social conventions that are perceived to be endorsed by society and its established authorities. (p. 2)[1]

All three components would suggest that authoritarianism will strengthen support for a war that is called for by the American president and has broad popular support.

Previous studies have shown that authoritarianism enhances support for America's wars. Izzett (1971) found that authoritarianism, measured with the unidirectional Fascism Scale (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), correlated positively with attitudinal support for the Vietnam War and negatively with participation in a moratorium protesting the war. Studies using Altemeyer's (1988) balanced Right Wing Authoritarianism Scale (RWA) found similar results: Doty, Winter, Peterson, and Kemmelmeier (1997) found that authoritarianism strongly predicted support for the 1990 Gulf War both prior to and after that war. Duncan and Stewart (1995) showed that authoritarianism predicted pro-Gulf War attitudes and activism and that low authoritarianism predicted antiwar attitudes and activism. Authoritarianism also predicts war support in other countries: As the Soviet Union was disintegrating in 1991, authoritarianism in Russia predicted support for military suppression of the Baltic States (McFarland,

Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap, 1992). In Germany, authoritarianism increased students' support for NATO's military intervention in Yugoslavia (Cohrs & Moschner, 2002).

Nevertheless, the reasons authoritarianism engenders war support are not clear. Winter (1996) suggested that the core feature of authoritarianism is a heightened sense of threat. Similarly, in Duckitt's (2001) dual-process model of the origins and effects of authoritarianism and social dominance, harsh and punitive child-rearing engenders a heightened sense that the world is threatening and social conformity to escape threat, and these in turn induce authoritarianism. Once developed, authoritarianism leaves the individual with a heightened sense that the world is dangerous and threatening. Altemeyer (1988, 1998) found repeatedly that authoritarianism correlates about .50 with perceptions of the world as dangerous and threatening. In experimental work, Lavine et al. (1999) showed that high authoritarians are particularly receptive to persuasive messages that emphasize threat. High authoritarians rated threat-based messages (e.g., "Voting provides a way for you to prevent basic American values from being undermined") as higher in quality than messages emphasizing rewards (e.g., "Voting enables one to play an active role in the direction taken by your government") and were more persuaded by them. For low authoritarians, the messages emphasizing reward were rated higher in quality and were the more persuasive. These findings suggest that individuals high in authoritarianism should be particularly persuaded by arguments that Saddam Hussein threatened America (by possessing weapons of mass destruction and by aiding al Qaeda terrorists, the U.S. administration's two main arguments for going to war). Believing in this threat in turn should increase their support for the attack.

However, the magnitude of the authoritarianism-threat correlations does not appear to justify viewing a heightened sense of threat as the sole motive behind authoritarianism or indicate that the effects of authoritarianism will be fully mediated by this sense of threat. Other mechanisms seem likely as well.

From its first formulations, the authoritarian personality has been associated with a patriotism that is blindly unwilling to criticize one's country. For Adorno et al. (1950), this kind of patriotism was described as "blind attachment to certain national cultural values, uncritical conformity with the prevailing group ways, and rejection of other nations as outgroups. It might be better termed "*pseudopatriotism*" (p. 107). In an analysis that preceded his dual-process theory, Duckitt (1989) interpreted authoritarianism as a normative belief about the proper relationship between the individual and the ingroup. An authoritarian individual, unlike a nonauthoritarian, be-

lieves in the paramount importance of maintaining in-group cohesion, even if doing so requires suppressing dissent and debate. The authoritarian's concern is for anything that might fracture the solidarity of the in-group. Blind patriotism appears to be a natural expression of this authoritarian concern. A popular bumper sticker after the attack gave expression to this concern by presenting an American flag with the phrase "Together We Stand." Schatz, Staub, and Lavine (1999) defined *blind* patriotism as "an attachment to country characterized by unquestioning positive evaluation, staunch allegiance, and intolerance of criticism" (p. 151). Schatz et al. found that authoritarianism correlated .54 with blind patriotism. In short, both authoritarian theory and prior research suggested that blind patriotism would also partially mediate the relationship between authoritarianism and support for attacking Iraq.

Blind patriotism is almost certainly interconnected with a sense of threat. Blind patriotism likely rises when the group is under threat. Oppositely, well-developed blind patriotism may intensify the tendency to view the outside world as threatening. Schatz et al. (1999) found that blind patriotism correlated .52 with a heightened sense of "national vulnerability . . . manifested in heightened distrust of foreign nations and exaggerated vigilance and preparedness" (p. 155) but did not specify causal direction. My own logic suggested that they are mutually reinforcing, so I hypothesized bidirectional causal paths between seeing Iraq as a threat and blind patriotism.

Social Dominance Orientation and War Support

Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle (1994) defined the social dominance orientation as "the extent that one desires that one's in-group dominate and be superior to out-groups" (p. 742). This orientation is manifested in a preference for social policies that are "hierarchy-enhancing" rather than "hierarchy-attenuating" (p. 742) and in attitudes favoring national dominance. Consistent with this formulation, Pratto et al. found that their Social Dominance Orientation Scale (SDO) strengthened support in general for wars that promote national interest and dominance but weakened support for wars promoting humanitarian ends such as protecting human rights. Because it was seen as a war of national self-interest, social dominance correlated .48 with support for the 1991 Gulf War. By contrast, McFarland and Mathews (in press) found that social dominance reduced Americans' willingness to use American forces around the world to end genocide or other human rights abuses.

In Duckitt's (2001) dual-process model, the social dominance orientation arises from absence of childhood affection, which creates a lack of empathy, cold-

heartedness, and striving for superiority. Social dominance then is associated with callousness toward others' suffering and a desire for superiority rather than with feelings of threat. Studies have consistently shown that social dominance is negatively associated with dispositional empathy (e.g., Pratto et al., 1994). For that reason, social dominance should intensify support for attacking Iraq in large part by reducing concern for the suffering that the war might cause, the innocent lives that it might end—particularly so because most of this suffering seemed certain to be borne by non-Americans.

Individuals high in social dominance seek the superiority of their ethnic and national ingroups (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). They identify strongly with dominant ingroups, which makes socially dominant Americans particularly likely to identify with the powerful United States. Thus, it is not surprising that an association between social dominance and blind patriotism is well documented. Pratto et al. (1994) found that social dominance correlated .50 with Kosterman and Feshbach's (1989) measure of nationalism, a measure very similar to blind patriotism (Schatz et al., 1999). Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, and Birum (2002) found that both authoritarianism and social dominance correlated with this measure of nationalism, and Altemeyer (1998) found that both correlated with McFarland and Adelson's (1996) measure of blind patriotism. But the reasons authoritarianism and social dominance lead to blind patriotism probably differ: The blind patriotism of authoritarians appears rooted in a sense of threat and a concern for ingroup unity, whereas that of socially dominant individuals is simply a bald expression of desire for ingroup dominance and superiority. Despite these differences, the effects of social dominance on support for the attack were also expected to be mediated through blind patriotism.

A structural model of the effects of authoritarianism and social dominance on support for attacking Iraq. Taken together, these considerations suggest the structural model presented in Figure 1. Because authoritarianism and social dominance are relatively stable dispositions that preexisted before the attack on Iraq was planned and the interest here was in how they might influence attitudes toward the war, they were posited as the exogenous variables. Authoritarianism was predicted to indirectly strengthen support for the attack by intensifying the perception that Iraq posed a threat. Social dominance was expected to indirectly bolster support for the attack by reducing concern for the war's human costs. Both were predicted to intensify support for the attack on Iraq through increasing blind patriotism. Blind patriotism and the perception of threat from Iraq were expected to strengthen each other. Finally, because blind
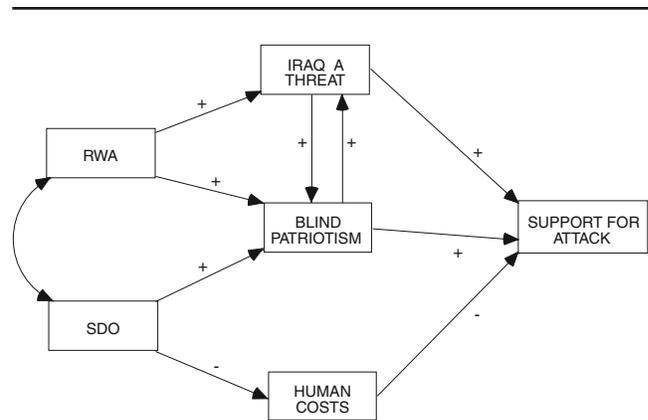

Figure 1   Hypothesized model of support for attacking Iraq.
NOTE: RWA = right wing authoritarianism; SDO = social dominance orientation.

patriotism is believed to induce "unquestioning . . . [and] staunch support for its [the nation's] actions" (Schatz et al., 1999, p. 156), it was predicted to directly lead to support for the attack.

The White House announced on March 17 that President Bush would address the nation that evening. In that speech, President Bush gave Saddam Hussein 48 hours to leave Iraq, warning that otherwise Iraq would be attacked. Having already anticipated an attack, I had collected a large sample to test the model in the 3 preceding days. However, I continued sampling for two reasons. The first was to assess the effects, if any, of the president's speech on students' attitudes toward a war with Iraq. Second, a second sample would provide an opportunity to replicate the structural model and to see if the president's speech affected the structural relations among the variables used in the model. No such structural changes were envisioned.

METHOD

Participants and Sampling

In the week immediately preceding the attack on Iraq, two samples of American students at Western Kentucky University completed a questionnaire that assessed their perceptions of Iraq as a threat to America, their worries about the human costs of the war, and their support for that attack. Sample 1 ($n = 371$; 238 women and 128 men, with 5 not specifying gender) was taken March 14 to March 17. Sample 2 ($n = 96$; 54 women and 42 men) was collected March 18 and 19, after the president's speech but before the attack. Approximately 70% of each sample were freshmen and sophomores. A larger second sample was desired, but the March 20 attack

TABLE 1:   Means, Standard Deviations, and Internal Consistencies (Alphas) for Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), Blind Patriotism, Perceptions of Iraq as a Threat, Concern About Human Costs, and Support for Attacking Iraq

| | Sample 1 | | | Sample 2 | | |
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Alpha
RWA (10/50)	28.76	6.79	.79	28.11	6.82	.78
SDO (10/50)	22.32	7.17	.86	22.19	7.96	.87
Blind patriotism (10/50)	32.18	5.87	.75	31.84	5.84	.77
Iraq a threat (4/20)	14.06	3.05	.77	14.27	3.36	.80
Human costs (2/10)	4.80	1.80	.45	7.35	1.73	.34
Support for attack (4/20)	11.66	4.11	.87	11.67	4.65	.88

NOTE: Numbers in parentheses represent the lowest and highest possible scores on each measure. Sample 1 was collected March 13 to 17, prior to President Bush's speech; Sample 2 was collected March 18 and 19, between the president's speech and the initiation of the attack on Iraq.

meant that students' support for attacking Iraq before the attack was launched could no longer be measured; the item wordings assumed that an attack had not yet occurred. All students received the measures during scheduled psychology classes.

Measures

Because of limited time for in-class administration, abbreviated 10-item versions of Altemeyer's (1996) RWA and Sidanius and Pratto's (1999) SDO were used. Each measure consisted of the 5 protrait and 5 contrait items that loaded most strongly on the total scales on earlier samples; these reduced scales correlated above .90 with the full scales on samples that I had taken for unpublished earlier studies. McFarland and Adelson's (1996) balanced 10-item measure of blind patriotism was used to assess this construct. These items had been drawn from Thurstone's (1932) two 20-item patriotism scales, selected on the basis of the face validity of the items to assess blind or pseudopatriotism (e.g., "I'm for my country, right or wrong"). These items appear virtually identical in content to Schatz et al.'s (1999) later Blind Patriotism Scale. Single items assessed gender and class in school. The RWA, SDO, and blind patriotism measures preceded the measure of attitudes toward Iraq.

Perception of Iraq as a threat was assessed by four questions, two regarding the threat posed by Saddam's weapons of mass destruction and two regarding his aiding of al Qaeda in attacking America. One question in each of these domains was positively worded (e.g., "It is clear that Saddam Hussein is a threat to America with weapons of mass destruction, etc."), and one was negatively worded (e.g., "There is no proof that Saddam Hussein aided Al Qaeda in attacking America"). Concern about the human costs of the war was measured by a positively worded statement ("I fear very much that a war with Iraq will kill thousands of innocent people") and a negatively worded statement ("Innocent lives are lost in

any war, but that is a necessary cost of getting rid of Saddam Hussein").[2] Support for attacking Iraq was measured by four items, two positively worded (e.g., "President Bush is right in planning to start the war against Saddam Hussein *very soon!*") and two negatively worded (e.g., "President Bush is rushing the U.S. into war with Iraq much too fast"). For all items, 5-point response scales ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* were used.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and alphas for the six variables in the model for both samples. *T* tests indicated that the two samples differed only in their concern about the human costs of the war, with the second sample expressing significantly greater concern than did the first, $t = 12.7$, $p < .001$. It would appear that the president's speech, which made clear that an attack was imminent, intensified concern that the war might cost many innocent lives. The two samples did not differ in the degree to which they viewed Iraq as a threat or in their support for an attack, so the president's speech did not appear to affect these attitudes, $t < 1.0$ in both cases. The samples also did not differ in their authoritarianism, social dominance, or blind patriotism, $t < 1.0$ in all cases. Overall, about 70% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that Saddam Hussein threatened America, whereas about 20% disagreed or strongly disagreed. With regard to attacking Iraq however, the participants were almost equally divided in thirds: those who supported an immediate attack, those who believed the attack was being rushed, and those who were undecided.

Table 2 provides the zero-order correlations among the six measures. As can be seen, both authoritarianism and the social dominance orientation correlated significantly with a perception of Iraq as a threat, diminished

TABLE 2:   Correlations of Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), Blind Patriotism, Perceptions of Iraq as a Threat, Concern About Human Costs, and Support for Attacking Iraq in the Days Immediately Preceding the Attack on March 20, 2003

	RWA	*SDO*	*Patriot*	*Threat*	*Costs*	*Attack*
RWA	—	.39	.47	.38	–.31	.46
SDO	.36	—	.42	.27	–.43	.37
Blind patriotism	.47	.47	—	.60	–.46	.61
Iraq a threat	.39	.17	.53	—	–.29	.58
Human costs	–.28	–.54	–.52	–.31	—	–.58
Support attack	.31	.34	.44	.53	–.66	—

NOTE: Correlations above the diagonal are from Sample 1 (collected March 13 to 17); those below the diagonal represent Sample 2 (collected March 18 and 19). With the exception of the nonsignificant correlation between SDO and Iraq a threat in Sample 2, all correlations in both matrices are significant at $p < .01$ or higher.

concern about the human costs of the war, and support for attacking Iraq. However, for both samples the strongest correlates of support for attacking Iraq were blind patriotism, perception of Iraq as a threat, and a lack of concern for the human costs of the war.

To allow latent variable tests of the model, the items measuring each construct were divided into balanced halves. The two indicators for Iraq as a threat and support for the attack thus each consisted of two items, whereas the two for concern for human costs consisted of one item each. Figure 2 presents the test of the model on Sample 1. For ease of viewing, error terms associated with each indicator and each latent variable are not displayed. All paths were significant, $p < .01$, except that from blind patriotism to support for the attack. As predicted, authoritarianism enhanced support for attacking Iraq by strengthening the belief that Iraq posed a threat and by engendering blind patriotism. Social dominance increased support for attacking Iraq through both limiting concern about the human costs of the war and increasing blind patriotism. Blind patriotism had bidirectional causal effects with viewing Iraq as a threat.

Nevertheless, the goodness-of-fit indices for the model (presented with Figure 2) were poor, indicating either that the model was poorly designed or that the specified paths created an incomplete model. Exploratory paths of SDO on perception of Iraq as a threat and of RWA on concern for the human costs of the war did not approach significance. Had either of these paths proved significant, the modeled hypotheses about the unique ways that authoritarianism and social dominance would influence attitudes toward the attack would have been contradicted. Also, direct paths from RWA and SDO to support for attacking Iraq were not significant; the impacts of authoritarianism and social dominance on support for the attack were fully mediated through
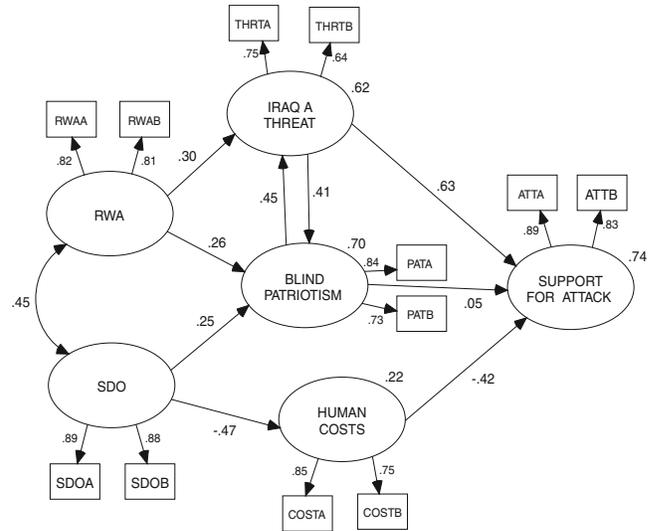

Figure 2   Test of the model of support for attacking Iraq, Sample 1.
NOTE: At bottom of Figure 2: chi-square(44, *N* = 371) = 124.99, $p < .001$; Comparative Fit Index = .94; root mean square error of approximation = .088. Standardized regression weights are presented as path coefficients, and squared multiple correlations are presented for the endogenous and dependent variables at the upper right of each variable. All paths were significant, $p < .01$, except for the nonsignificant path from BLIND PATRIOTISM to SUPPORT FOR ATTACK. RWA = right wing authoritarianism; SDO = social dominance orientation.

their effects on blind patriotism, seeing Iraq as a threat, and lack of concern for the human costs of the war.

In retrospect, because the human costs seemed destined to be borne primarily by non-Americans, blind patriotism might well reduce concern for these costs. Figure 3 presents the test of the model with this added path. Goodness-of-fit tests indicate that the data fit this revised model well. This added effect was not considered until the initial model was found incomplete.[3] Although the wisdom of post hoc model modification has been widely discussed (e.g., Byrne, 2001), such analyses are deemed appropriate as long as their tentativeness is recognized and the revised model is replicated.

Figure 4 displays the test of this revised model on Sample 2. The goodness-of-fit indices all show that the Sample 2 data fit the revised model well. Only the path from blind patriotism to seeing Iraq as a threat was nonsignificant. Of particular import, the added path from blind patriotism to human costs was again significant, indicating that its addition to the model was appropriate. As with Sample 1, added direct paths from social dominance to perceived threat and from authoritarianism to concern for the human costs of the war did not approach significance (both were exactly .00). The hypotheses about the unique ways that authoritarianism and social dominance would influence support for the
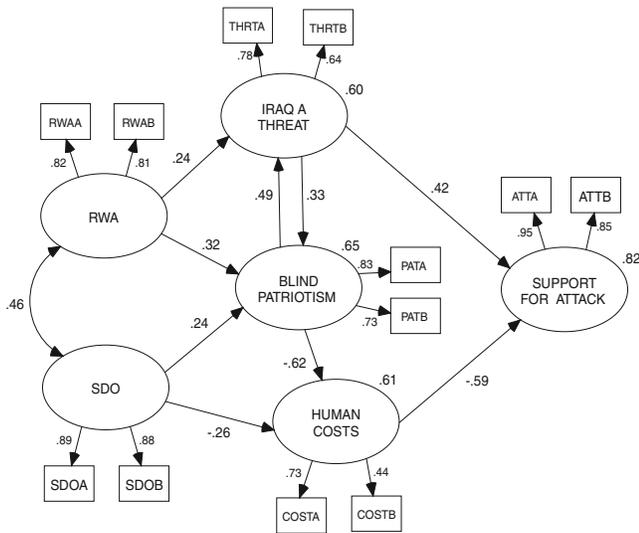
Figure 3   Modified model of support for attacking Iraq, Sample 1.
NOTE: At bottom of Figure 3: chi-square (40, $N = 371$) = 47.90, $p = .07$; Comparative Fit Index = .99; root mean square error of approximation = .03; Hoelter = 443 ($p < .01$). All paths were significant, $p < .01$, except RIGHT WING AUTHORITARIANISM (RWA) to IRAQ A THREAT, $p < .05$. The coefficients and goodness-of-fit indicators include four undisplayed (and uninterpretable) correlated errors; without these, the paths between RWA, BLIND PATRIOTISM, IRAQ AS THREAT, and SUPPORT FOR ATTACK were all marginally larger. With 16 error terms and 107 possible correlations among them, the four correlated errors are likely random; none were replicated on the second sample. Importantly, their presence did not alter the structural relations among the variables under investigation. SDO = social dominance orientation.
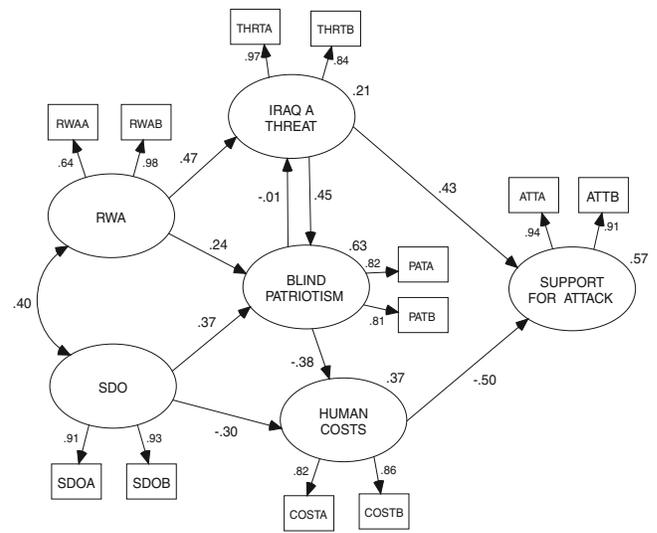

Figure 4   Modified model of support for attacking Iraq, Sample 2.
NOTE: At bottom of Figure 4: chi-square (43, $N = 96$) = 45.92, $p = .35$; root mean square error of approximation = .02; Comparative Fit Index = .996; Hoelter = 140 ($p < .01$). For this analysis, the only correlated error was between the error terms for the two human costs indices, reducing slightly the magnitude of the three paths associated with HUMAN COSTS. All paths were significant, $p < .01$, except for the nonsignificant path from BLIND PATRIOTISM to IRAQ A THREAT. RWA = right wing authoritarianism; SDO = social dominance orientation.

attack were thus reconfirmed. As for the first sample, the effects of authoritarianism and social dominance on support for the attack were fully mediated through the respective endogenous variables; neither RWA nor SDO directly affected support for the attack. Finally, blind patriotism did not directly affect support for the attack; its effects were mediated completely through reducing concern for the attack's human costs.

DISCUSSION

The first aim of this study was to test if authoritarianism and social dominance, which were previously shown to predict support for America's wars (and social dominance for wars of dominance in general), led to greater support for the attack on Iraq. As expected, both correlated with this support. Given that they did, a second aim was to test whether they influenced support for the attack in the unique ways suggested by the differing nature of the constructs. In keeping with the hypothesized model, authoritarianism but not social dominance intensified the belief that Iraq posed a threat to the

United States through its possession of weapons of mass destruction and through its support for al Qaeda's attacks on America. Social dominance but not authoritarianism intensified support for the attack by reducing concern for the likely human costs—the loss of innocent lives—that the war seemed certain to produce. These results are consistent with both prior research and the theoretical distinctions between the two constructs. The results support prior research that high authoritarians are especially prone to perceive the world as threatening; here, authoritarianism increased the belief that Saddam posed a threat to America. And in keeping with both Duckitt's (2001) dual-process model and prior research indicating that the social dominance orientation is associated with callousness and a lack of empathy, social dominance enhanced support for the attack by reducing concern for its costs in innocent lives.

In parallel with earlier findings that both authoritarianism and social dominance increased nationalism and blind patriotism, both also enhanced blind patriotism here. The nature of the constructs suggests that they do so for different reasons: Authoritarianism intensifies a perception of external threat and a fear of ingroup disunity, and this perception and fear induce blind patriotism. Social dominance however strengthens concern

for sheer superiority and unqualified identification with a powerful ingroup. This study showed that authoritarianism increased blind patriotism in part through intensifying the perception of threat. Social dominance had no parallel effect. But the current study offers no further evidence that authoritarianism and social dominance induce blind patriotism for these differing reasons.

These results also enlarge our knowledge of blind patriotism. Although previous research had shown that it is related to belief that the world is threatening, both samples showed that this belief enhanced blind patriotism; Sample 1 also indicated that blind patriotism reciprocates by strengthening the view that the world is threatening. The new finding that blind patriotism in both samples induced callousness regarding the loss of innocent lives the war would produce was not anticipated. To blind patriots, apparently, the loss of innocent lives is not a consequence to be weighed in considering whether to go to war. Finally, the fact that the effects of blind patriotism on support for the war were totally indirect, fully mediated by strengthening the perception of threat and reducing concern for the loss of innocent lives was not expected.

It is possible, of course, that the data could fit an alternate model as well as it does the one tested here. Logic, however, appears to dictate the sequencing and direction of effects proposed by this model. Authoritarianism and social dominance undoubtedly reflect prestanding personal dispositions held by the participants before the issue of an attack on Iraq emerged, so they were naturally posited as the exogenous variables. And because support for the attack was the central concern, it was therefore treated as the dependent variable. One reviewer of an earlier draft suggested that the three measures of attitudes toward the war with Iraq might constitute a single latent factor of negative attitudes toward Iraq. However, confirmatory factor analysis on the indicators revealed that a three-factor solution fit these measures well, chi-square $(6, N = 96) = 5.66$, $p > .45$; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 1.00; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .000, so the three attitudes are distinguishable. Conceivably, those who wanted to attack Iraq emphasized that Iraq was a threat and deemphasized the human costs retroactively as justifications for the attack. Critics have charged that the Bush administration had unspoken reasons for the attack and did just that, but it is difficult to imagine that the students in this study had such unspoken motives and that they exaggerated the threat and diminished their concern for human costs as post hoc rationalizations. If they did so, the model should specify that authoritarianism, social dominance, and blind patriotism increase support for the attack, which in turn increases the perception that Iraq poses a threat and decreases concern for human costs. However,

a test of this alternate model on Sample 1 yielded poor goodness of fit, chi-square $(34, N = 371) = 67.62$, $p < .001$, CFI = .98; RMSEA = .05, and tinkering with this model by dropping nonsignificant paths and so on did not improve fit. In all likelihood, students' support for the attack was actually based on their belief that Iraq posed a threat and their limited concern for the innocent lives that would be lost, the reasons identified in the original model and found for both samples.

Although authoritarianism and social dominance were not as powerful correlates of support for the attack as were the more proximate predictors, their joint effects were substantial. For the larger sample, the multiple correlation of authoritarianism and social dominance with support for the attack was .51; unattenuated, this multiple correlation was .60. It appears clear that these two dispositions predispose those who hold them to support war and that they do so for both distinct and overlapping reasons.

NOTES

1. The issue of whether authoritarianism should be regarded as a personality trait or as a broad social ideological perspective is ongoing (e.g., Duckitt & Fisher, 2003; Feldman & Stenner, 1997; Martin, 2001), but that issue is peripheral to concerns of this article. Whatever its exact nature, generations of research have now shown authoritarianism predicts innumerable social attitudes.

2. Four items were written to assess concern for human costs, paralleling the number used for the other Iraq war constructs, but two were inadvertently omitted when the final questionnaire was hurriedly assembled. Although this error undoubtedly lowered the reliability of this measure substantially, the results showed that two-item measure still functioned as anticipated; both address the concern about the loss of innocent lives.

3. Two reviewers of an earlier version of this article suggested that a negative path from blind patriotism to concern for human costs could have been hypothesized based both on logic and prior evidence. But I found no specific prior evidence that nationalism or blind patriotism is associated with callousness toward the suffering of outgroups. Although nationalism and blind patriotism do predict negative attitudes toward outgroups (e.g., Blank & Schmidt, 2003), these negative attitudes do not necessarily imply a lack of concern for human suffering in the outgroup.

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