

**The Politics of Risking Peace:  
Do Doves Deliver the Olive Branch or Does it  
Take a Nixon to Go to China?**

by

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# Questions

1. Under what international and domestic conditions will governments risk making peace with a long-term adversary?
2. Under what conditions will those efforts succeed in bringing about long lasting resolution of rivalries?
3. Can democracies make peace? What are the domestic political implications of risking peace?

# Risking Peace on Two Levels

## **International:**

- Possibility of cooperation, but danger of exploitation
- Uncertainty about other side's preferences → learning

## **Domestic:**

- Factions with different preferences
- Competition for political office

# Actors and Sequence of Moves

## International Level

- Two states, A and B, interact over two periods.
- In period 1, A chooses to cooperate (*c*) or defect (*d*), then B chooses to cooperate or defect.
- In period 2, the interaction repeats but B goes first.

## Domestic Level

- State A is composed of two political parties, the Hawks and the Doves, and a pivotal voter.
- One party is in power to start the game.
- After period 1, the voter chooses to keep the incumbent or replace it with other party.
- The elected party chooses A's policy in period 2.

# Payoffs

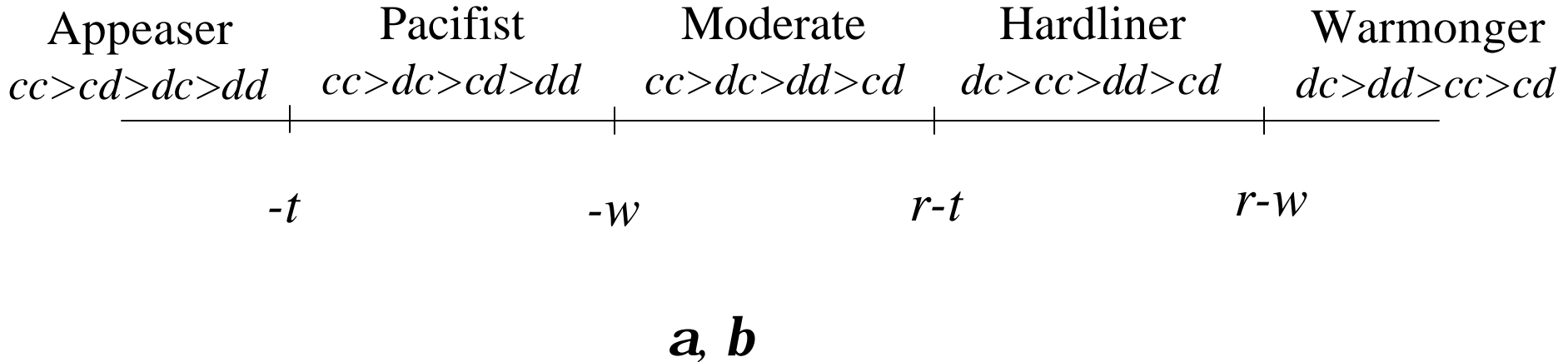
- Political parties value holding office
- All actors value the international payoff in each period, as follows:

		<b>B</b>	
		Cooperate	Defect
<b>A</b>	Cooperate	$r, r$	$0, t+b$
	Defect	$t+a, 0$	$w+a, w+b$

With  $r > t > w > 0$ .

# Payoffs (cont.)

The parameters  $a$  and  $b$  determine actors' preference orderings:



# Information and Beliefs

## State A

1. The median voter is known to be moderate, with  $\mathbf{a}_V=0$ .
2. The Hawk party has moderate and hard-line factions.
  - The moderate faction ( $\mathbf{a}_H=0$ ) is in control with probability  $p_H$ , and
  - the hard-line faction ( $\mathbf{a}_H=\mathbf{a}_H^*>r-t$ ) is in control with probability  $1-p_H$ .
3. The Dove party has moderate and pacifist factions.
  - The moderate faction ( $\mathbf{a}_D=0$ ) is in control with probability  $p_D$ , and
  - the pacifist faction ( $\mathbf{a}_D=\mathbf{a}_D^*<-w$ ) is in control with probability  $1-p_D$ .

# Information and Beliefs (cont.)

## State B

State B has moderate and hard-line factions.

- The moderate faction ( $\mathbf{b}=0$ ) is in control with probability  $q$ , and
- the hard-line faction ( $\mathbf{b}=\mathbf{b}^*>r-t$ ) is in control with probability  $1-q$ .

$q \approx$  How much A “trusts” B

All equilibria shown here exist when trust is low—that is,  $q \in [0, \bar{q}]$  .

# Second Period Strategies

If B...

		Cooperated	Defected
Then A...	Cooperates if	Moderate, Pacifist	Pacifist
	Defects if	Hard-line	Moderate, Hard-line

Incentive to appear moderate:

- Internationally: More likely to elicit cooperation from B
- Domestically: Voters like that leaders that will
  - elicit cooperation from B, and
  - reciprocate cooperation when it is offered.

# First Period Strategies: Dove in Power

## 1. The Dove government

- defects if moderate
- cooperates with probability  $s_D \in [0,1)$  if pacifist.

## 2. State B

- In response to cooperation,
  - cooperates if moderate
  - cooperates with probability  $s_D^c$  if hard-line.
- In response to defection,
  - cooperates or defects if moderate
  - defects if hard-line.

## 3. The electorate

- Elects Hawk after  $cd$
- Reelects Dove with some probability after  $cc$  or  $dd$
- Elects Dove after  $dc$

# First Period Strategies: Hawk in Power

(High Rewards from Cooperation,  $r > 2w$ )

1. The Hawk government
  - cooperates if moderate
  - defects if hard-line
2. State B
  - In response to cooperation or defection,
    - cooperates if moderate
    - defects if hard-line.
3. The electorate
  - Reelects Hawk after  $cc$ ,  $cd$ , or  $dd$
  - Elects Dove after  $dc$

# First Period Strategies: Hawk in Power

(Low Rewards from Cooperation,  $r < 2w$ )

1. The Hawk government defects, regardless of type.
2. In response, State B defects, regardless of type.
3. The electorate reelects Hawk after  $dd$ .

# Who Initiates Cooperation?

## Probability of Initiating Cooperation

Party	Type	$r > 2w$	$r < 2w$
Dove	Pacifist	$[0, 1)$	$[0, 1)$
Dove	Moderate	0	0
Hawk	Moderate	1	0
Hawk	Hardliner	0	0

Why?

1. Hawk has greater electoral security in cooperating
2. Different strategies for revealing moderate preferences

# Will Cooperation Be Reciprocated?

Doves are better at eliciting cooperation in the short-run:

$$\Pr(cc|\text{Dove cooperated})=q+(1-q)s_D^c$$

$$\Pr(cc|\text{Hawk cooperated})=q$$

Why? Hard-liners in B have an incentive to keep the Dove in power, and so they reciprocate cooperation in period 1, knowing that to do otherwise would lead to the election of the Hawk.

# Will Cooperation Last?

But mutual cooperation is more likely to endure if it was initiated by a Hawk:

- After *cc* initiated by a Dove, future cooperation could break down due to
  - Hard-line B that cooperated in period 1 reveals itself in period 2
  - Dove removed by skeptical electorate and replaced by a hard-line Hawk
- After *cc* initiated by Hawk, future cooperation could break down only if
  - Hard-line faction takes over Hawk party

# Implication 1

*Who initiates cooperation?*

As the gains from cooperation increase relative to the costs of conflict, a moderate from the hawkish party becomes the most likely type to initiate cooperation.

Note: This does *not* mean that a Hawk is ex ante more likely to initiate cooperation than a Dove. That depends on relative frequency of moderates in the two parties,  $p_H$  and  $p_D$ .

# Implication 2

*Will cooperation last?*

Cooperative arrangements delivered by a Hawks are more likely to endure than are those delivered by Doves.

# Implication 3

*What are the electoral implications of initiating cooperation?*

Asymmetric political costs and benefits:

- Initiating cooperation is costly for a Dove, because it is seen as a sign of extremism.
  - The *cd* outcome spells electoral defeat, and
  - even the *cc* outcome can lead to defeat by a skeptical electorate.
- Initiating cooperation is beneficial for a Hawk, because it is seen as a sign of moderation.
  - A Hawk that cooperates is always reelected, regardless of the outcome.

**Could Humphrey Have Gone to China?  
Measuring the Electoral Costs and Benefits of  
Making Peace**

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# The Easy Counterfactual Challenge

Hypothesis: Had he been elected president in 1968  
Humphrey would not have made the tripe to China in  
1971.

Observation: Humphrey did not win 1968 election.

Solution: Focus on 1968 election campaign and reframe  
the question: what would have been the political  
ramifications of a proposal to make peace with  
China?

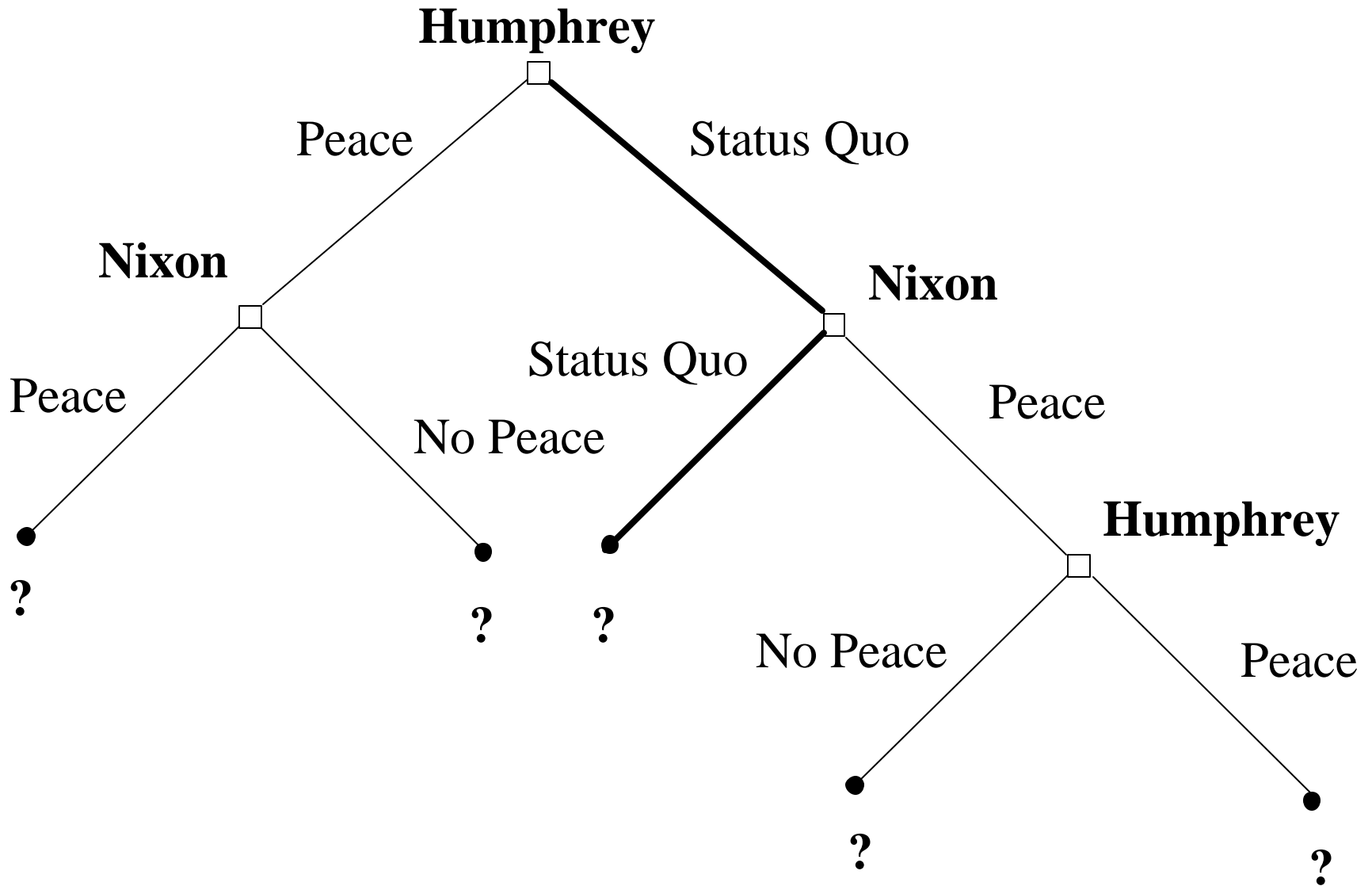
# The Hard Counterfactual Challenge

Hypothesis: Humphrey would have incurred substantial political costs in proposing a dramatic opening with China.

Observation: Humphrey chose not to propose a dramatic opening with China.

Problem: How do you measure, or even confirm the existence of, political costs that rational politicians will never choose to incur?

# The Peace Proposal Game



# Counterfactuals and Strategic Choice

General Problem: How do you estimate utilities associated with outcomes that should not be (or are only rarely) reached in equilibrium?

“Signorino Solution”:

1. Relax the assumption of perfect rationality so that errors can be made
2. Collect lots of observations

But what if neither of these is desirable/possible?

# Variables from 1968 NES

Dependent Variable: Candidate preference

Preferences on China (CHINAPREF):

- Soft: “China should be admitted to the UN.”
- Medium: “China should not be admitted to the UN, but US should stay in if it is.”
- Hard: “China should not be admitted to the UN, and the US should get out if it is.”

Perception of Party Position:

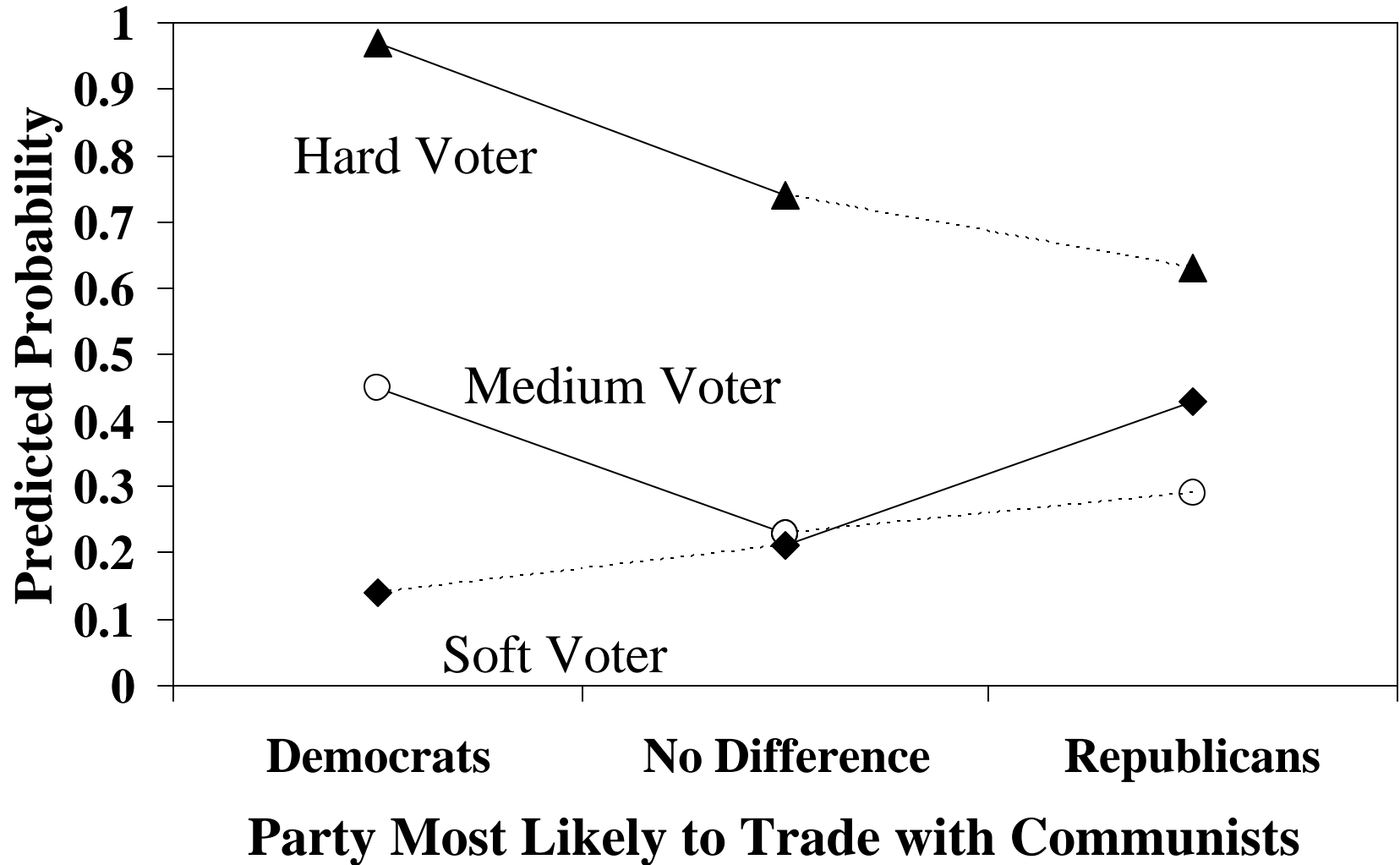
Which party is more likely to allow trade with communist countries?

Controls: Ideology, Party ID, Race, Financial Situation

# Perception of Party Positions

Party most likely to allow trade with communist countries	% Respondents
Democratic	26.0
No Difference	61.6
Republican	12.4

# Predicted Probability of Voting for Nixon in Two-Party Race



# Counterfactual Scenarios

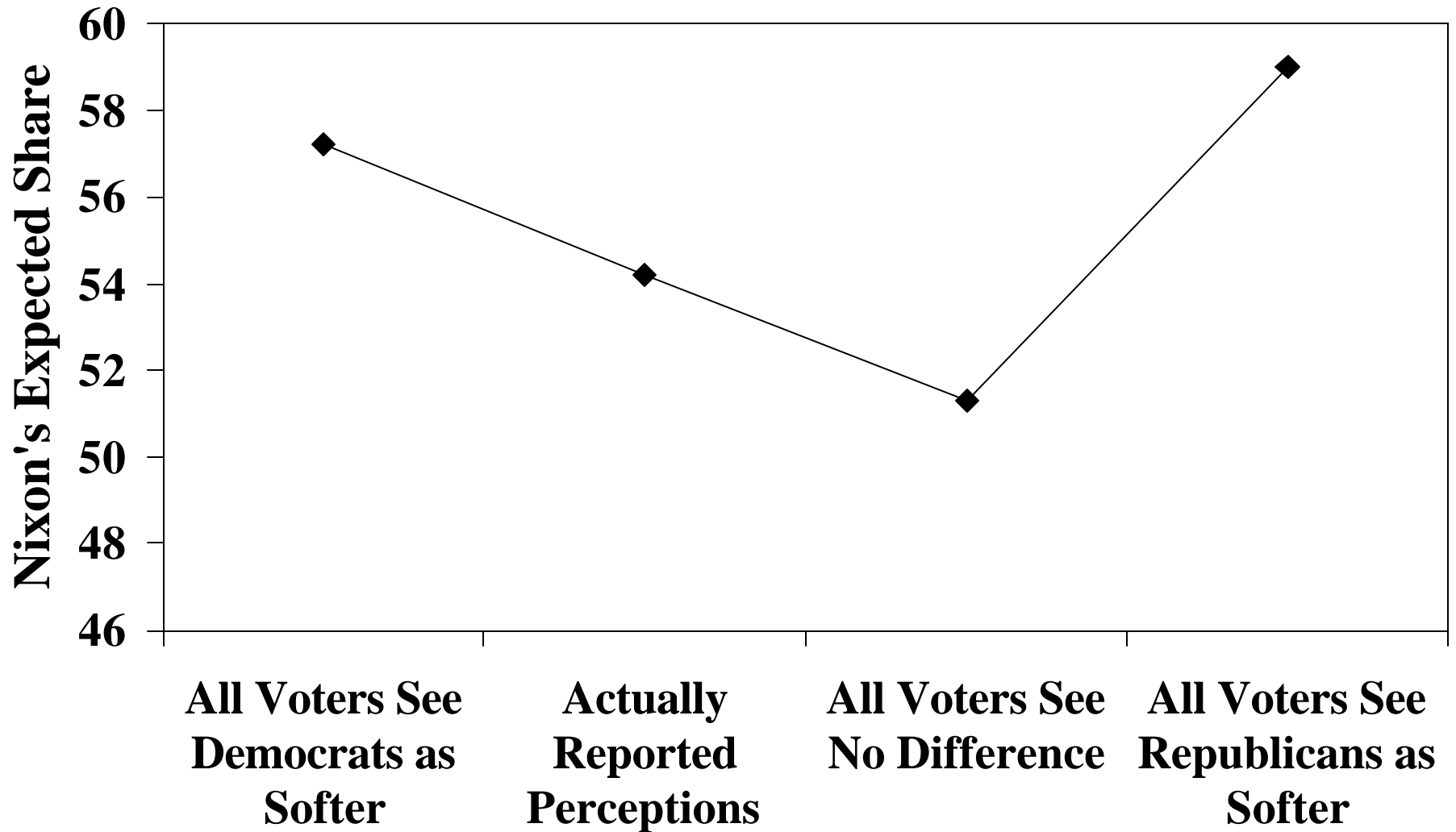
1. All voters think Democrats are more likely to trade with communists.
2. All voters thinks Republicans are more likely to trade with communists.
3. All voters perceive no difference between the parties.
4. Actually reported perceptions.

# Simulating Election Results

(see King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000; Scheve and Tomz 1999)

1. Estimate vote model to determine posterior distribution of  $\mathbf{b}$ .
2. Draw 1000 sets of parameter estimates ( $\hat{\mathbf{b}}$ ) from this posterior distribution.
3. For each voter and each set of parameters, generate the predicted vote.
4. For each set of parameters, sum votes across voters to simulate 1000 elections.
5. Change independent variables to simulate different conditions and repeat 3.

# Nixon's Expected Share of the Two-Party Vote



# The Proposal Game with Estimated Preference Orderings

