Doctor of Political Science

The State, the Firm and Europe: Disentangling the Politics of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base.

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Abstract

Given that defence industrial issues are hard-wired into traditional notions of sovereignty, it is puzzling to observe the member states of the European Union (EU) cooperating on defence industrial issues through a policy framework known as the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB). Yet how does one explain why and how European governments cooperate with one another on defence industrial issues at the EU level? By using Liberal Intergovernmentalism to explain defence-industrial cooperation in Europe, this thesis argues that while economic preferences are an important indicator of government interests they only explain part of the dynamic that leads to the adoption of policy outcomes at the EU level. Moving beyond a simple adumbration of economic preferences, this thesis argues that the EU’s institutional framework and corpus of law are used by governments to re-affirm their position as the ultimate arbiter and promoter of domestic economic preferences. In this sense, bargains between governments at the EU level allow governments to re-assert control over national DTIBs in a context where defence globalisation and broader geopolitical forces threaten to irreparably alter the traditional links that exist between governments and firms. To test these hypotheses, this thesis draws on three relevant case studies of the 2004 establishment of the European Defence Agency, the 2009 adoption of the EU defence transfers directive and the 2009 adoption of the EU defence procurement directive.