TO: NES Board of Overseers

FROM: Pamela Johnston Conover and Stanley Feldman

RE: Measuring Patriotism and Nationalism

    The purpose of this memo is to detail the results for two sets of questions included on the 1987 NES Pilot Study. The first set deal with "patriotism" which we define as a deeply felt affective attachment to the nation. The second set concern "nationalism" which may be thought of as feelings of the superiority of one's own country vis-a-vis other countries. So defined, a person may feel patriotic without necessarily feeling nationalistic.

INDIVIDUAL ITEMS

    A sense of patriotism was measured by eight items dealing with emotional reactions to the country and its symbols such as the flag and the national anthem. The frequencies for these items are presented in Table 1 part a. As can be seen, with only a few exceptions the distributions for most of the items are skewed towards the "patriotic" response. It seems unlikely that a change in question format would improve the situation given that these questions were settled on after earlier experimentation with alternative question wordings. This seems to be a case where the concept being measured, patriotism, is so ladden with social desirability that it is very difficult to design questions that do not produce a skewed distribution.

    A sense of nationalism was measured by four five-point Likert items. The distributions for these items are presented in the second part of Table 1. Unlike the case of patriotism, the nationalism items produced noticeably more balanced distributions.

SCALE CHARACTERISTICS

    For both sets of items, questions were rescaled so that low scores indicated, respectively, low patriotism and low nationalism. Then, for each of the two sets of items a scale was formed by summing the responses across items, taking the average. The final scale scores were then rescaled to a zero to one format where "1" represents either high patriotism or high nationalism.

    Presented in Table 2 are the properties for these two scales. In keeping with earlier pretests, the patriotism scale has a very high reliability; coefficient alpha equals .86. However, the scale is also skewed toward the "patriotic" side and there is not as much variance across the sample as one would like to see.

    In contrast, the "nationalism" scale has a somewhat lower reliability than the patriotism scale (coefficient alpha equals .70). But, having said that, it must be remembered that the nationalism scale is composed of only four items compared to the eight that made up the patriotism scale. In

other respects, the nationalism scale "out performs" the patriotism scale. Specifically, there is more variation in the nationalism scale than in the patriotism scale and it is not skewed nearly as much as the patriotism scale.

Finally, it should be noted that the correlation between the nationalism and patriotism scales is .30. Thus, as might be expected, the two are clearly related, but they are by no means the same. In effect, patriotism and nationalism represent two dinct orientations; it is, indeed, possible to be patriotic without being nationalistic.

BACKGROUND AND BASIC POLITICAL CORRELATES

The correlations of the scales with various political orientations and background factors are presented in Table 3. With respect to the latter, patriotism is more closely linked to the background factors than nationalism. Specifically, race, age and education are all significantly related to patriotism; but only education is significantly associated with nationalism. As might be expected, whites, older people and the less well educated tend to be more patriotic, and the latter also tend to be more nationalistic.

Five basic political variables were also correlated with the two scales: party identification, liberal-conservative identification, moral traditionalism, militarism and egalitarianism. The last three are additive scales formed from the following questions: moral traditionalism (V2192-V2197), militarism (V5249-V5246), and egalitarianism (V2176-V2179). On the five measures, high scores indicate, respectively, Republicans, conservatives, low moral traditionalism, high militarism, and low egalitarianism.

As in the case of the background factors, patriotism has a pattern of stronger correlations with the political factors than does nationalism. As shown in Table 3, patriotism is significantly related to all five of the political orientations with Republicans, conservatives, moral traditionalists, militarists and non-egalitarians tending to be more patriotic. Moreover, the correlations are moderate in strength for liberal-conservative identification, moral traditionalism and militarism. Thus, while patriotism is distinguishable from these other political orientations it is still related with a clear conservative bias emerging among respondents who score high on the patriotism scale. Whether this is indicative of the true relationship between patriotism and these political orientations, or simply an artifact of our measure of patriotism cannot be determined at this point.

In contrast, militarism is the only political orientation that nationalism is moderately related to . Thus, of the two measures, nationalism is clearly tapping a dimension that is more distinctive from existing measures of political orientations than is patriotism.

ISSUE CORRELATES

Presented in Table 4 are the correlations of the patriotism and nationalism scales with a variety of variables tapping positions on foreign policy issues and evaluations of Reagan and others. All of these variables

have been recoded so that low scores indicate what might generally be labeled the "conservative" response on these issues such as being tough with the Russians, maintaining a strong military posture in foreign affairs, adopting an interventionist position in various "hotspots", strong support for military spending, and favorable evaluations of Reagan and others. (For the sake of consistency positive feeling thermometer ratings of "liberal" groups were also scored with the positive evaluations as low scores).

As can be seen in Table 4, both patriotism and nationalism are moderately related to positions on issues involving the Soviets with those scoring high on the two scales adopting a tougher stance with the Russians. Similarly, both scales demonstrate moderate relationships with measures tapping the respondent's general posture on foreign affairs, and attitudes towards involvement in "hotspots" around the world. Again, those scoring high on the patriotism and nationalism scales tend to favor a more militaristic foreign affairs posture and a more interventionist role in world politics.

Yet, though the patterns of correlations are quite similar for the two scales on a number of issues, there are also types of issues where the two appear distinctive. In particular, patriotism is more strongly related to spending on military programs than is nationalism. And, patriotism is more strongly related to assessments of Reagan's performance and character than is nationalism. Finally, both scales are only sporadically related to evaluations of people and groups other than Reagan.

In sum, as might well be expected, both patriotism and nationalism seem to be important fundamental orientations that are linked to a number of more specific policy questions. At the same time, it is also clear that the two scales are tapping distinct orientations in the foreign affairs arena. Which of the two is more important for understanding a wide array of issues can be determined through a multivariate analysis. Let us turn to that now.

MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

To assess the relative usefulness of patriotism and nationalism in explaining foreign affairs attitudes, regressions were run using as dependent variables the issues employed in Table 4. A sample of five of those regressions is presented in Table 5. Again, all five of these dependent variables have been recoded so that low scores indicate, respectively, the sense that the Soviets pose a threat, a willingness to intervene in Central America, a desire to fund star wars research, approval of Reagan, and high feeling thermometer ratings of conservatives.

The independent variables in the analyses were the patriotism and nationalism scales as well as three of the basic political orientation measures discussed earlier--party identification, liberal-conservative identification, and militarism. The background variables of age, sex, race and income were also included. These results of these five regression analyses are presented in Table 5.

As can be seen in Table 5, of the three measures of foreign affairs orientations--patriotism, nationalism, and militarism--one stands out as having the consistently strongest effect: militarism. On the three foreign affairs issues (soviet threat, Central America, and Star wars), militarism

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has the strongest effect of any variable; and on the remaining two issues it has the strongest effect of the foreign affairs orientations. Of course, to some extent, this might be expected. The questions composing the militarism measures are "closer" in content to the specific issue questions than are the questions composing the measures of nationalism and especially patriotism. Thus, this pattern is not especially surprising.

At the same time, it is important to note that patriotism does have a significant effect on three of the issues (as it does on many of the issues for which the results are not presented). Thus, even when the more directly relevant measure of militarism is included in the regression, patriotism still proves to be a valuable predictor of both foreign policy attitudes and evaluations of Reagan. The same cannot be said of nationalism. Generally, the effects of nationalism prove to be weak and statistically insignificant.

CONCLUSIONS

Of the two measures considered here, patriotism is the more reliable scale; but it is also the more skewed scale. Moreover, patriotism is more closely tied to a variety of existing background and basic political measures. In contrast, the nationalism scale, though not quite as reliable as the patriotism scale, is the more balanced of the two measures, and it is more distinctive in terms of its relationships with background factors.

In terms of zero-order correlations, both patriotism and nationalism are related to a variety of foreign affairs attitudes and evaluations of politicians and groups. But, multivariate analyses suggest that patriotism is the more powerful of the two measures. On a number of issues, patriotism continues to have a significant effect even when background factors and basic political orientations--including the very relevant one of militarism--are controlled. In contrast, in the multivariate analyses the potential of nationalism as a predictor fades.

Based on these findings, we would recommend that future NES studies carry the patriotism measure either in its entirety or some abbreviated form. This recommendation is made on the basis of the strength of patriotism's performance as a predictor, even though it came in "second" to militarism. In particular, though it does not do quite as well as the militarism measure it is also a much more general measure than the militarism one. And, thus it merits future consideration. In particular, it would be interesting to see the extent to which patriotism's predictive abilities extend beyond the foreign affairs arena.

Table 1
Frequency Distributions for Patriotism and Nationalism Items

A.	Patriotism Items	Extremely	Very	Somewhat	Not Very
V5151	Respect for U.S.	29.5%	41.8%	25.1%	3.6%
V5152	Others Criticize	17.7%	31.3%	32.7%	18.3%
V5153	Proud to be American	61.2%	31.0%	7.3%	.6%
V5154	Angry over flag burning	55.0%	23.6%	15.0%	6.4%
V5155	Feels good to fly flag	50.8%	36.6%	12.3%	.3%
V5156	Love of country	49.9%	41.8%	8.1%	.3%
V5157	Selling govt secrets	61.5%	26.5%	8.9%	3.1%
V5158	Proud over anthem	46.9%	38.2%	14.9%	0%

B.	Nationalism Items	Straly agr	agree	neither	disagree	straly dis
V2172	America's Influence	19.6%	36.8%	10.6%	25.8%	7.3%
V2173	Others make like U.S.	25.8%	28.0%	6.4%	25.6%	14.3%
V2174	U.S gain advantage	19.2%	24.9%	4.4%	28.5%	23.0%
V2175	Big say U.N.	24.8%	34.2%	7.6%	19.0%	14.3%

Table 2
Scale Characteristics

Characteristics	Patriotism	Nationalism
Mean	.75	.55
Variance	.034	.064
Standard Deviation	.184	.254
Skevness	-.692	-.152
Kurtosis	-.219	-.848
Reliability	.86	.70

Table 3
Background and Political Correlates

I. Background Variables	Patriotism	Nationalism
Race	-.20*	.06
Sex	.06	.01
Age	.23*	-.02
Education	-.11*	-.27*
Income	-.04	-.06

II. Political Variables	Patriotism	Nationalism
Party identification	.12*	.05
Liberal/conservative identification	.27*	.12*
Moral traditionalism	-.23*	-.09*
Militarism	.30*	.30*
Egalitarianism	-.09*	.05

Table 4
Issue Correlates of Patriotism and Nationalism

Issue	Patriotism	Nationalism
A. SOVIETS		
Cooperate with Russia (V5236)ª	-.25*	-.21*
Soviet threat (V5238)	-.27*	-.15*
Negotiate with Soviets (V5240)ª	-.14*	-.12*
Trade with Soviets (V5248)ª	-.05	-.20*
B. FOREIGN AFFAIRS POSTURE		
Deal with nations (V5230)	-.24*	-.28*
Keep peace (V5233)	-.20*	-.12*
Strong military (V2245)	-.34*	-.33*
Party keep out of war (V2268)	-.14*	-.10*
C. "HOTSPOTS"		
Involvement in Centrl America (V2246)ª	-.27*	-.29*
Troops to Centrl America (V5242)	-.25*	-.25*
Spending on Contras (V2267)	-.18*	-.19*
Mideast (V5243)	-.15*	-.30*
Poland (V5244)	-.06	-.12*
D. PROGRAMS		
Nuclear weapons (V5239)	-.21*	-.14*
Starwars (V5241)	-.32*	-.17*
defense spending (V5246)ª	-.18*	-.08*
E. REAGAN		
Feeling thermometer (V2157)ª	-.31*	-.18*
Approval (V5297)ª	-.22*	-.15*
Intelligent (V2184)	-.27*	-.29*
Compassionate (V2185)	-.32*	-.15*
Leader (V2188)	-.21*	-.21*
Decent (V2189)	-.25*	-.16*
Knowledgeable (V2191)	-.28*	-.35*
Angry (V2211)	-.05	-.15*
Hopeful (V2212)ª	-.15*	-.05
Afraid (V2213)	-.17*	-.17*
Proud (V2214)ª	-.22*	-.11*
F. FEELING THERMOMETERS--OTHERS		
(all reversed)		
Dole (V2158)	-.03	-.03
Bush (V2159)	-.16*	-.12*
Kemp (V2160)	-.02	-.14*
Hart (V2161)	.12*	-.02
Liberals (V5159)	.27*	.09*
Poor people (V5160)	-.08*	-.02
Conservatives (V5161)	-.22*	-.14*
People on Welfare (V5168)	-.01	.02

a=question reversed   *=p<.05

Table 5
Selected Regression Results

Dependent Variables

Independent Variables	Soviet Threat	Central America	Star Wars	Reagan Approv.	Conserv- atives
Patriotism	-.17*	-.07	-.20*	-.11*	-.07
Militarism	-.31*	-.40*	-.18*	-.20*	-.12*
Nationalism	-.01	-.09*	-.05	-.04	-.05
Party Identification	.07	-.03	-.09	-.32*	-.15*
Liberal/conservative Identification	-.07	-.07	-.07	-.08	-.27*
Age	.04	.03	-.07	.03	-.12*
Race	-.01	.11*	.05	.02	-.01
Sex	.03	-.02	.04	.01	-.00
Income	.06	.12*	.10*	.01	.07
ADJUSTED R^2	.16	.26	.15	.22	.18

entries are beta weights   *=p<.05