

RATIONALIST EXPLANATIONS FOR WAR

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- why a rational actor would choose war as the best option in a conflict with another nation
- Five rationalist arguments
 - Anarchy
 - Expected benefits greater than expected costs
 - Rational preventive war
 - Rational miscalculation due to lack of information
 - Rational miscalculations or disagreement about relative power

MAIN ARGUMENT



- If the previous five explanations don't work:
 - Private information/incentives to misrepresent
 - Commitment problems
 - Issue indivisibilities

**MAIN
ARGUMENT**



- Unwanted v. wanted wars
 - Wanted = Pareto-efficient
 - Unwanted = resolvable & rare
- *ex ante* (before) v. *ex post* (after)
- "What prevents states in a dispute from reaching an *ex ante* agreement that voids the costs they know will be paid *ex post* if they go to war?" (Fearon 384)

THE PUZZLE

Anarchy

- Fundamental difference between domestic and international politics

Preventive War

- Declining power

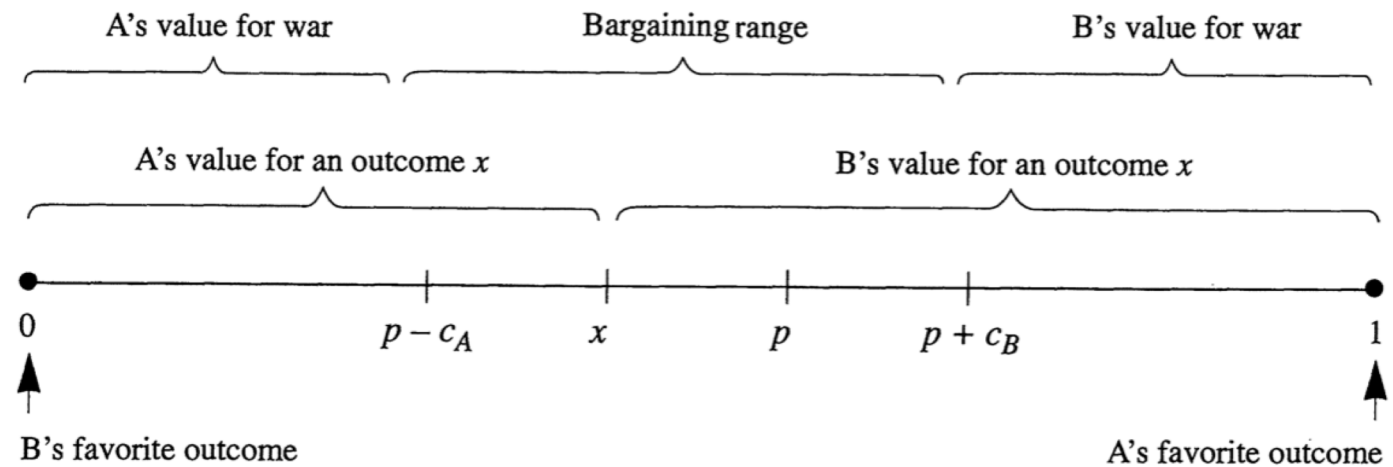
Positive expected utility

- Expected utility of war $>$ expected utility of peace
- (Utility = expected benefits – costs)

THE PUZZLE

WHEN WILL THERE EXIST BARGAINS BOTH SIDES PREFER TO WAR?

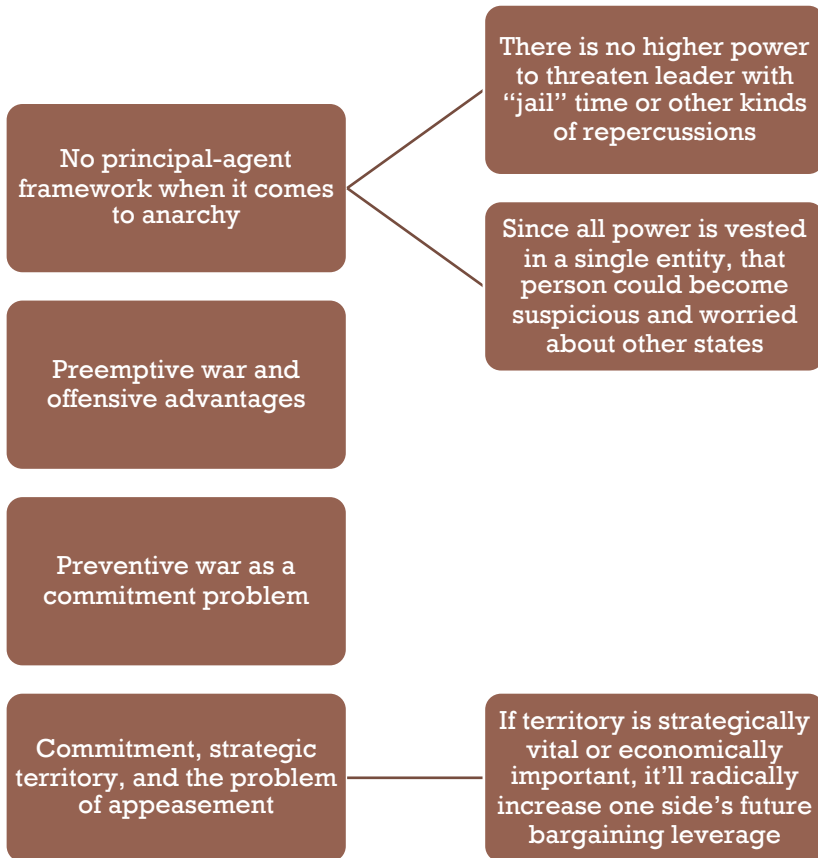
- P = probability of state A prevailing
- x = proportion of all territory between A and B that is controlled by A
- $p - c_A$ = A's expected utility for war
- $p + c_B$ = B's expected utility for war
- If a bargaining range exists, why might states fail either to locate or agree on an outcome within this range?



WAR DUE TO PRIVATE INFORMATION AND INCENTIVES TO MISREPRESENT

- Disagreements about relative power
 - Conflicts about likely outcome of military conflict
 - Emotional commitments
 - World is complex
 - Private information about militarily relevant factors
- Miscalculation of an opponent's willingness to fight
- incentives to misrepresent in bargaining
 - July Crisis of World War I





WAR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF COMMITMENT PROBLEMS

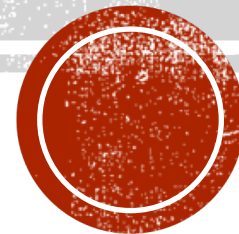
CONCLUSION

- Two major claims:
 - Fighting is costly and risky implies that there should exist negotiated agreements that rational states would prefer to war
 - Why rational states are unable to agree on such bargain:
 - Combination of private information about resolve or capability and incentives to misrepresent these
 - States' ability in specific circumstances, to commit to uphold a deal



ATTACKING THE ATOM: DOES BOMBING NUCLEAR FACILITIES AFFECT PROLIFERATION

BY SARAH E. KREPS & MATTHEW FUHRMANN



- Discusses the debate on the efficacy of military force through historical record of attacks against nuclear programs
- Four theoretical mechanisms:
 - Delay target's ability to build by destroying facilities that are critical for bomb development
 - Could produce a change in fissile material production
 - Make foreign suppliers less willing to provide nuclear assistance
 - Enhanced international inspections

MAIN ARGUMENT



- Comprehensive analysis of 16 attacks against nuclear programs
 - 1942 to 2007
 - Peacetime as well as ongoing war
- Peacetime cases are ideal for evaluation both the direct and indirect mechanism

METHOD



HOW COULD ATTACKS AFFECT PROLIFERATORS' WEAPONS PROGRAMS?

- The direct effects
 - Delay the target's nuclear ambitions
 - The effectiveness of the raid is hard to estimate
 - Failed attacks could lead to states more motivated and creating measures making future raids more difficult
- The indirect effects
 - Alter state's priorities
 - Reduction in willingness of foreign suppliers to provide assistance
 - Do not want to be associated
 - Signals that someone else believes that the state in question is not developing energy, but building a bomb
- Enhances international inspections and safeguards



PEACETIME CASE STUDIES

- Israeli attacks against Iraq's nuclear program, 1981
 - Series of covert and overt actions designed to delay the Iraqi nuclear program
 - Directly
 - One side: 1981 strike did little to affect program
 - Because light water reactor already took 10-30 years to produce enough plutonium for a bomb
 - Plus, the French supplier would have reported any illegal weapons activity
 - On the other side: strike successfully prevented Iraq from building a nuclear weapon
 - Indirectly:
 - Iraq shifted towards uranium enrichment , but didn't have the adequate knowledge
 - Shifted towards gas centrifuge technology, again, didn't have adequate knowledge
 - Saddam Hussein intensified support for the Iraqi program
 - Added additional scientists, increased financial investments, etc.
 - French was less likely to assist the program



PEACETIME CASE STUDIES

- Israeli attack against Syria's nuclear program, 2007
 - Secret operation
 - Directly
 - Destroyed a Syrian reactor at Al Kibar which was in the early phases of development
 - Likely with assistance from North Korea
 - Well suited to plutonium production
 - Negated about six years of progress toward nuclear development
 - Indirectly
 - Triggered international investigations
 - *Appears* that because of the raid, North Korea is less likely to assist in Syria's nuclear program



WARTIME CASE STUDIES

- Allied attacks against Germany's Nuclear Program, 1942-1945
 - Four separate attacks on the Norsk-Hydro heavy water facility in German-occupied Norway
 - Oct. 1942 – failed
 - Feb. 1943
 - Royal Norwegian Army dressed in British uniforms raided facility
 - facility out of commission for about two months
 - Nov. 1943
 - Attacked facility through air
 - Shut down the facility for months
 - 1944
 - Norwegian saboteur was tipped off by British intelligence
 - Intercepted and sank the ferry *Hydro*, which was transporting heavy water



WARTIME CASE STUDIES

- Iraqi attacks against Iran's nuclear program, 1984 – 1988
 - During the Iran-Iraq War
 - 1980, Iranian F-4 Phantoms attacked Iraq's Osirac plant en route home from a bombing raid
 - Failure – caused little damage
 - 1984, Iraq raided Iran's Bushehr reactors
 - March 1984 through 1988
 - Total of seven strikes over 5 years
 - 1987 attack, necessitated nearly a complete reconstruction of the facilities



WARTIME CASE STUDIES

- US attacks against Iraq's Nuclear Program, 1991, 1993
 - 1991, during the Persian Gulf War
 - Mainly targeted EMIS and gas centrifuge enrichment programs
 - Destroyed several key chokepoint facilities
 - But other key facilities were not destroyed because the US was unaware of their existence/location
 - 1993, after the Gulf War, US again struck suspected nuclear facilities
 - Facility 409 produced power supplies for the EMIS project
 - Operational success



- The three indirect mechanisms are not likely to work
 - Tehran does not depend on external support to sustain military program
 - Currently receives civilian nuclear assistance from Russia, but effects of withdrawal unclear
 - Unlikely that an attack would lead to a change in Iran's fissile material production strategy
 - Already relies on centrifuge enrichment technology, which is easier to hide
 - Could possibly have an effect through inspections
 - But not likely - example: Syria; gave IAEA additional access, but still has not committed to the AP
 - Direct, physical destruction would be the main route

CONCLUSION: THE POSSIBLE EFFECT OF AN ATTACK AGAINST IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

- Whether tools other than force can provoke the same mechanisms
- Why countries choose force to oppose proliferation
- Why strikes are relatively infrequent even if most view nuclear proliferation as the greatest threat to national security

CONCLUSION: POSSIBLE FUTURE RESEARCH