

Summaries

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When Actions Speak Louder Than Words: Adversary Perceptions of Nuclear No-First-Use Pledges

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The United States has repeatedly debated whether to adopt a nuclear no-first-use (NFU) pledge. Advocates for such a pledge emphasize its potential advantages, including strengthening crisis stability, decreasing hostility, and bolstering nonproliferation and arms control. But these benefits depend heavily on nuclear-armed adversaries finding a U.S. NFU pledge credible. A new theory based on the logic of costly signals and tested on evidence from NFU pledges by the Soviet Union, China, and India suggests that adversaries perceive such pledges as credible only when: (1) the political relationship between a state and its adversary is already relatively benign, or (2) the state's military has no ability to engage in nuclear first use against the adversary. Empirically, these conditions rarely arise. More typically, hostile political relations combined with even latent first-use capabilities lead adversaries to distrust NFU pledges and to assume the continued possibility of being subject to first use. The implication is that changes to U.S. declaratory policy alone are unlikely to convince adversaries to disregard the prospect of U.S. nuclear first use without changes in these countries' political relationships or U.S. nuclear force posture. The beneficial effects of an NFU pledge are therefore likely to be more minimal than advocates often claim.

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When Foreign Countries Push the Button

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How strong are the constraints against nuclear use? Experimental studies find that a majority or near majority of citizens in multiple major powers approve of their own governments' nuclear strikes if they create military advantages or protect co-national soldiers. But what if the nuclear taboo only begins at the water's edge when individuals evaluate the use of nuclear weapons by a

foreign government? Many policymakers believe that the international reaction to nuclear use would be severe, especially among allies. Yet prior studies have not tested this assumption. An identity-based theory of support for nuclear weapons use proposes that this argument is incorrect. The public will display favoritism toward allied and partner countries because it views them as members of the in-group. Four survey experiments in the United States and India provide evidence for this theory. In contrast to many policymakers' expectations, public approval of nuclear use is not significantly lower for allies or strategic partners than for one's own government. As expected, however, approval is lower for out-groups, such as non-allied and non-partner countries. Absolute support for nuclear attacks is also high, even when it is foreign countries pushing the button. On balance, these findings are inconsistent with the existence of a nuclear taboo or strong non-use norm.

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Not So Innocent: Clerics, Monarchs, and the Ethnoreligious
Cleansing of Western Europe
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Sizeable Jewish and Muslim communities lived across large swathes of medieval Western Europe. But all the Muslim communities and almost all the Jewish communities in polities that correspond to present-day England, France, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, and Spain were eradicated between 1064 and 1526. Most studies of ethnoreligious violence in Europe focus on communal, regional, and national political dynamics to explain its outbreak and variation. Recent scholarship shows how the Catholic Church in medieval Europe contributed to the long-term political development and the “rise of the West.” But the Church was also responsible for eradicating non-Christian minorities. Three factors explain ethnoreligious cleansing of non-Christians in medieval Western Europe: (1) the papacy as a supranational religious authority with increasing powers; (2) the dehumanization of non-Christians and their classification as monarchical property; and (3) fierce geopolitical competition among Catholic Western European monarchs that made them particularly vulnerable to papal-clerical demands to eradicate non-Christians. The extant scholarship maintains that ethnoreligious cleansing is a modern phenomenon that is often committed by nationalist actors for secular purposes. In contrast, a novel explanation highlights the central role that the supranational hierocratic actors played in ethnoreligious cleansing. These findings also contribute to under-

standing recent and current ethnic cleansing in places like Cambodia, Iraq, Myanmar, the Soviet Union, and Syria.

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Writing Policy Recommendations for Academic Journals: A Guide for the Perplexed

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Academic research can inform decision-makers on what actions to take or to avoid to make the world safer, more peaceful, and more equitable. There are many good works on bridging the gap between policymakers and academics but few on how scholars writing in academic journals can influence the policy process. In contrast to most policy-focused research, academic journals have long shelf lives and provide space for scholars to present heavily researched empirical evidence, theories, and analyses. Long, well-researched articles can, over time, shape the broader narrative for how to think about complex issues. Scholars also tend to be more objective and less partisan than policymakers. Despite the potential importance of academic work to the policy debate, many scholars receive little training on why and how to make policy recommendations. To remedy this problem, steps are offered to guide scholars as they begin developing policy recommendations for their articles. These include recognizing the dilemmas that policymakers themselves face, considering the audience before starting to write, identifying and using policy option menus, among others. When crafting recommendations, scholars should consider the long-term implications of their research on current policy as well as recommendations that might lead to more effective approaches. At the same time, scholars should consider the costs and limits of their recommendations.

NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

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