

## *Concessions to VEOs do not increase VEO attacks.*

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### General Description of the Literature:

The theories and evidence produced by scholars in political science and economics are inconclusive about the relationship between the number of VEO attacks and concessions to VEOs. Sandler (1995) developed some formal models of the government-VEO bargaining process where the government can make concessions that will influence future VEO attacks. His 1994 formal model suggests that the effects concessions have are dependent upon the risk aversion of the VEO. He infers that concession will work against risk averse groups and not work against risk acceptant groups. In a 2003 paper, Sandler suggests that concessions may appease moderates in VEOs but embolden extremists thus creating a situation where concessions create more extreme VEOs. Bueno de Mesquita (2005) in another formal model suggests a similar process whereby concessions empower the most violent individuals in VEOs.

Lichbach (1987) also created some decision-theoretic models and argued that consistent policies (concessions or repression) reduce VEO activity. Inconsistent policies or mixing repression and concessions will increase VEO activity. Pape (2003, 2005) using a database of suicide attacks/campaigns suggests territorial concessions may decrease VEO violence in that case, but provide incentives for other groups in different theaters to use the same tactic. Pape suggests that concessions are unlikely to prevent suicide attacks and argues for homeland security instead.

Wilkinson (2000), using case evidence, suggests concessions will encourage terrorism but advocates a criminal justice over military response for democracies. Crenshaw (1991), also citing multiple cases, suggests that concessions or any counterterrorism response is a small part of why groups end violence.

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### Detailed Analyses

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**Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence:** While the formal work on the topic provides logically consistent theories, little if any of these have been empirically tested. Conversely, the empirical results provided by Pape (2003, 2005) have been discredited (Ashworth et al. 2008). Crenshaw (1991) provides solid case evidence for her claims but does not subject them to a large sample analysis. It is difficult to conduct a confirmatory test of whether concessions have no impact on VEO activity and little systematic evidence can be shown for concessions having a clear positive or negative influence on future VEO activity.

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### **Empirical Support Score: 2**

**Applicability to Influencing VEOs:** The evidence that does exist comes directly from the VEO context.

**Applicability Score:** Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs

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## General Comments

The relationship between concessions to VEOs and the number of VEO attacks should be evaluated through a lengthy time-series cross-sectional approach. Additionally, further case work could be used to evaluate the mechanisms by which concessions may influence the supply of moderates within these organizations or other processes argued to influence VEO activity.

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