Secrecy and War:
'Open Covenants of Peace, Secretly Arrived At'

Shawn L. Ramirez

Political Science
Emory University

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Is secrecy needed where open diplomacy may fail?

Public Cuban Missile Crisis

Secret Talks

- Does secrecy work?
  - Cuban Missile Crisis
  - World War I
  - Israel-Palestine today

Is secrecy needed where open diplomacy may fail?

Public Cuban Missile Crisis

Secret Talks
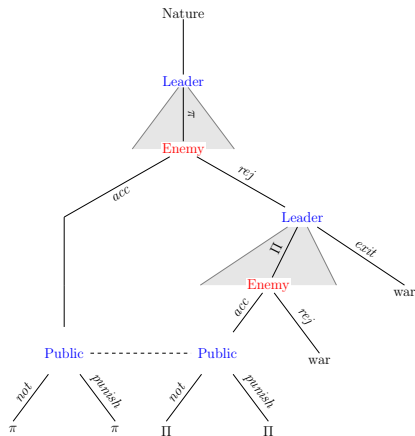
- Does secrecy work?
  - Cuban Missile Crisis
  - World War I
  - Israel-Palestine today

- What does secrecy do?
  - public would oppose
    - caving,
    - damage reputation,
    - deterrence
  - publicity would cause failure
    - unpopular compromise

Model: How might secrecy affect bargaining?

- Leader, his public, an enemy.
- Enemy is strong or weak.

If a secret agreement is reached, public must infer.

Weak enemy

Public: Weak enemy accepts a low offer.

Weak enemy

Public: Weak enemy accepts a low offer.

Secret: Weak enemy fishes.
Leader *exits*.

Secrecy makes war more likely.

Equilibrium Behavior

Weak enemy

Public: Weak enemy accepts a low offer.

Secret: Weak enemy fishes. Leader *exits*.

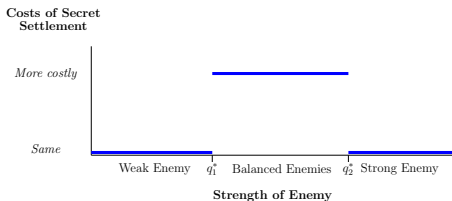*Secrecy makes war more likely.*

Balanced enemies

Secret: Higher risk of war is not acceptable.
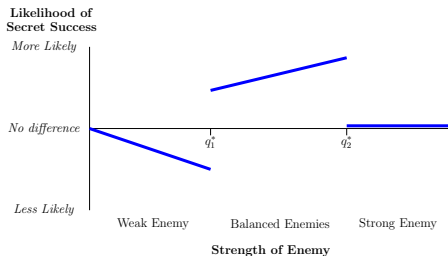
"firm compromise"

Secrecy makes peace more likely.

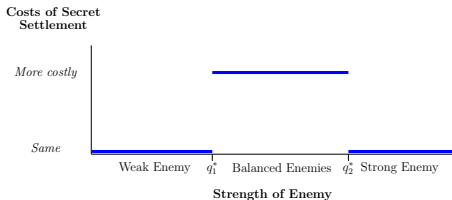# How does secrecy compare?

Higher settlement to balanced enemy

Less or more likely to succeed

How does secrecy compare?

Higher settlement to balanced enemy

Costs of Secret Settlement / More costly / Same — Strength of Enemy: Weak Enemy, q_1^*, Balanced Enemies, q_2^*, Strong Enemy

Less or more likely to succeed

Likelihood of Secret Success / More Likely / No difference / Less Likely — Strength of Enemy: Weak Enemy, Balanced Enemies, Strong Enemy; q_1^*, q_2^*
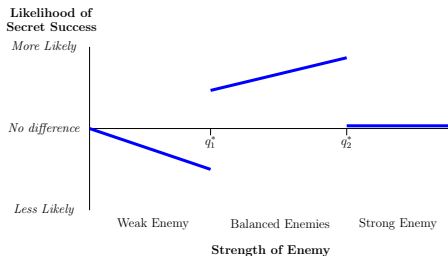
Result 1: No consensus to choose secrecy.

Public bargaining is Pareto optimal when enemy is weak.
Disagreement when enemy is balanced.

How does secrecy compare?
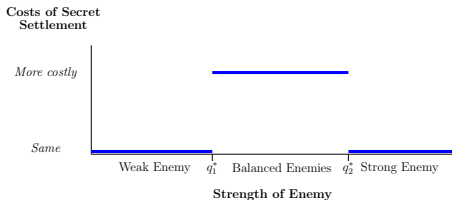
Higher settlement to balanced enemy   Less or more likely to succeed
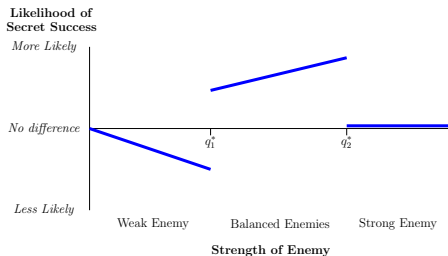
Result 2: Public welfare is higher with public terms.

Public bargaining generally gives a higher ex ante utility for leader and his public. In the limit, as $p_H - p_L \to 0$, the ex ante utilities may converge.

How does secrecy compare?

Higher settlement to balanced enemy
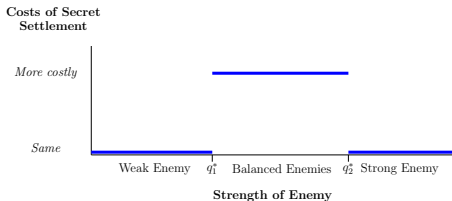
Less or more likely to succeed
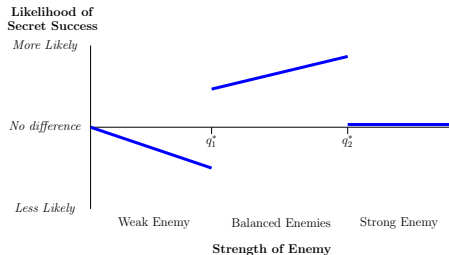
Result 3: War is less likely with secrecy.

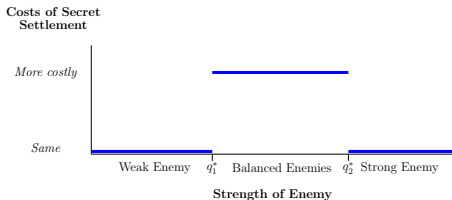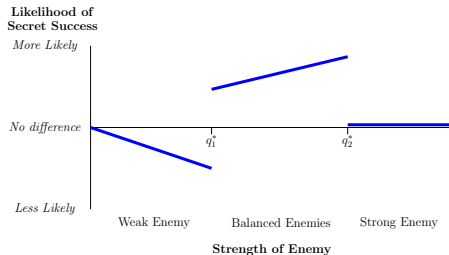The ex ante probability of war is lower with secrecy.

How does secrecy compare?

Costs of Settlement:

Likelihood of success:

Empirical Implications

H1: Probability of a secret talk is highest in the middle.
H2: Success of a secret talk.

Data: Israeli-Palestinian Talks 1993-2013

Date	Agreement	Agree
Sept 1993	The Oslo Accords	Y
Apr 1994	Protocol on Economic Relations	Y
May 1994	Agreement on Gaza and Jericho	Y
Aug 1994	Preparatory Transfer of Powers	Y
Aug 1995	Further Transfer of Powers	Y
Sept 1995	Interim Agreement (Oslo II)	Y
Jan 1997	The Hebron Protocol	Y
Feb 1997	The Beilin-Eitan Agreement	Y
Oct 1998	The Wye River Memorandum	Y
Sept 1999	Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum	Y
Oct 1999	Protocol Concerning Safe Passage	Y
July 2000	2000 Camp David Summit	
Dec 2000	The Clinton Peace Plan	
Jan 2001	The Taba Summit	
June 2001	Tenet Ceasefire Plan	
Oct 2001	Bush Proposal	
Mar 2002	Arab Peace Initiative	
Sept 2002	The People's Voice	
Apr 2003	Road Map for Peace	Y
Oct 2003	The Geneva Initiative	
Feb 2005	Sharm el-Sheikh Summit	Y
Nov 2007	The Annapolis Conference	Y
June 2008	Israel Hamas Ceasefire	Y
Sept 2010	Obama Mediated Peace Talks	
Sept 2011	Middle East Quartet Proposal	
Apr 2012	Middle East Quartet Statement	
Nov 2012	Pillar of Defense Ceasefire	Y

	Public	Secret
Success	7	9
Fail	9	2
	16	11

As in the model, a talk is secret if the terms were kept secret.

Data: Israeli-Palestinian Talks 1993-2013
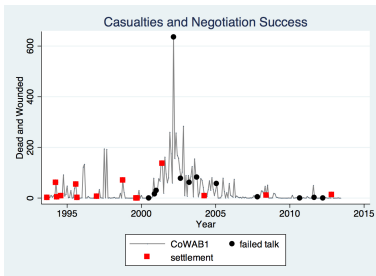
Casualties and Negotiation Success

	Public	Secret	No talk
Success	7	9	
Fail	9	2	225

Monthly data:

- casualties, injuries
- spoiler factions
- domestic politics:
  approval for peace, support for
  diplomacy, faith in treaties,
  elections, L-R party position
- mediators, Israeli defense spending,
  expert-identified phases

	Public	Secret	No talk
Success	7	9	
Fail	9	2	225

Number of Factions and Negotiation Success

Monthly data:

- casualties, injuries
- spoiler factions
- domestic politics:
  approval for peace, support for
  diplomacy, faith in treaties,
  elections, L-R party position
- mediators, Israeli defense spending,
  expert-identified phases

Data: Israeli-Palestinian Talks 1993-2013

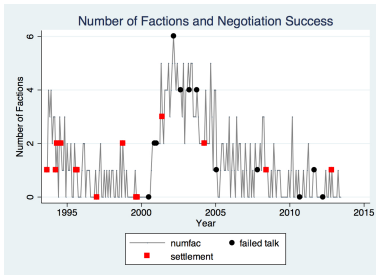|	Public	Secret	No talk
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Monthly data:

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- domestic politics: approval for peace, support for diplomacy, faith in treaties, elections, L-R party position
- mediators, Israeli defense spending, expert-identified phases

Public Opinion and Negotiation Success

H1: Probability of a Secret Talk

vs. public talk, or no talk

	MNL Logit
No Talk (base)	
Secret	
casualties	1.19*
casualties^2	$-.30$*
factions	.52
capabilities	$-.59$
constant	-4.27***
Public	
casualties	.085
casualties^2	$-.082$
factions	.52***
capabilities	$-.83$**
constant	-4.12***

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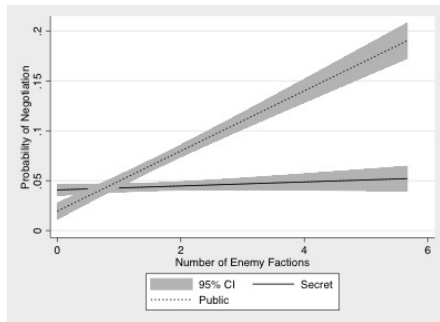
Increasing factions from 1 to 2 makes public terms twice as likely.

H2: Probability a Talk Succeeds

	Public	Secret	No talk
Success	7	9	
Fail	9	2	225

- selection bias
- few degrees of freedom

Multinomial logit-based selection correction model
      (Bourguignon, Fournier, and Gurgand, 2007)
bootstrap standard errors

H2: Casualties affect probability of a secret success

Secret	
casualties	1.19*
casualties^2	−.30*
factions	.52
capabilities	−.59
constant	−4.27***
Public	
casualties	.085
casualties^2	−.082
factions	.52***
capabilities	−.83**
constant	−4.12***

	Secret	Public	Secret	Public	Secret	Public	Secret	Public
casualties	.76*	.18						
casualties^2	−.16*	−.05						
faith in treaties			.00	.02***				
party position					.08	−.24*		
mediator							.11	−.61**
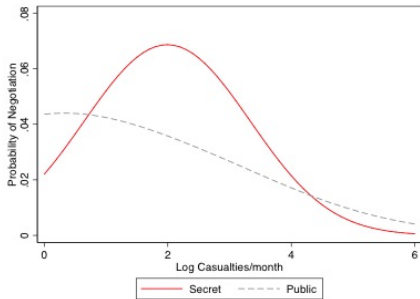
H2: Domestic politics affects public success

Secret	
casualties	1.19*
casualties^2	$-.30$*
factions	.52
capabilities	$-.59$
constant	-4.27***
Public	
casualties	.085
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	Secret	Public	Secret	Public	Secret	Public	Secret	Public
casualties	.76*	.18						
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faith in treaties			.00	.02***				
party position					.08	$-.24$*		
mediator							.11	$-.61$**

H2: Mediators less successful with public terms

Secret	
casualties	1.19*
casualties^2	$-.30$*
factions	.52
capabilities	$-.59$
constant	-4.27***

Public	
casualties	.085
casualties^2	$-.082$
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	Secret	Public	Secret	Public	Secret	Public	Secret	Public
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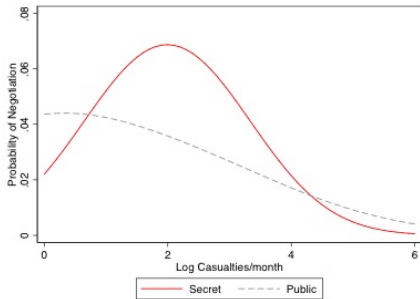
- **Secrecy** - occurs and succeeds when enemies are balanced.

  Weak enemies spoil secret talks by fishing.
  The public benefits when leaders tie their hands against weak enemies with public terms.

- **Public talks** - preferred against weak enemies and multiple factions
  Success $\sim$ domestic politics, third parties

- War in the international system: open covenants, secretly arrived at

H1: Probability of a Secret Talk

Relaxing the IIA assumption using a multinomial probit model makes only one difference – Israel's capabilities lowers the probability of secret talks.

	MNL Logit	MNL Probit
No Talk (base)		
Secret		
Casualties	1.19*	.69*
Casualties^2	−.30*	−.18*
Factions	.52	0.29
Capabilities	−.59	−.41*
Constant	−4.27***	−3.09***
Public		
Casualties	.085	.08
Casualties^2	−.082	−.06
Factions	.52***	.73***
Capabilities	−.83**	−.56**
Constant	−4.12***	−3.05***

H1: Probability of Secret Talks

The 95% confidence intervals reveals where we lack data. Negotiations are infrequent in general, and in the wake of high casualties, talks are even more infrequent.