

The smiling Buddha effect: Canadian and US policy after India's 1974 nuclear test

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2017. "Making The Real: Rhetorical Adduction and the Bangladesh Liberation War", *International Organization*, 71(2): 317-348.

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Abstract

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been one of the most successful international security institutions. However, its success was not inevitable and in fact it faced a serious threat only a few years after it came into force in 1970. India's "peaceful nuclear explosion" (PNE) in May 1974 rocked the nuclear nonproliferation regime and cast doubt on the NPT. And yet in the two years after the PNE, several significant countries ratified the treaty. Why did states that had been notable holdouts from the NPT, like Italy, Japan, and South Korea, ratify the treaty soon after the Indian nuclear test? This paper finds that the PNE galvanized pro-NPT forces in the US and Canada, leading to changes in nonproliferation policy. In particular, it led them to threaten to withhold access to nuclear technology and materials unless the holdouts ratified the NPT. It also motivated Henry Kissinger to change his secret advice to Japan that the US did not want Japan to ratify the NPT in order to keep the People's Republic of China unsure about Japan's nuclear intentions.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been one of the most successful international security institutions, with widespread adherence as well as evidence that it has “influenced many decisions to refrain from developing military applications of nuclear power programs” (Sagan 2011: 227; see also Fuhrmann and Lupu 2016). However, its success was not inevitable and was dependent upon important states joining the regime. Understanding why states ratified the NPT is thus crucial to understanding its success. And yet, “We know very little about why different governments joined the NPT” (Sagan 2011: 239). In particular, there is little appreciation in the literature that the NPT faced a serious threat only a few years after it came into force in 1970. India’s explosion of a nuclear device in May 1974, despite their calling it a ‘peaceful nuclear explosion’ (PNE),¹ rocked the nuclear nonproliferation regime generally and specifically cast doubt on the NPT. The threat was so serious that decisionmakers were wondering, “Is the NPT dead?”²

The conventional wisdom is that those states made a trade-off, or “Grand Bargain” (Weiss 2003), of agreeing to forego nuclear weapons in exchange for promises of disarmament (as yet unrealized) and the benefits of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Other accounts of NPT ratification highlight a variety of security and economic concerns (Coe and Vaynman 2015; Swango 2014; Verdier 2008; Way and Sasikumar 2004) as well as normative factors (Ruble 2009). However, existing work has underappreciated the important role played by India’s 1974 nuclear test in NPT ratification.³ This paper argues that the US and Canada were galvanized by the PNE to both pay more attention to and also to change their policy towards NPT ratification of key states. Original historical analysis, based on recently available documents, shows that the PNE made nuclear nonproliferation generally, as well as specifically NPT ratification, more salient which had a knockon effect on the nonproliferation activities of supplier states, especially Canada and the US. Namely, the US and Canada were newly motivated to coerce Italy, Japan,

¹ The test was supposedly initially code-named Smiling Buddha by Indian nuclear scientists. See Perkovich 2001 for an account of the Indian nuclear program.

² “Memorandum Of Conversation [Energy; North Sea Oil; Foreign Assistance; Nuclear Non-Proliferation; CSCE; Trade Bill], July 07, 1974, Wilson Center Digital Archive [WCDA], <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/119774>]

³ Rabinowitz and Sarkar (2018) argue for transformative shifts in the nonproliferation regime in the wake of the Indian test but do not focus on the NPT. Similarly, Miller’s work (2018) on nuclear dominoes and the effect of the Indian nuclear test on US nonproliferation policy ignores the issue of NPT ratification.

and South Korea, to ratify the NPT. In addition, the PNE had effects on debates over nuclear weapons, proliferation, and ratification of the NPT in particular, in Italy and Japan.

These cases complicate some themes in the literature on the NPT. First, states do not have constant preferences over nonproliferation. If this important factor is omitted, explanations of nonproliferation activities like NPT ratification could erroneously attribute outcomes to other factors like variability in capabilities or policy type rather than willingness to pay the costs of coercion. Second, contrary to the Grand Bargain thesis, this paper challenges the narrow focus in the nonproliferation literature only on the nonproliferation activities of the superpowers or nuclear weapon states (NWS) and the US in particular. While US diplomatic activity was important and influential in some cases, Canada played a crucial role in coercing certain states to ratify the NPT.

This paper first surveys the literature on ratification of the NPT generally as well as in the immediate aftermath of India's test. Then the paper shows that the PNE changed US and Canadian attitudes towards both nonproliferation and the NPT in particular. The next three sections are case studies of NPT ratification by Italy, Japan, and South Korea (ROK), showing the effect of the PNE on those states and also the effect of US and Canadian diplomacy.

Explaining the NPT

That the NPT represents a “grand bargain” between nuclear weapon states (NWS) and non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS) is pervasive in public discourse about nuclear weapons and nonproliferation,⁴ and is also present in scholarly work (Way and Sasikumar 2004: 1). This bargain involves Article II, in which NNWS agree to not acquire nuclear weapons, and either Article IV, in which NNWS get “the peaceful uses of nuclear energy”, or Article VI, in which NWS agree to pursue nuclear disarmament, or both.⁵ Some scholars have argued that while the bargain itself may have worked for some states, others required “extra compensation or specific threats from the two superpowers” (Verdier 2008: 443) or “explicit threats or offers of benefits in exchange for joining the treaty” (Coe and Vaynman 2015: 992). Way and Sasikumar consider a wide range of economic, security, and other political motivations that might be relevant to the

⁴ Just one recent example is UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at the 2015 NPT Review Conference <<https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/dc3551.doc.htm>>.

⁵ <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/text/>

decision to ratify, including the interplay between a challenging security environment and a defense pact, and that between a high level of industrial development and high energy needs (2004: 4).

However, there are some assumptions baked into these types of accounts that are problematic in light of the historical evidence presented in this paper, specifically who is assumed to be doing the pressuring to join the treaty and why (and when) they are doing it. First, they downplay the role of changing or inchoate preferences, both for the ratifiers of the NPT and the counter-proliferating superpowers.⁶ Second, many accounts assume that the NWS, or even more narrowly the superpowers, are the ones colluding together to pressure states to join the treaty. None of the existing explanations apply to states who are neither superpowers nor have nuclear weapons, such as Canada.

Another implication of the evidence presented in this paper is that there is an important relationship between NPT membership and the provision of nuclear assistance. This finding runs counter to prior work. For example, Swango argues that the bargain theory implies that there should have been “a common, shared understanding during the negotiations that nuclear cooperation and assistance was being traded for nonproliferation commitments” (2014: 224). Based on diplomatic documents, Swango argues that “no such understanding existed” and that the US “was not willing to use [nuclear fuel supplies as] leverage to coerce states to join the treaty” (2014: 224; 222). More broadly, Fuhrmann (2009) finds that on average NPT membership either has no effect on whether a state receives nuclear technology for peaceful use or even makes a state less likely to sign a nuclear cooperation agreement with a nuclear supplier. In the cases considered in this paper, both the US and Canada manipulated other states’ perceptions of whether they would continue to receive nuclear technology and materials in the absence of NPT membership. Thus this paper challenges Fuhrmann’s finding with new evidence of the crucial role that NPT membership actually has played in the provision of nuclear assistance.

Apart from general theoretical work, there is also some existing literature that refers to the decisions of states to ratify the NPT after India’s test and makes judgments as to the role of the

⁶ Coe and Vaynman (2015) do mention a change in non-proliferation preferences in the 1960s.

US in those decisions. Walker reports that Glenn R Schleede, associate director of the White House Domestic Council, argued the US had actively encouraged adherence to the NPT and sixteen more nations, including Germany, Japan, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands, had ratified it. (Walker 2001: 235). Cameron and Rabinowitz's valuable and wide-ranging survey of US nonproliferation policy in the 1970s, downplays the centrality of NPT ratification to the US's post-PNE strategy but grant that "the US successfully encouraged a number of countries, such as Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands to ratify the treaty in 1975" (2016: 14). They also imply that Kissinger's advice to Ford not to put "heavy pressure" on Japan to ratify during the president's visit to Tokyo in November 1974 meant that the US did not play an important role in Japan's ratification in June 1976 (2016: 14), thus missing the dynamics that actually transpired. Not only did the US actively seek to make the Japanese worry that continued nuclear cooperation and supply was conditional on ratification, but there was also the fallout from a secret plan by US President Richard Nixon and his National Security Adviser and later Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to keep Japan's nuclear option open as a geopolitical counter-weight to China. Only when Kissinger and others in the Ford administration clearly and repeatedly assured the Japanese government at multiple levels were the effects of this gambit negated. In addition, many scholars⁷ argue that the US was responsible for coercing the Republic of Korea (ROK) to ratify in early 1975. In fact, it was Canadian threats of withholding nuclear cooperation that caused the ROK to ratify, as this paper shows below.

The idea that a nuclear test spurs changes in nonproliferation policy is not new. Some have argued that China's test in 1964 resulted in a shift in US policy via the Gilpatric Report. As Gavin notes, the report "led to a far more active nonproliferation policy" (2012: 99). Generally, there was a shift towards general "support for the *principle* of non-dissemination" and making nonproliferation "a higher priority" in foreign policy and a "key feature of US arms control efforts" (Brands: 2006: 104, 107). It was in this atmosphere that the US put its energy towards creating the NPT in the first place.

There is also a burgeoning literature on the role played by the PNE in transforming the nonproliferation regime. This includes work on changes in US nonproliferation policy (Tzeng

⁷ Including Lanoszka (2018), Miller (2014a; 2018), Drezner (1999), Solingen (2007), Way and Sasikumar (2004), Verdier (2008), Paul (2000), and Kim (2001).

2013; Miller 2018; Sarkar 2019), French exports (Rabinowitz and Sarkar 2018) and UK policy (Craig 2017), as well as the Nuclear Supplier's group and export controls (Anstey 2018). Generally, however, existing work does not pay sufficient attention to the question of the impact of the PNE on nonproliferation policy, nor does it adequately reflect newly available evidence.

This paper makes several arguments. First, the PNE threatened the NPT in that it caused some states to delay or question ratification. Second, that the US (and others including Canada), because of the PNE, changed their policy towards NPT ratification. Third, that US actions were causally relevant to Italian and Japanese NPT ratification and that Canadian action was causally relevant to Italian and South Korean ratification. These actions were not the sole considerations in the decision-making of these states. For example, Japan's main concern was ensuring the supply of civilian nuclear energy and they were also in this period engaged in negotiations with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). However, the leverage exerted by the US and Canada was a crucial element in producing the decisions to ratify. In both Italy and Japan, the Indian test provided an opportunity for military hardliners or nuclear nonproliferation skeptics to make the case that global nonproliferation activity was not working and that therefore developing nuclear weapons or maintaining a nuclear weapons option (nuclear latency) was a good idea. Ratifying the NPT meant increasing the obstacles to this policy and so ratification should be at least delayed, and perhaps put off indefinitely. In the US and Canada, the Indian test prompted a wholesale change in nonproliferation policy and one piece of the new policy was to push states, Italy and Japan in particular, to ratify the NPT. The push turned out to involve making the Italians and Japanese believe that their continued access to nuclear fuel, enriched uranium, and other nuclear materials and technology as well as financing for nuclear projects, was dependent upon NPT ratification. For the Japanese case, this also involved undoing the confusion generated by Nixon and Kissinger's earlier gambit. The Canadian government was much more directly coercive, making supply of uranium (to Italy) and nuclear reactors (to Korea) explicitly conditional upon ratification. The difference between the two supplier states' strategies is plausibly explained by the US's much more extensive alliance engagement, so that issue linkages made it harder for the US to be coercive.

Nonproliferation Policy and the Effect of the PNE

Nixon, when he sent the NPT to the Senate for ratification in 1969, explicitly said that the US should not pressure other countries and in particular the FRG, to ratify it (Gavin 2012: 117). Shortly after Nixon took office, during a National Security Council meeting on the NPT, Kissinger, then National Security Advisor, asked Nixon, “following ratification, how much pushing would we do on others”, adding that “if we don’t pressure the Germans, it would help them”.⁸ Nixon replied that “he wanted it understood that there was to be no arm twisting of other states on the NPT issue, that it is completely up to them as to whether or not they follow U.S. lead”. This meeting was followed by National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) 6, in which Kissinger relayed the President’s direction that after US ratification “there should be no efforts by the U.S. Government to pressure other nations...to follow suit” and that the US should be “clearly dissociating itself from any plan to bring pressure on these countries to sign or ratify”.⁹

The subsequent U-turn in US policy, and in particular Kissinger’s switch from active hostility to unenthusiastic advocacy of NPT ratification, is attributable to the shock to the nonproliferation regime of India’s nuclear test. On 23 May 1974, five days after India’s test, Kissinger issued National Security Study Memorandum 202, which stated that President Nixon had “directed a review of U.S. policy concerning the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)”.¹⁰ The goal of this review was to produce a study that would “review present U.S. policy concerning non-proliferation and the NPT ... in particular, in light of India’s announcement of its underground nuclear test.” The study should “consider specifically whether the U.S. should press for renewed support for the treaty by those now party to it and accession to the treaty by those not yet signators”.¹¹ Kissinger, albeit a few weeks after the PNE, said that he wanted “to begin developing a position on non-proliferation, sparked by the Indian peaceful explosion”.¹² A memo used by Kissinger in briefing the President on non-proliferation in August 1974 stated:

⁸ Minutes of National Security Council Meeting, 29 January 1969, Nixon-Ford Administrations, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, vol. E-2, doc. 5.

⁹ NSDM 6, 5 February 1969, Nixon-Ford Administrations, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, vol. E-2, doc. 8.

¹⁰ National Security Study Memorandum [NSSM] 202, 23 May 1974, Nixon-Ford Administrations, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, vol. E-14, doc. 50.

¹¹ NSSM 202.

¹² Secretary’s Analytical Staff Meeting [SASM], July 12 1974, 4:05pm, NARA, RG 59, Transcripts of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger’s Staff Meetings, 1973-1977, Box 4 [Transcripts]. Another initiative included here was a nuclear suppliers’ group (NSG) aimed at coordinating supplier state policy towards further restricting access to

“As a result of the Indian nuclear test, other non-nuclear weapons states may rethink their decisions regarding the acquisition of nuclear explosives. These trends could adversely affect the future of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) through setbacks in the ratification process in Japan and the European community countries, generally damaging the longer-term efficacy of the treaty as a non-proliferation instrument.”¹³

Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary for Political Affairs, responded to a question about the effect of “the Indian bomb”, that the US “used to take the lead in trying to get adherence to the NPT” but that “we have relaxed on this in a fashion which frankly I have not liked” and that the US should “renew it now in the aftermath” of India’s test.¹⁴

Other states reacted similarly to the PNE. In the UK, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office argued that “the NPT’s status was paramount and that the Indian explosion represented a tipping point that threatened to lead to a proliferation cascade” (Craig 2017: 24). The USSR also acknowledged that proliferation was destabilizing and was supportive of nonproliferation measures in the wake of the test, such as export-controls and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (Burr 2014: 261). Especially significant was Canada’s reaction to the PNE, “one of shock and disappointment” that “compelled a complete re-evaluation of Canada’s policy on nuclear exports” (Morrison 1978: 60, 62). Canada engaged in an intensive review of nuclear export policy following India’s nuclear test, resulting initially in an announcement in the House of Commons in December 1974 of a far more rigorous safeguards policy (Hunt 1977: 82). This included insisting “that no nuclear deals will be made with any nation which has not ratified the non-proliferation treaty”.¹⁵ There is also evidence that Canadian foreign policy makers were thinking about action specifically on the NPT very early on. On June 18 1974, during a US-Canada discussion between Kissinger and Sharp on the Indian nuclear explosion, A.E. Ritchie,

nuclear technology. One interpretation is that the NSG was aimed at suppliers and the NPT ratification efforts were aimed at recipients of nuclear technology.

¹³ Department of State Memorandum for Major General Brent Scowcroft, The White House, Briefing Paper on Non-Proliferation, 21 August 1974, RG 59, PPC[Policy Planning Council, Winston Lord's Papers], Box 349.

¹⁴ George Springsteen, ‘Transcript, Under Secretary Sisco’s Principals’ and Regionals’ Staff Meeting, Friday, 21 June 1974’, in National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book 467, Document 3
<<http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb467/docs/doc%203%20Sisco.pdf>>

¹⁵ CIA Staff Notes: Western Europe, Canada, International Organizations, March 18 1975, CREST CIA-RDP79T00865A000600040001-2.

Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, asserted that the main “question is also about protecting the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Not India, but the others.”¹⁶

Deciding to Push Ratification

During a crucial analytical staff meeting on the new nonproliferation policy on 8 August 1974, Winston Lord, Director of the State Department Policy Planning Staff, and Fred Ikle, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), were in the position of selling Kissinger on various parts of the strategy.¹⁷ In particular, Kissinger was skeptical of the US pressing for NPT ratification. Lord argued that the NPT was “central” to nonproliferation efforts and, when challenged by Kissinger to justify this assertion, appealed to the fact that it already existed, i.e. was “the major political and world-wide tool that” the US had, that it had legal implications for export constraints, and that it specifically prohibits peaceful explosions. Ikle added that “it makes harder the domestic decision in some countries, if they have ratified the treaty”. Kissinger then questioned that US action could do anything to make other states ratify and Ikle said that the idea was to target “Japan and Italy, where they are close to a decision”. The point here was that feasible US action, like making delivery of nuclear materials or technological cooperation “contingent on membership”, might tip some countries over the edge.

Very early on in State Department thinking, Italy and Japan were singled out as targets for pressure, persuasion, and leverage. In a State and ACDA briefing memo that became the main basis of US nonproliferation policy in the following years, annexes outlined specific objectives for various countries.¹⁸ Italy and Japan are both identified as countries that would potentially delay or decide against ratification, along with strategies for trying to obtain their ratification. Germany and the Netherlands are mentioned only in terms of coordinating approaches to trying to get Italy to ratify. Belgium is not specifically mentioned. In fact, both the FRG’s and the

¹⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, 'Indian Nuclear Explosion; World Food Conference; Pacific Coast Tankers; NATO Declaration; Middle East; Trade Bill', June 18 1974, WCDA, <<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/119772>>

¹⁷ SASM, August 8 1974, 3:00pm, RG 59, Transcripts.

¹⁸ Briefing Memo for Analytic Staff Meeting on Non-Proliferation Strategy, 31 July 1974, from Fred Ikle and Winston Lord to Secretary of State, National Security Archive, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 467, Declassified Documents Show Henry Kissinger's Major Role in the 1974 Initiative That Created the Nuclear Suppliers Group. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb467/docs/doc%206%207-31-74%20PPS-ACDA%20paper%20for%20staff%20meeting.pdf>

Netherlands' parliaments approved ratification of the NPT before India's nuclear test.¹⁹ So, despite claims that the US successfully encouraged these states to ratify (Walker 2001; Cameron and Rabinowitz 2016; Miller 2018), none of Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium were the target of US policy. However, both Italian and Japanese ratification were affected by US diplomatic pressure and South Korea ratified as a result of Canadian action. I now investigate these three cases of ratification in detail.

For each case, the core questions are whether the PNE had any effect on decisionmaking in the target state, whether there was a change in policy towards the target state and if so whether it was due to the Indian test, what exactly were the actions taken by the US and by others, and whether those actions that were taken had any impact on the decisionmaking in the target state. The main alternative explanations for the case outcomes are that the PNE was irrelevant to both US and the target states' policy, and that the external pressure was irrelevant to the decisions of Italy, Japan, and Korea to ratify, that is, they would have ratified when they ratified even in the absence of US or Canadian diplomacy.

Italy

The effect of the PNE on Italy

The Indian test affected the debate within Italy about NPT ratification. Nuti makes the point that a 1973 agreement on safeguards between EURATOM and the IAEA meant that the way was clear for Italy to ratify the NPT. However, "the explosion of the first Indian nuclear bomb in the Rajasthan desert caused a prolonged debate in the Italian parliament and in the media" (1993: 137). Articles by Roberto Gaja, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Achille Albonetti, a noted nuclear weapons expert, as well as a collection of essays in *Politica e strategia* including a call for Italy to develop its own nuclear weapons "unleashed a veritable storm in the Italian media which lasted for several weeks" (Nuti 2017: 135). US, UK, and FRG diplomats all perceived a distinct change in Italian attitudes, namely, "Italy's declining interest in NPT ratification since the Indian nuclear explosion".²⁰ Italian Director General for Political

¹⁹ "Second Chamber Approves NPT", Telegram from Embassy in the Hague to Secretary of State, 6 May 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974THEHA02252; "Italian NPT Ratification Prospects", Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy in Rome etc., 20 March 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974STATE055415.

²⁰ Memorandum of Conversation on "NPT" between Carl Lahusen (German Embassy) and Robert Miller (ACDA) June 12 1974, NARA, RG 59, [Central Foreign Policy Files, JP-Reel[Printouts], Box 63A, P740063-0040

Affairs, Roberto Ducci, said that submitting the NPT to parliament for ratification was “complicated by the recent Indian nuclear explosion”. Ducci, along with Gaja, was said to be at the center of a “small and parochial clique within Italian [Foreign Office]” who wanted “to dodge or delay NPT ratification one way or the other”.²¹ German diplomats thought that “for the first time, there was the hint that Italy might try to avoid submission of the NPT to their parliament”.²²

US and others' pressure on Italy

As noted above, prior to the Indian test, US policy had been to avoid specific pressure on countries to ratify the NPT. However, as part of the wholesale review of nonproliferation policy, Italy's ratification became a specific and key part of the initial strategy. When Kissinger, trying to clarify exactly what the State department / ACDA nonproliferation strategy was, asked, “Your NPT strategy is to try to get ratification on the part of those who have already signed”?, Ikle replied, “Primarily Italy”.²³ The main types of pressure aimed at inducing Italy to ratify the NPT were 1) giving the impression that continued supply of nuclear fuel and other nuclear materials and technology would be more secure with and under threat without NPT ratification; and 2) making the granting of US Export-Import Bank credits for the Italian nuclear energy program appear to be conditional on ratification.

The major issue was whether there was any relationship between NPT membership and access to nuclear materials and technology. Early on, in May 1974, Ducci “did not think that there had been any U.S. indication that delivery of American fissionable material would be affected by delay in the ratification of the NPT”.²⁴ He also noted that the US “continued to supply fissionable materials to states which were not parties to the NPT”, perhaps a reference to nuclear cooperation deals with Egypt and Israel.²⁵ In response, numerous US policymakers pushed for

²¹ “Italy and the NPT - Thomson's Views”, Telegram from US IAEA Amb Porter to Secretary of State, 20 January 1975, 1975IAEA V00466

²² “German and Italian NPT Ratification and Indian NPT Nuclear Explosion”, Telegram from Embassy in Bonn to Secretary of State, 31 May 1974, AAD, 1974BONN08718.

²³ SASM, August 8 1974, 3:00pm, RG 59, Transcripts.

²⁴ “German and Italian NPT Ratification and Indian NPT Nuclear Explosion”, Telegram from Embassy in Bonn to Secretary of State, 31 May 1974, AAD, 1974BONN08718.

²⁵ Prior to the Indian test, the US had entered into discussions with Egypt and Israel (neither members of the NPT) to supply them with nuclear reactors and fuel. The nuclear cooperation agreements were announced in June, after the Indian test, and quickly became the subject of controversy, both in the US and around the world.

making approaches to Italy to hint or imply that NPT ratification would mean easier access to nuclear materials and technology. For example, the US Embassy in Rome commented that it “would regret any action which would tend to preserve GOI sense of surety in regard to a continuing supply of nuclear materials and expertise without becoming a full party to the NPT”.²⁶ When, in February 1975, Ducci was still arguing that Italy would be better off outside the NPT because it would be less subject to safeguards, Ikle corrected him, saying that the “general trend is to contrary that non-parties of NPT may increasingly be at disadvantage in relation to parties”.²⁷

Canada went even further than the US and actually made continued supply conditional on ratification. In preparation for Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau’s visit to Rome in March 1975, there were reports from Ottawa that “as result Indian nuclear explosion” Trudeau’s plan was to “be forceful in urging NPT ratification without qualification for Italy”.²⁸ When he arrived, there was explicit linking of Italian NPT ratification with Canadian supply of natural uranium to Italian nuclear energy reactors. When the Italians, including Prime Minister Aldo Moro and Foreign Minister Mariano Rumor, made their high degree of interest in a supply agreement clear, the “Canadians promised only that serious consideration would be given to Italian request after NPT and safeguards agreement ratified”.²⁹ Trudeau justified this move by saying that the Canadians were “sensitive concerning safeguards following Canada's unhappy involvement in the Indian experience”.³⁰

Another source of leverage on Italy was strengthened by the Oil Crisis, in full flow in 1974 after the October 1973 oil embargo declared by OPEC. One of the ways that Italy was trying to deal with the crisis was by developing its nuclear power program. Arnaldo Angelini, president of Enel, the Italian state power company, approached various members of the US government, including President Ford personally, in late 1974 asking for help in financing a large expansion

²⁶ “Italy and the NPT”, Telegram from Embassy in Rome to Secretary of State, 20 December 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974ROME17604

²⁷ “Italian NPT Ratification”, Telegram from Secretary of State to US Embassy in Rome, 7 February 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975STATE028268

²⁸ “Primin Trudeau's European Tour”, Telegram from Embassy in Ottawa to Secretary of State, 20 February 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975OTTAWA00613

²⁹ “Trudeau Visit to Rome: Economic Issues”, Telegram from Embassy in Rome to Secretary of State, 12 March 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975ROME03625

³⁰ “Prime Minister Trudeau's Visit to Rome; Political Aspects of Conversations with GOI; NPT”, Telegram from Embassy in Rome to Secretary of State, 11 March 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975ROME03531

of the nuclear program, including four nuclear power plants. The State Department recommended that Kissinger personally link the granting of Export-Import Bank credits to Italy by saying that the US “would welcome prompt Italian ratification of the NPT” which would “help remove potential legal and political obstacles to our [the US's] fullest possible cooperation”.³¹ In January 1975, Fred Ikle was threatening Italian diplomat Eric Da Rin that if Italy did not ratify the NPT and “lay a sound legal basis for nuclear cooperation between the US and Italy”, then “Congress would assert itself and [US-Italy] relations in the nuclear cooperation and credits area [would] run the risk of deteriorating”.³² When Da Rin complained that “the Italians were having their feet put to the fire by everyone” but that “neither the US nor the Soviet Union had cried out after the Indian explosion”, Ikle reinforced the point by arguing that for post-explosion India “it would be hard to get credits from Congress”.³³

The result

While the center of resistance to the NPT in the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (primarily Gaja and Ducci), was impervious to the external pressure, in that they did not change their position during the process, the diplomacy was viewed as effective in a very particular way. Whereas previously the issue had not been on the radar of the top political level of the Italian government, all the diplomatic activity had “sensitized [Gaja and Ducci's] political superiors to some of the unpleasant domestic and international ramifications of further foot-dragging on NPT”, according to John Volpe, US Ambassador to Italy.³⁴

Italy became so concerned about the fact that the US and other nuclear suppliers could “cut off nuclear materials at any time”³⁵ that they began a campaign to request a waiver of article 25 (b) of the 1973 agreement between the seven Euratom countries and the IAEA for the implementation of nuclear safeguards. Article 25 (b) states that the agreement “shall remain in force as long as States are Parties to the [NPT]”.³⁶ If Italy was not a party to the NPT, then the

³¹ “Possible Approach to Secretary on Italian Nuclear Program”, Telegram from Secretary of State to US Embassy Moscow, 26 October 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974STATE236247

³² “Italian Ratification of NPT”, [Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy in Rome, 15 January 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975STATE009355].

³³ “Italian Ratification of NPT”.

³⁴ “Italy and the NPT

³⁵ “Italy and NPT”, [Telegram from Embassy in Rome to Secretary of State, 5 February 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975ROME01711].

³⁶ <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/infocirc193.pdf>

agreement would not be in force and thus Italy would not be in compliance with other agreements and treaties that required the high level of safeguards provided by the agreement, such as those involving the continued supply of nuclear fuel. However, if Italy obtained a waiver, then Italy would have the requisite safeguards without needing to ratify the NPT. The US and the Europeans were well aware of the ramifications of the waiver and so Italy was told that “safeguards agreement will not enter into force until all affected states, including Italy, are parties to the NPT”³⁷ and that “if Italy would only ratify the NPT ‘the whole problem would go away’”.³⁸

After all of this activity, the Italian Senate ratified the NPT on 23 April 1975, and Italy, along with West Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, all formally ratified the NPT on May 2. Prime Minister Moro, justifying ratification to the Italian Ambassador to Tokyo, emphasized the “badly felt need” for Italy “to purchase uranium for its civilian atomic energy program” and that “Western countries which supply our uranium have unmistakably conditioned their deliveries to our ratification of the NPT” (Nutti 2017: 138). Similarly, Foreign Minister Rumor explained the decision to finally ratify by making “clear that Italy's action on NPT is directly linked to its concern for long-term, assured, adequate supplies of nuclear fuels for energy production”.³⁹ Finally, during his first meeting as Ambassador to the US in July 1975, Gaja made sure that, given Italy’s recent ratification of the NPT, there would be no ““cut-off” in supply of enriched uranium”.⁴⁰

Japan

The Effect of the PNE on Japan

The Indian test raised concerns in Japan about nuclear nonproliferation in general and about NPT ratification in particular; “it complicated the debate within Japan and probably rendered the task of ratification more difficult and uncertain” (Okimoto 1975). Initial reports from “Japanese defense and nuclear experts” were that the “Indian nuclear explosion ... will reinforce Japan's

³⁷ “Italy and the NPT”.

³⁸ “Italy and NPT”.

³⁹ “Italy, the NPT and the Safeguards Agreement”, Telegram from Embassy in Rome to Secretary of State, 18 April 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975ROME05798.

⁴⁰ “Call by Italian Ambassador”, Telegram from Secretary of State to US Mission to IAEA, 18 July 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975STATE166751.

reluctance to ratify NPT” and that “India's explosion has been universally deplored in Japan”.⁴¹ The US Embassy in Tokyo in June 1974 warned that “entry of India into nuclear club” as well as US “decision to provide nuclear fuel to two nations [Egypt and Israel] which refuse to ratify NPT” and “daily press reports indicating that international consensus restraining nuclear proliferation may be breaking down” had led the Japanese Foreign Office “to question whether to proceed with ratification under current circumstances” and some to “conclude that if current international climate threatening non-proliferation persists, opportunity will be lost, perhaps forever, for ending spread of nuclear weapons”.⁴² Yoshiro Kawashima, Director of Japan’s Nuclear Materials Control Center, reported a “quantum change that has already transpired in Japan since India exploded nuclear device”, and that whereas “two months ago no Japanese politician or official would have openly advocated retaining nuclear option”, the Indian test had meant that “advocacy is now commonplace” in right-wing circles of Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party.⁴³ As regards the NPT, Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka said publicly in June 1974, that the “question of whether to proceed with ratification of NPT under current international conditions and thereby renew commitment to forego nuclear option” was “under serious reconsideration”.⁴⁴ The Japanese Foreign Office told the US embassy in Tokyo that “recent developments, specifically India's nuclear explosion and US offers of nuclear plants and fuel to Egypt and Israel, had strengthened position of those opposed to ratifying NPT”.⁴⁵ In early 1975, Japanese Disarmament Ambassador Masahiro Nishibori had a conversation in Geneva with US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs J Owen Zurhellen in which he said he “thought it a foregone conclusion’ that if Japan did not ratify the NPT now, it would never do so”.⁴⁶ Frankel argues in Japan, India’s nuclear explosion “warned of the dangers of proliferation becoming unstoppable”, making voluntarily submitting to NPT safeguards even less appealing (1977: 257).

⁴¹ "May 21 EA Press Summary", Telegram from Secretary of State to East Asian Embassies, 22 May 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974STATE106677

⁴² "Japan and International Nuclear Developments"[, Telegram from Embassy in Tokyo to Secretary of State, 28 June 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974TOKYO08528].

⁴³ "Japan and International Nuclear Developments".

⁴⁴ "Japan and International Nuclear Developments".

⁴⁵ "GOJ Views on Ratifying NPT", Telegram from Embassy in Tokyo to Secretary of State, 09 July 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974TOKYO08952.

⁴⁶ Department of State Action Memorandum, “US Approach to GOJ on NPT”, From Philip Habib and Winston Lord to Secretary of State, February 20 1975, RG 59, PPC, Box 368

US and others' pressure on Japan

The most important issue was whether Japan would have better access to nuclear resources and technology as a NPT member or outside the treaty. Continued access to Canadian uranium (Endicott 1977: 291) and cooperation with the US (Frankel 1977: 263) has been conjectured to have been relevant to Japan's decision. There is evidence that the main concern communicated to the US was whether there were any additional incentives to NPT membership, such as making "availability of enrichment plants, reprocessing plants, which have not gone into non-signatories yet" conditional on NPT membership.⁴⁷ U. Alexis Johnson (former Ambassador to Japan) said that his "underground" information was that "the principal argument they [pro-ratification Japanese] have been using has been that if they did not ratify, they over a period of time would stand in danger of losing us as a source of supply for commercial fuel".⁴⁸ This argument was made much harder to sustain when the US announced plans for nuclear deals with Egypt and Israel, neither of whom had ratified the NPT. Yoshiro Kawashima reported that "Egypt-Israel arrangements were immediately seized upon by [Kinji] Moriyama [Director General of the Science and Technology Agency] and other NPT detractors to support view that NPT not necessary to assure Japanese access to nuclear fuel supplies."⁴⁹ A major part of US strategy was to indicate that Japan would "be in a more favorable position with respect to international nuclear cooperation if they join the treaty than if they do not".⁵⁰ Deputy Secretary of State Robert Ingersoll formally told Japanese Ambassador Yasukawa in February 1975 that, *inter alia*, ratification would "strengthen the weight of Japan's voice" when dealing with supplier nations and "in cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy".⁵¹ By September 1975, Kissinger was explicit in communicating to the Japanese government that ratification would "simplify a number of other matters, including U.S. export of certain nuclear-related materials and

⁴⁷ SASM, August 8 1974, 3:00pm, RG 59, Transcripts.

⁴⁸ SASM, August 8 1974, 3:00pm, RG 59, Transcripts.

⁴⁹ "NPT", Telegram from Embassy in Tokyo to Secretary of State, 31 July 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974TOKYO09967

⁵⁰ Briefing Memo for Analytic Staff Meeting on Non-Proliferation Strategy, 31 July 1974, from Fred Ikle and Winston Lord to Secretary of State, National Security Archive, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 467, Declassified Documents Show Henry Kissinger's Major Role in the 1974 Initiative That Created the Nuclear Suppliers Group. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb467/docs/doc%206%207-31-74%20PPS-ACDA%20paper%20for%20staff%20meeting.pdf>

⁵¹ "Japan and NPT", Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy in Tokyo, 25 February 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975STATE041780

equipment to Japan, and facilitate U.S.-Japanese cooperation in carrying out our responsibilities as suppliers of nuclear-related equipment”.⁵²

Japan’s concerns about the Egypt and Israel deals were assuaged when members of the US Congress criticized the deals and then the administration added extra conditions to the agreements. First, the US raised the safeguards required from safeguards only on US-supplied reactors to safeguards on all nuclear facilities in the country (“full-scope” safeguards), which meant that the deals were at least as restrictive as deals with NPT parties.⁵³ This led to serious doubts that the deals would go through, as the Israelis then backed away from the deal, perhaps because they did not want the Dimona reactor, used in the construction of Israel’s nuclear weapons capability, put under international scrutiny.⁵⁴ The signs from Tokyo were that these US “efforts to tighten controls in various fora recently” had “largely mitigated these former doubts”.⁵⁵ The deal with Egypt was delayed at the request of Israeli politicians and there were no agreements signed until 5 August 1976, after Japan’s ratification (Rabinowitz and Sarkar 2018).

In addition to bilateral diplomatic communications, the first meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group in London in November 1975 seems to have been amongst a series of signs that those in Japanese industrial circles saw as a “tightening of restrictions by suppliers on exports of nuclear materials, equipment and technology” such that they had become “convinced that future nuclear material supply is related to action on NPT”.⁵⁶ The Atomic Energy Division Director of Japan’s Ministry of International Trade and Industry relayed that industrial actors were “alarmed” at how strict the regulations on nuclear exports to non-NPT members were.⁵⁷ The point was also raised by Fred Ikle in a speech to a group of Diet members during a visit to Washington, DC in early 1976, including three members of the Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee which was

⁵² "Japanese NPT Ratification", Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy in Tokyo, 13 September 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975STATE218169

⁵³ John W Finney, 1974. "U.S. Atom Aid in Mideast Tied to Facility Inspection." *New York Times (1923-Current File)*, Oct 02, 1.

⁵⁴ John W Finney. 1974. "Sale of Reactors to Egypt and Israel is Now in Doubt." *New York Times (1923-Current File)*, Dec 17, 77.

⁵⁵ "Miki Visit Paper: NPT", Telegram from Embassy in Tokyo to Secretary of State, 11 July 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975TOKYO09291

⁵⁶ "Japan and NPT: GOJ Push for Ratification"[, Telegram from Embassy in Tokyo to Secretary of State, 4 February 1976, NARA, AAD, 1976TOKYO01718].

⁵⁷ "Japan and NPT: GOJ Push for Ratification".

currently in the midst of discussion of NPT ratification. Ikle noted that the NPT creates “an environment of confidence that has facilitated international cooperation in nuclear energy” and that for US “Congress and public ... it will be much easier to gain continued support for transactions with NPT parties”.⁵⁸

So, through a combination of communications and actions, the US stoked fears inside Japan that a failure to ratify the NPT would endanger the continued supply of nuclear materials and technology. Further, the moves towards stricter multilateral nuclear export policies assuaged Japanese fears that the nonproliferation system was breaking down.

The Nixon-Kissinger-Sato Imbroglio

Existing accounts of Japan’s ratification of the NPT did not have access to documents now made available through declassification and so miss a major part of the diplomatic storm between the US and Japan affecting ratification. For example, Frankel states that “American attitudes were consistently in favour of Japan’s ratification” (1977: 258), something that can now be said to be false given revelations about Nixon and Kissinger’s communications with Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku Sato. Nixon and Kissinger’s approach to Japanese ratification of the NPT before 1974 was actively counter to ratification. While meeting with Nixon at his home in San Clemente on January 7 1972, Sato asked the President, “whether Japan should move to ratify the NPT”.⁵⁹ Nixon’s response was to dissuade Sato from ratifying the treaty and also to obliquely advise a policy of nuclear ambiguity, that is, making others, like the PRC, think that Japan might build or have a nuclear bomb.⁶⁰ First, Nixon said that the decision to ratify the NPT should be decided by each nation “in light of its own circumstances”, and that “The United States ... is not exerting pressure on Japan to ratify”. Then he continued to say that, “Japan might take its time, and thus keep any potential enemy concerned”, immediately following this up by asking the Prime Minister “to forget the preceding remark”. However, despite Sato noting that a relatively technical question on “inspections” was “the only thing holding up Japan's ratification”, Nixon

⁵⁸ "Japan and NPT", Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy in Tokyo, 13 February 1976, NARA, AAD, 1976STATE035684.

⁵⁹ Meeting with Eisaku Sato, Japanese Prime Minister, on Friday, 7 January 1972 9:30am in San Clemente, in Japan and the United States: Diplomatic, Security and Economic Relations, 1960–1976, Digital National Security Archive, Accession Number: JU01500.

⁶⁰ Nixon may have thought that Sato would be predisposed in favor of this policy as Sato had a reputation for being pro-nuclear and had in fact forcefully told US President Lyndon Johnson, “if the Chi-Coms have nuclear weapons, the Japanese should also have them.” (quoted in Rublee 2009: 64).

pursued his theme. Nixon pointed out that “in his view Japan's position in Asia and the world would be strengthened if those who might become Japan's opponents were given cause to worry”. Nixon then noted that he understood that Japanese domestic politics meant that the government had to forswear military power, but “Japan’s interest in foreign policy” would be to “cause its neighbors some concern, and not say specifically what it would not do”. Sato responded with comments about anti-war feeling in Japan and emphasized that “all Japanese abhor nuclear weapons”. He also told a story about visiting the Hiroshima Museum, “which made him feel even more deeply the horror of nuclear weapons”. Nixon responded by recalling “a hunting story, that a sitting duck could easily become a Peking duck”. This exchange can only be interpreted as Nixon trying to encourage Japan to make the PRC think that Japan might develop nuclear weapons, and that ratifying the NPT would mean that Japan had renounced that possibility.

This policy of dissuading Japan from ratification was consistently pursued. After returning from a trip to Japan in June 1972, Kissinger was debriefing Nixon and mentioned that “on my trip to Japan, the State Department was bugging the daylights out of me and I was getting briefing papers, letters, planted questions, if I would publicly support the Nonproliferation Treaty in Japan and squeeze the Japanese government.”⁶¹ Nixon said, “I hope you didn’t”, to which Kissinger replied, “I didn't. I sort of mumbled around where ever the ambassador was present. But I told *Sato* and Fukuda privately that what you said in San Clemente is our policy.” Then, in Tokyo in February 1973, Kissinger was again talking to Sato and asked “whether he recalled the discussion of the NPT at San Clemente”.⁶² Sato “replied that he recalls it in detail, and thinks of it often.” Kissinger then “assured him that that remained our policy, and advised him not to pay attention to what any one else might say.” Kissinger here is probably referring to other parts of the US government, like the State department, that generally but halfheartedly advocated ratification of the NPT.

⁶¹ Foreign Relations of The United States, 1969–1976, Volume E–2, Documents On Arms Control And Nonproliferation, 1969–1972, Document 58. Conversation Between President Nixon and his Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), Washington, June 13, 1972, 11:43 a.m.-1:18 p.m.

⁶² [Private Message for Eisaku Sato from President Nixon], 20 February 1973, in Japan and the United States: Diplomatic, Security, and Economic Relations, 1977–1992, Digital National Security Archive, Accession Number JA00056.

It seems likely that knowledge of Nixon and Kissinger's policy spread quickly among the top level of Japanese policymakers. In March 1974, Japanese diplomat Toshio Yamazaki said that "opposition to the NPT within the Japanese Cabinet came from those who claimed that the United States was not really enthusiastic any longer about the NPT".⁶³ This was made very explicit when Nishibori explained the problem to Zurhellen and Van Doren in September 1974.⁶⁴ He said that "there had been reports that President Nixon told former Prime Minister Sato quite directly that it would be better for Japan not to ratify and to maintain its option to go nuclear". The fact that these reports had not been explicitly refuted by the US "was used by opponents of ratification to buttress their arguments" to the extent that "those few politicians within the Government party opposing the NPT based their argument largely on the allegation that the United States did not want Japan to ratify". If President Ford, during his visit to Tokyo in November 1974, "simply indicated to Prime Minister Tanaka, even in a low-key way, that he hoped for Japan's ratification of the NPT", Nishibori thought that this would be "crucial" and "the final factor that would cause the Prime Minister to proceed with ratification".⁶⁵ Awareness of this issue had broadened to become public knowledge by February 1975, when the US Embassy in Tokyo reported a "growing feeling in Tokyo that the US no longer really cares whether or not Japan ratifies the NPT".⁶⁶ A specific example was Yasuhiro Nakasone, Minister of International Trade and Industry, who was said to be "misrepresenting your [Kissinger's] past comments as an indication that we have no special interest in or concern over Japan's ratification".⁶⁷

In response to these concerns, Kissinger took steps to communicate to Japan that the US did in fact now want them to ratify the NPT. Kissinger's briefing notes for Ford's visit to Japan in November 1974 include among the points that the President should stress that "we are glad to note Japan's announced intention to ratify the Treaty".⁶⁸ Both President Ford and Secretary

⁶³ Memorandum of Conversation on "Japanese Ratification of NPT" March 5 1974, NARA, RG 59, P-Reel, Box 20D, P740020-1862

⁶⁴ Memorandum of Conversation on "Japanese Ratification of NPT" September 5 1974, NARA, RG 59, P-Reel, Box 101C, P740101-1385.

⁶⁵ Memorandum of Conversation on "Japanese Ratification of NPT" September 5 1974, NARA, RG 59, P-Reel, Box 101C, P740101-1385

⁶⁶ Department of State Action Memorandum, "US Approach to GOJ on NPT", From Philip Habib and Winston Lord to Secretary of State, February 20 1975, NARA, RG 59, PPC, Box 368

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Henry Kissinger to Gerald Ford, 'Your Visit to Japan', undated, National Security Adviser, Trip Briefing Books and Cables for President Ford, 1974-1976, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library.

Kissinger publicly and privately made assurances that the US was committed to Japanese ratification of the NPT.⁶⁹ For example, on 24 February 1975, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Ingersoll formally told Japanese Ambassador Yasukawa that Kissinger wanted him to know that the US position was that Japan should ratify the NPT as soon as possible.⁷⁰ In response to all of this communication, Prime Minister Miki personally assured Ford that he would proceed with ratification.⁷¹

Similarly, Ogawa's analysis of the Diet's discussion of NPT ratification in May 1975 and March 1976 reveals that one of the four primary issues raised in the debate was the future of Japan's nuclear energy industry. A government representative told the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee that "the increasingly strict provisions against nuclear energy cooperation with non-NPT signatories following the Indian nuclear test would be detrimental to Japanese nuclear energy production should Japan fail to ratify the NPT" (Ogawa 2003: 36). Japan finally ratified the NPT on 8 June 1976.

Republic of Korea

The South Korean case is slightly different from the Italy and Japan cases in that there is no evidence that the Indian test directly affected Korean attitudes towards the NPT. In the context of the US withdrawal from Vietnam and more broadly from South East Asia, South Korean (ROK) President Park Chung Hee took various steps towards pursuing nuclear weapons from 1970 onwards, including in late 1973 a \$2 billion plan to build a nuclear weapons capability within a decade (Reardon 2010: 223). When the US learned about this program in November 1974, there was broad agreement that action should be taken to stop it but that this action should be private, slow, and cautious so as to avoid destabilizing the alliance and the region (Young and Stueck 2003: 19; Oberdorfer 2001: 70). The US mission to the IAEA, worried in August 1974 about ROK moves towards acquiring nuclear power stations and reprocessing technology and the consequent "large quantities of plutonium", recommended that the US accord ROK ratification

⁶⁹ "Miki Visit Paper: NPT", Telegram from Embassy in Tokyo to Secretary of State, 11 July 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975TOKYO09291.

⁷⁰ "Japan and NPT", Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy in Tokyo, 25 February 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975STATE041780

⁷¹ "Japan and NPT: GOJ Push for Ratification", Telegram from Embassy in Tokyo to Secretary of State, 4 February 1976, NARA, AAD, 1976TOKYO01718.

of the NPT “very high priority attention”.⁷² However, despite the flurry of nonproliferation activity prompted by the Indian test, the US had taken no action by 23 January 1975, when Zurhellen had a discussion with a Canadian diplomat who asked whether “USG was pressing ROK for NPT ratification”.⁷³ Zurhellen could only note the general line taken by the US “that it hoped for widest possible adherence to NPT” and stated that “we have taken no specific actions to make NPT ratification a condition of any of our dealings with the ROK”. However, in March 1975, the US Congress made an Export-Import Bank loan and loan guarantee for the construction of a nuclear powerplant conditional on NPT ratification. Senator Adlai Stevenson III, of Illinois, introduced a resolution (S.J. Res 51, 7 March 1975) deferring approval of a loan to the Korea Electric Company of the Republic of Korea by the Ex-Im Bank for the KORI II nuclear reactor pending review by Congress.⁷⁴ The Republic of Korea then formally ratified the NPT on 23 April 1975. Relying on these facts, many scholars, including Drezner (1999) and Miller (2014a), argue that US pressure caused Korean NPT ratification. Drezner makes the inference that “After Congress made its threat, the South Korean Parliament promptly approved the Non-Proliferation Treaty” (1999: 258) and Miller notes that the “veiled threat was shortly followed by South Korea ratifying the NPT” (2014a: 934). Choi also attributes the Korean decision to ratify the NPT to American pressure, noting that “Washington started to press the ROK to ratify the NPT” and that then Korea ratified (2014: 76). However, these arguments are complicated by documents that reveal that the decision by ROK President Park to ratify preceded the linking of the loan to ratification. The evidence below suggests that Canada explicitly made the sale of a CANDU reactor and a research reactor dependent on Korea’s ratifying the NPT and that this was the reason why Park decided to ratify.

As noted above, Canadian nuclear export policy changed dramatically as a result of the Indian test. Canadian deals with Argentina and South Korea were already in progress in May 1974 but they came under intense scrutiny as a result of the Indian test (Morrison 1978: 62). One of the lines of action that Canada took was to make reactor sales conditional on NPT ratification. In a discussion on 13 November 1974, Gordon Longmuir, Canadian First Secretary in Seoul, told the

⁷² “Korean Ratification of NPT”, Telegram from US Mission to IAEA to Secretary of State, 13 August 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974IAEAV07090

⁷³ “Canadian Pressure for ROK Ratification of NPT”, Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassies in Seoul, Ottawa, and IAEA Vienna, 24 January 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975STATE016913

⁷⁴ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/94th-congress/senate-joint-resolution/51>

US Ambassador to the ROK Richard Sneider that the Canadian cabinet was considering various options regarding the sale of a CANDU reactor, including “to press the ROK for ratification of the NPT”.⁷⁵ The Canadian Cabinet concluded that NPT ratification was a precondition of the sale on 19 December (Jang 2017: 22). Then, on 6 January 1975, Allan J. MacEachen, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent a letter to South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Dong-jo, which “made it clear that Canada would only export CANDU on the condition that the ROK [ratified] the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty” (Choi 2014: 75).⁷⁶

Park can have been under no misapprehension that a refusal to ratify at this point would seriously endanger the CANDU sale and definitely preclude a research reactor deal. In fact, the available evidence suggests that ratification was aimed at satisfying this Canadian condition. In mid-January 1975, the ROK mission to the IAEA suddenly made inquiries regarding NPT safeguards and participation in the NPT Review Conference in May 1975. US Ambassador to the IAEA Dwight Porter commented that this might “have arisen from negotiations with Canada” because all previous mentions of the NPT to the ROK mission had “been met with little more than blank stare”.⁷⁷ In fact, a high-level ministerial meeting was held in the ROK on 23 January which agreed to recommend to President Park that they accept Canada’s demand and ratify the NPT in order to pursue the reactor purchases. The recommendation was approved by Prime Minister Kim in February and subsequently approved by President Park on March 7 (Jang 2017: 26-7). Longmuir had said he had been “officially informed ... on a confidential basis” the morning of 26 February, that Park had decided to ratify the NPT, with cabinet approval to come in April. Longmuir and the rest of the Canadian Embassy believed that Park had made the decision “largely because of Canadian pressure in connection with Candu reactor sale”. The decision, made in February, precedes Adlai Stevenson’s Ex-Im Bank Senate resolution in March.

⁷⁵ "Canadian Nuclear Reactor Program in Korea", Telegram from Embassy in Seoul to Secretary of State, 14 November 1974, NARA, AAD, 1974SEOUL07604

⁷⁶ Choi argues that, at the time, the ROK government thought that this letter was a result of American concerns about the ROK nuclear program (2014: 75 fn13).

⁷⁷ "Korea and NPT", Telegram from US Mission to IAEA to Secretary of State, 22 January 1975, NARA, AAD, 1975IAEAV00525

Ratification of the NPT did not fully stop the ROK nuclear weapons program, which continued until December 1976, at which point “US threats and the failure of the program to make any significant technical progress” drove the decision to cancel (Reardon 2010: 231).

Conclusion

The evidence demonstrates that theories of NPT ratification that ignore or dismiss the dynamics of changing preferences miss an important piece of the puzzle. It is clear from the evidence in the three cases that India’s nuclear test produced processes that both initially worked against and ultimately worked in favor of NPT ratification in certain states. First, the PNE produced or exacerbated fears of a nuclear domino effect (Miller 2014b), that is, the expectation that other states would acquire the capacity to create and deploy nuclear devices and weapons. It also challenged some people’s faith in the efficacy of the current nonproliferation system to achieve its goals. Regardless of the technical legal issues, India’s explosion was seen as a failure of the NPT. Thirdly, the PNE enabled pro-nuke factions in domestic politics, who became more vocal and were taken more seriously than previously. Counteracting these effects, the PNE raised the salience of nuclear proliferation in several ways. It made proliferation a matter of public interest, that is, it put it on the policy agenda as a problem to be solved. This meant that policymakers felt pressure to think about and analyze the situation, and to do, or at least be seen to do, something about the problem. The PNE also made counterproliferation more important than it had been previously. This meant that policymakers became more willing to sacrifice other policy goals, or pay higher costs, to pursue nonproliferation than they had been previously.

Further, contrary to many accounts of nonproliferation activities, in two of the cases studied here, Canada, a state that was not only not a superpower, but not even a nuclear weapons state, played a primary role. Many of the motivations attributed to counterproliferators are in some sense a function of the desire to preserve a nuclear-weapons monopoly, something that cannot be part of Canadian policy. This evidence suggests that further research on Canada’s role in the nonproliferation regime would be theoretically fruitful.

Finally, the findings also challenge claims that nuclear assistance has no relationship with NPT membership (Fuhrmann 2009; Swango 2014). In the cases studied here, threats, both implied and explicit, of denying nuclear materials and technology to non-ratifiers were made. However,

in all cases, the threats were not carried out because the recipients of the threats took action to avoid the consequences of non-compliance. This has implications for empirical studies of this question; perhaps there is a selection effect, such that those cases where NPT membership might have made a difference to the provision of nuclear assistance are more likely to be cases where the fear of losing nuclear assistance means that states are more willing to ratify the NPT.

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