### 1NC

#### Interpretation: “Private entities” is a generic bare plural. The aff may not defend that a subset of nations ban the appropriation of outer space.

Nebel 19. [Jake Nebel is an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California and executive director of Victory Briefs. He writes a lot of this stuff lol – duh.] “Genericity on the Standardized Tests Resolution.” Vbriefly. August 12, 2019. <https://www.vbriefly.com/2019/08/12/genericity-on-the-standardized-tests-resolution/?fbclid=IwAR0hUkKdDzHWrNeqEVI7m59pwsnmqLl490n4uRLQTe7bWmWDO_avWCNzi14> TG

Both distinctions are important. Generic resolutions can’t be affirmed by specifying particular instances. But, since generics tolerate exceptions, plan-inclusive counterplans (PICs) do not negate generic resolutions.

Bare plurals are typically used to express generic generalizations. But there are two important things to keep in mind. First, generic generalizations are also often expressed via other means (e.g., definite singulars, indefinite singulars, and bare singulars). Second, and more importantly for present purposes, bare plurals can also be used to express existential generalizations. For example, “Birds are singing outside my window” is true just in case there are some birds singing outside my window; it doesn’t require birds in general to be singing outside my window.

So, what about “colleges and universities,” “standardized tests,” and “undergraduate admissions decisions”? Are they generic or existential bare plurals? On other topics I have taken great pains to point out that their bare plurals are generic—because, well, they are. On this topic, though, I think the answer is a bit more nuanced. Let’s see why.

“Colleges and universities” is a generic bare plural. I don’t think this claim should require any argument, when you think about it, but here are a few reasons.

First, ask yourself, honestly, whether the following speech sounds good to you: “Eight colleges and universities—namely, those in the Ivy League—ought not consider standardized tests in undergraduate admissions decisions. Maybe other colleges and universities ought to consider them, but not the Ivies. Therefore, in the United States, colleges and universities ought not consider standardized tests in undergraduate admissions decisions.” That is obviously not a valid argument: the conclusion does not follow. Anyone who sincerely believes that it is valid argument is, to be charitable, deeply confused. But the inference above would be good if “colleges and universities” in the resolution were existential. By way of contrast: “Eight birds are singing outside my window. Maybe lots of birds aren’t singing outside my window, but eight birds are. Therefore, birds are singing outside my window.” Since the bare plural “birds” in the conclusion gets an existential reading, the conclusion follows from the premise that eight birds are singing outside my window: “eight” entails “some.” If the resolution were existential with respect to “colleges and universities,” then the Ivy League argument above would be a valid inference. Since it’s not a valid inference, “colleges and universities” must be a generic bare plural.

Second, “colleges and universities” fails the [upward-entailment test](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/generics/#IsolGeneInte) for existential uses of bare plurals. Consider the sentence, “Lima beans are on my plate.” This sentence expresses an existential statement that is true just in case there are some lima beans on my plate. One test of this is that it entails the more general sentence, “Beans are on my plate.” Now consider the sentence, “Colleges and universities ought not consider the SAT.” (To isolate “colleges and universities,” I’ve eliminated the other bare plurals in the resolution; it cannot plausibly be generic in the isolated case but existential in the resolution.) This sentence does not entail the more general statement that educational institutions ought not consider the SAT. This shows that “colleges and universities” is generic, because it fails the upward-entailment test for existential bare plurals.

Third, “colleges and universities” fails the adverb of quantification test for existential bare plurals. Consider the sentence, “Dogs are barking outside my window.” This sentence expresses an existential statement that is true just in case there are some dogs barking outside my window. One test of this appeals to the drastic change of meaning caused by inserting any adverb of quantification (e.g., always, sometimes, generally, often, seldom, never, ever). You cannot add any such adverb into the sentence without drastically changing its meaning. To apply this test to the resolution, let’s again isolate the bare plural subject: “Colleges and universities ought not consider the SAT.” Adding generally (“Colleges and universitiesz generally ought not consider the SAT”) or ever (“Colleges and universities ought not ever consider the SAT”) result in comparatively minor changes of meaning. (Note that this test doesn’t require there to be no change of meaning and doesn’t have to work for every adverb of quantification.) This strongly suggests what we already know: that “colleges and universities” is generic rather than existential in the resolution.

#### Precision o/w – anything else justifies the aff arbitrarily jettisoning words in the resolution at their whim which decks negative ground and preparation because the aff is no longer bounded by the resolution.

#### Violation – They specified China

#### Standards:

#### Limits and ground – their model allows affs to defend any combination of private entities in any countries which explodes negative burden and causes random affs every tournament

#### Drop the debater:– we can’t restart the round from the 1AC and I’m skewed for the rest of the debate.

## 1NC -- Long

#### Interpretation: the affirmative must only defend that the appropriation of space by private entities is unjust.

#### China's "private" sector companies aren't private

Olson 20 [Stephen Olson, research fellow at the Hinrich Foundation. "Are Private Chinese Companies Really Private?" The Diplomat, 9-30-2020, accessed 1-14-2022, https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/are-private-chinese-companies-really-private/] HWIC

China has often been criticized for a lack of transparency, especially with regard to its economic and trade policies. While in many cases these criticisms are valid, it belies the fact that in other instances, China is remarkably open and transparent about its intentions and ambitions.

Such is the case with China’s “Opinion on Strengthening the United Front Work of the Private Economy in the New Era,” recently released by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (and further elaborated on by President Xi Jinping himself). This document tells us in no uncertain terms that Chinese private companies will be increasingly called upon to conduct their operations in tight coordination with governmental policy objectives and ideologies. The rest of the world should take note.

A Different Vision of “Private” Business

The 5,000 word “opinion” aims to ratchet-up the role and influence of the CCP within the private sector in order “to better focus the wisdom and strength of the private businesspeople on the goal and mission to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.” The objective is to establish a “united front” between business and government and facilitate the “enhancement of the party’s leadership over the private economy.” According to the plan, “private economic figures are to be more closely united around the party,” thereby achieving “a high degree of consistency with the Party Central Committee on political stand, political direction, political principles, and political roads.”

All of this stands in stark contrast to long-accepted concepts of how private companies function in a free market. The overriding purpose of business, according to these traditional precepts, is to earn profits through the provision of value-added products and services, in response to marketplace signals and under the constraint of basic economic realities. Government ideology plays no role in that equation.

But China has a very different vision. Government officials and government ideologies are directly infused into business operations. Private sector employees are “educated” on government policies and ideologies, with the expectation that this “enlightenment” will help inform their business decisions. This government-business symbiosis is further cemented by the provision of massive government subsidies (estimated to be about 3 percent of China’s GDP) to Chinese companies.

#### Negate – they skirt the core controversy of the topic which is national vs private space activities – kills stasis point and pre-round prep and means we lose access to generics that rely on the motives of private companies differing from national interest proven by the fact that their advantage is functionally China space good/bad – competing interps and DTD on T, it's a question of models and we indict their advocacy

### Case – Space

#### No one’s going to war over a downed satellite

Bowen 18 [Bleddyn Bowen, Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Leicester. The Art of Space Deterrence. February 20, 2018. https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/commentary/the-art-of-space-deterrence/]

Space is often an afterthought or a miscellaneous ancillary in the grand strategic views of top-level decision-makers. A president may not care that one satellite may be lost or go dark; it may cause panic and Twitter-based hysteria for the space community, of course. But the terrestrial context and consequences, as well as the political stakes and symbolism of any exchange of hostilities in space matters more. The political and media dimension can magnify or minimise the perceived consequences of losing specific satellites out of all proportion to their actual strategic effect.

#### Won’t go nuclear – seen as a normal conventional attack because of integration with ground forces

Firth 7/1/19 [News Editor at MIT Technology Review, was Chief News Editor at New Scientist. How to fight a war in space (and get away with it). July 1, 2019. MIT Technology Review]

Space is so intrinsic to how advanced militaries fight on the ground that an attack on a satellite need no longer signal the opening shot in a nuclear apocalypse. As a result, “deterrence in space is less certain than it was during the Cold War,” says Todd Harrison, who heads the Aerospace Security Project at CSIS, a think tank in Washington, DC. Non-state actors, as well as more minor powers like North Korea and Iran, are also gaining access to weapons that can bloody the noses of much larger nations in space.

**Pursuit of dominance leads to Sino-Russia alliance**

**Porter, DPhil, 19**

(Patrick, ModernHistory@Oxford, ProfInternationalSecurityAndStrategy@Birmingham, Advice for a Dark Age: Managing Great Power Competition, The Washington Quarterly, 42:1, 7-25)

Even the United States cannot prudently take on every adversary on multiple fronts. The costs of military campaigns against these adversaries in their backyards, whether in the Baltic States or Taiwan, would outstrip the losses that the U.S. military has sustained in decades. Short of all-out conflict, to mobilize for dominance and **risk escalation on multiple such fronts** would court several dangers. It would **overstretch the country**. The U.S. defense budget now approaches $800 billion annually, not including deficit-financed military operations. This is a time of ballooning deficits, where the Congressional Budget Office warns that “the prospect of large and growing debt poses substantial risks for the nation.”27 If in such conditions, current expenditure is not enough to buy unchallengeable military preponderance—and it may not be—then the failure lies not in the failure to spend even more. Neither is the answer to sacrifice the quality of civic life at home to service the cause of preponderance abroad. The old “two war standard,” a planning construct whereby the United States configures its forces to conduct two regional conflicts at once, would be unsustainably demanding against more than one peer competitor, or potentially with a roster of major and minor adversaries all at once.28 After all, the purpose of American military power is ultimately to secure a way of life as a constitutional republic. To impose ever-greater debts on civil society and strip back collective provision at home, on the basis that the quality of life is expendable for the cause of hegemony, is perversely to set up power-projection abroad as the end, when it should be the means. The problem lies, rather, in **the inflexible pursuit of hegemony itself**, and the **failure to balance commitments** with scarce resources. To attempt to suppress every adversary simultaneously would **drive adversaries together, creating hostile coalitions**. It also may not succeed. Counterproliferation in North Korea is difficult enough, for instance, but the task becomes more difficult still if U.S. enmity with China drives Beijing to refuse cooperation over enforcing sanctions on Pyongyang. Concurrent competitions would also split American resources, attention and time. Exacerbating the strain on scarce resources between defense, consumption and investment raises the polarizing question of whether preponderance is even worth it, which then undermines the domestic consensus needed to support it. At the same time, reduced investment in infrastructure and education would damage the economic foundations for conducting competition abroad in the first place. Taken together, indiscriminate competition risks creating the thing most feared in traditional U.S. grand strategy: **a hostile Eurasian alliance** leading to continuous U.S. mobilization against hostile coalitions, turning the U.S. republic into an illiberal garrison state. If the prospect for the United States as a great power faces a problem, it is not the size of the defense budget, or the material weight of resources at the U.S. disposal, or popular reluctance to exercise leadership. Rather, the problem lies in the scope of the policy that those capabilities are designed to serve. To make the problem smaller, Washington should take steps to make the pool of adversaries smaller.

#### Space wars don’t cause escalation

James Pavur 19, Professor of Computer Science Department of Computer Science at Oxford University and Ivan Martinovic, DPhil Researcher Cybersecurity Centre for Doctoral Training at Oxford University, “The Cyber-ASAT: On the Impact of Cyber Weapons in Outer Space”, 2019 11th International Conference on Cyber Conflict: Silent Battle T. Minárik, S. Alatalu, S. Biondi, M. Signoretti, I. Tolga, G. Visky (Eds.), <https://ccdcoe.org/uploads/2019/06/Art_12_The-Cyber-ASAT.pdf>

A. Limited Accessibility Space is difficult. Over 60 years have passed since the first Sputnik launch and only nine countries (ten including the EU) have orbital launch capabilities. Moreover, a launch programme alone does not guarantee the resources and precision required to operate a meaningful ASAT capability. Given this, one possible reason why space wars have not broken out is simply because only the US has ever had the ability to fight one [21, p. 402], [22, pp. 419–420]. Although launch technology may become cheaper and easier, it is unclear to what extent these advances will be distributed among presently non-spacefaring nations. Limited access to orbit necessarily reduces the scenarios which could plausibly escalate to ASAT usage. Only major conflicts between the handful of states with ‘space club’ membership could be considered possible flashpoints. Even then, the fragility of an attacker’s own space assets creates de-escalatory pressures due to the deterrent effect of retaliation. Since the earliest days of the space race, dominant powers have recognized this dynamic and demonstrated an inclination towards de-escalatory space strategies [23]. B. Attributable Norms There also exists a long-standing normative framework favouring the peaceful use of space. The effectiveness of this regime, centred around the Outer Space Treaty (OST), is highly contentious and many have pointed out its serious legal and political shortcomings [24]–[26]. Nevertheless, this status quo framework has somehow supported over six decades of relative peace in orbit. Over these six decades, norms have become deeply ingrained into the way states describe and perceive space weaponization. This de facto codification was dramatically demonstrated in 2005 when the US found itself on the short end of a 160-1 UN vote after opposing a non-binding resolution on space weaponization. Although states have occasionally pushed the boundaries of these norms, this has typically occurred through incremental legal re-interpretation rather than outright opposition [27]. Even the most notable incidents, such as the 2007-2008 US and Chinese ASAT demonstrations, were couched in rhetoric from both the norm violators and defenders, depicting space as a peaceful global commons [27, p. 56]. Altogether, this suggests that states perceive real costs to breaking this normative tradition and may even moderate their behaviours accordingly. One further factor supporting this norms regime is the high degree of attributability surrounding ASAT weapons. For kinetic ASAT technology, plausible deniability and stealth are essentially impossible. The literally explosive act of launching a rocket cannot evade detection and, if used offensively, retaliation. This imposes high diplomatic costs on ASAT usage and testing, particularly during peacetime. C. Environmental Interdependence A third stabilizing force relates to the orbital debris consequences of ASATs. China’s 2007 ASAT demonstration was the largest debris-generating event in history, as the targeted satellite dissipated into thousands of dangerous debris particles [28, p. 4]. Since debris particles are indiscriminate and unpredictable, they often threaten the attacker’s own space assets [22, p. 420]. This is compounded by Kessler syndrome, a phenomenon whereby orbital debris ‘breeds’ as large pieces of debris collide and disintegrate. As space debris remains in orbit for hundreds of years, the cascade effect of an ASAT attack can constrain the attacker’s long-term use of space [29, pp. 295– 296]. Any state with kinetic ASAT capabilities will likely also operate satellites of its own, and they are necessarily exposed to this collateral damage threat. Space debris thus acts as a strong strategic deterrent to ASAT usage.

#### Loss of satellites will shut down terrestrial mining

Les Johnson 13, Deputy Manager for NASA's Advanced Concepts Office at the Marshall Space Flight Center, Co-Investigator for the JAXA T-Rex Space Tether Experiment and PI of NASA's ProSEDS Experiment, Master's Degree in Physics from Vanderbilt University, Popular Science Writer, and NASA Technologist, Frequent Contributor to the Journal of the British Interplanetary Society and Member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, National Space Society, the World Future Society, and MENSA, Sky Alert!: When Satellites Fail, p. 105

Resource Location

Looking for rare minerals to be mined for our many gadgets, household appliances, and industrial machines? Soil type is often a strong indicator of whether or not underground deposits of metals and minerals are located. By using satellite data to identify promising surface structural features and different soil types, mining companies can better identify promising mining locations, wasting less time and effort in finding the best places to obtain much-needed industrial resources. Without satellite images, the finding and assessment of promising new mines would grind to a halt as the industries retooled back into the days of much slower and labor-intensive field surveys (but without GPS!).

#### Amazon mining will cause extinction

Charito Ushiñahua 11, Anthropologist Working for the Preservation of Indigenous Amazonian Cultures, “Yanomami Indians: The Fierce People?”, http://www.amazon-indians.org/yanomami.html

A mineralogical survey of the northern Amazon by the Brazilian government in 1975 revealed the presence of gold ore in the Roraima region of Brazil. By the early 1980's, miners in search of gold began invading the Yanomami territory in Brazil and by 1987 it had become a full-fledged gold rush. Over 30,000 prospectors entered Yanomami lands and established over a hundred clandestine mining operations. The resulting massacres and diseases brought by these invaders is estimated to have caused the death of over 2,000 Yanomami. One of the problems with gold mining is the environmental destruction it causes. In order to separate gold from rocks and soil, mercury is used. Mercury in the rivers and streams bio-accumulates and permeates the entire ecosystem. The mercury accumulates in predators and hunters (such as the Yanomami) higher up the food chain and creates a neurotoxin that causes birth defects and abnormal child development. The Yanomami have had increased child mortality rates while their birth rates have declined putting their very existence into risk. Moreover, malaria increased in the area due to the stagnant pools left by the miners that increase the mosquito populations that are vectors of the disease. Some have estimated that malaria is responsible for the deaths of about 13% of the Yanomami population every year. However, the negative influence of the miners extends beyond physical health. Their introduction of alcohol and other western goods has had an immense negative effect on Yanomami society itself.

In response to the crisis created by the gold miners, in 1992 the Yanomami territory was protected by the Brazilian government by creating a federal indigenous reserve. However, the gold miners were not happy about the creation of the reserve and in July, 1993, a group of miners tried to exterminate an entire village in what has become to be known as the "Haximu Massacre." At lease 16 Yanomami were killed in what many have called genocide. Some of the miners were tried and convicted and after numerous appeals on the 7th of August, 2006 the Brazilian Supreme Federal Court reaffirmed that the crime known as the Haximu Massacre and upheld the ruling sentencing the miners to 19 years in prison for genocide. However, to this day there is political pressure by the mining industry to reduce the Yanomami territory and allow commercial mining operations on their lands.

In the year 2000, a journalist named Patrick Tierney published a book called, "Darkness in El Dorado," and accused anthropologist Napoleon Chagnon and his colleague geneticist James Neel of numerous misdeeds, among them intentionally creating an epidemic of measles among the Yanomami people in order to study the effects of natural selection on primitive societies. Tierney states that the resulting epidemic caused the death of hundreds of Yanomami. Incredibly, Tierney charged that the experiments were funded by the US Atomic Energy Commission, who sought to model the societal consequences of mass mortality caused by nuclear war. In addition to the measles epidemic, Tierney charged that Chagnon mischaracterized the Yanomami as "The Fierce People" when in fact it was Chagnon who was causing the violence by introducing enormous amounts of western goods such as machetes into the Yanomami society, thus stimulating warfare over the introduced goods. Tierney also accused Chagnon of fraud by staging films, such as "The Axe Fight" that he helped produce. The journalist charged that the anthropologist prescripted the films and that they were not spontaneous as portrayed.

Tierney's book caused an uproar in the anthropological community and the American Anthropological Association (AAA) got involved in the debate. In fact, the AAA convened a special commission to investigate the allegations against Chagnon and Neel. The report by the AAA issued in May, 2002 exonerated the anthropologist and geneticist from causing a measles epidemic among the Yanomami. Nonetheless, the AAA criticized some aspects of Chagnon's research, including his portrayal of the Yanomami as "The Fierce People," and his bribing of Venezuelan officials. However, the AAA debate was not over and three years later in June, 2005 they rescinded the acceptance of the 2002 report.

As someone who is working to support indigenous people, I would like to point out that over the many years since publishing his first book on the Yanomami (whose revenues made him a millionaire), Chagnon has failed to bring significant aid to the Yanomami people. In fact, he sought to damage the indigenous movement by publicly criticizing Davi Kopenawa, a Yanomami activist who helped establish the Yanomami reserve in Brazil. One might ask if it was proper behavior for an anthropologist to hurt the efforts of an indigenous Amazonian activist attempting to defend his people. Interestingly, the Yanomami leader Davi Kopenawa has predicted the destruction of the entire human race if the Amazon Rainforest is destroyed. Kopenawa states, "The forest-land will only die if it is destroyed by whites. Then, the creeks will disappear, the land will crumble, the trees will dry and the stones of the mountains will shatter under the heat. The xapiripë spirits who live in the mountain ranges and play in the forest will eventually flee. Their fathers, the shamans, will not be able to summon them to protect us. The forest-land will become dry and empty. The shamans will no longer be able to deter the smoke-epidemics and the malefic beings who make us ill. And so everyone will die." Many ecologists seem to agree with Kopenawa, believing that the Amazon Rainforest are the "lungs of the Earth" and that if the Amazon is destroyed, it will cause a global ecological disaster resulting in the eventual destruction of the human race.

#### Satellites are crucial for large, industrial megafarms

Les Johnson 13, Deputy Manager for NASA's Advanced Concepts Office at the Marshall Space Flight Center, Co-Investigator for the JAXA T-Rex Space Tether Experiment and PI of NASA's ProSEDS Experiment, Master's Degree in Physics from Vanderbilt University, Popular Science Writer, and NASA Technologist, Frequent Contributor to the Journal of the British Interplanetary Sodety and Member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, National Space Society, the World Future Society, and MENSA, Sky Alert!: When Satellites Fail, p. 106

Agriculture

To feed the Earth's growing population affordably, farming has gone from a mostly decentralized, family-owned business to corporate farming on a scale never before imagined. These industrial megafarms are a primary reason that many people in the world can enjoy plentiful and varied foods at a reasonable cost. On this scale, deciding what crop to plant in a given field is not just business - it's science. And the science relies, in large part, on data from space.

Companies such as the Satellite Imaging Corporation (SIC) provide data from space on overall crop health, soil analysis, and irrigation impacts and efficiencies. From space, you can easily map soil variations, finding areas rich in organic matter and others less so - this allows optimized planting to take advantage of crops that thrive in any given soil environment. Very large farms also use satellite images to assess the overall health of their crops by land area, spotting those that are being impacted by non-optimal soil moisture content, etc., allowing the farmer to take corrective action while there is still time to save the crop.

#### Industrial ag’s unsustainable and causes extinction

Alice Friedemann 17, Systems Architect and Engineer For Over 25 Years, Science, Energy, and Agriculture Writer, Investigative Journalist and Energy Expert, Founder of Energy Skeptic, Author of When Trucks Stop Running: Energy and the Future of Transportation, “Chemical Industrial Agriculture is Unsustainable. Here’s Why”, Resilience, 5-27, http://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-03-27/chemical-industrial-farming-unsustainable-heres/

We hear a lot about how we’re running out of antibiotics. But we are also doomed to run out of pesticides, because insects inevitably develop resistance, whether toxic chemicals are sprayed directly or genetically engineered into the plants.

Worse yet, weeds, insects, and fungus develop resistance in just 5 years on average, which has caused the chemicals to grow increasingly lethal over the past 60 years. And it takes on average eight to ten years to identify, test, and develop a new pesticide, though that isn’t long enough to discover the long-term toxicity to humans and other organisms.

And this devil’s bargain hasn’t even provided most of the gains in crop yields, which is due to natural-gas and phosphate fertilizers plus soil-crushing tractors and harvesters that can do the work of millions of men and horses quickly on farms that grow only one crop on thousands of acres.

Yet before pesticides, farmers lost a third of their crops to pests, after pesticides, farmers still lose a third of their crops.

Even without pesticides, industrial agriculture is doomed to fail from extremely high rates of soil erosion and soil compaction at rates that far exceed losses in the past, since soil couldn’t wash or blow away as easily on small farms that grew many crops.

But pest killing chemicals are surely accelerating the day of reckoning sooner rather than later. Enormous amounts of toxic chemicals are dumped on land every year — over 1 billion pounds are used in the United State (US) every year and 5.6 billion pounds globally (Alavanja 2009).

This destroys the very ecosystems that used to help plants fight off pests, and is a major factor biodiversity loss and extinction.

Evidence also points to pesticides playing a key role in the loss of bees and their pollination services. Although paleo-diet fanatics won’t mind eating mostly meat when fruit, vegetable, and nut crops are gone, they will not be so happy about having to eat more carbohydrates. Wheat and other grains will still be around, since they are wind-pollinated.

Agricultural chemicals render land lifeless and toxic to beneficial creatures, also killing the food chain above — fish, amphibians, birds, and humans (from cancer, chronic disease, and suicide).

Surely a day is coming when pesticides stop working, resulting in massive famines. But who is there to speak for the grandchildren? And those that do speak for them are mowed down by the logic of libertarian capitalism, which only cares about profits today. Given that a political party is now in power in the U.S. that wants to get rid of the protections the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other agencies provide, may make matters worse if agricultural chemicals are allowed to be more toxic, long-lasting, and released earlier, before being fully tested for health effects.

Meanwhile chemical and genetic engineering companies are making a fortune, because the farmers have to pay full price, since the pests develop resistance long before a product is old enough to be made generically. Except for glyphosate, but weeds have developed resistance. Predictably.

In fact, the inevitability of resistance has been known for nearly seven decades. In 1951, as the world began using synthetic chemicals, Dr. Reginald Painter at Kansas State University published “Insect Resistance in Crop Plants”. He made a case that it would be better to understand how a crop plant fought off insects, since it was inevitable that insects would develop genetic or behavioral resistance. At best, chemicals might be used as an emergency control measure.

Farmers will say that we simply must carry on like this, there’s no other choice. But that’s simply not true.

Consider the corn rootworm, that costs farmers about $2 billion a year in lost crops despite spending hundreds of millions on chemicals and the hundreds of millions of dollars chemical companies spend developing new chemicals.

To lower the chances of corn pests developing resistance, corn crops were rotated with soybeans. Predictably, a few mutated to eat soybeans plus changed their behavior. They used to only lay eggs on nearby corn plants, now they disperse to lay eggs on soybean crops as well. Worse yet, corn is more profitable than soy and many farmers began growing continuous corn. Already the corn rootworm is developing resistance to the latest and greatest chemicals.

But the corn rootworm is not causing devastation in Europe, because farms are smaller and most farmers rotate not just soy, but wheat, alfalfa, sorghum and oats with corn (Nordhaus 2017).

Before planting, farmers try to get rid of pests that survived the winter and apply fumigants to kill fungi and nematodes, and pre-emergent chemicals to reduce weed seeds from emerging. Even farmers practicing no-till farming douse the land with herbicides by using GMO herbicide-resistant crops. Then over the course of crop growth, farmers may apply several rounds of additional pesticides to control different pests. For example, cotton growers apply chemicals from 12 to 30 times before harvest.

Currently, the potential harm is only assessed for 2 to 3 years before a permit is issued, even though the damage might occur up to 20 years later.

Although these chemicals appear to be just like antibiotics, that isn’t entirely true. We develop some immunity to a disease after antibiotics help us recover, but a plant is still vulnerable to the pests and weeds with the genetics or behavior to survive and chemical assault.

Although there are thousands of chemical toxins, what matters is how they kill, their method of action (MOA). For herbicides there are only 29 MOAs, for insecticides, just 28. So if a pest develops resistance to one chemical within an MOA, it will be resistant to all of the thousands of chemicals within that MOA.

The demand for chemicals has also grown due the high level of bioinvasive species. It takes a while to find native pests and make sure they won’t do more harm than good. In the 1950s there were just three main corn pests. By 1978 there were 40, and they vary regionally. For example, California has 30 arthropods and over 14 fungal diseases to cope with.

When I was learning how to grow food organically back in the 90s, I remember how outraged organic farmers were that Monsanto was going to genetically engineer plants to have the Bt bacteria in them. This is because the only insecticide organic farmers can use is Bt bacteria, because it is found in the soil. It’s natural. Organic farmers have been careful to spray only in emergencies so that insects didn’t develop resistance to their only remedy. Since 1996, GMO plants have been engineered to have Bt in them, and predictably, insects have developed resistance. For example, in 2015, 81% of all corn was planted with genetically engineered Bt. But corn earworms have developed resistance, especially in North Carolina and Georgia, setting the stage for damage across the nation. Five other insects have developed resistance to Bt as well.

GMO plants were also going to reduce pesticide use. They did for a while, but not for long. Chemical use has increased 7% to 202,000 tons a year in the past 10 years.

Resistance can come in other ways than mutations. Behavior can change. Cockroach bait is laced with glucose, so cockroaches that developed glucose-aversion now no longer take the bait.

It is worth repeating that chemicals and other practices are ruining the long-term viability of agriculture. Here is how author Dyer explains it:

“Ultimately the practice of modern farming is not sustainable” because “the damage to the soil and natural ecosystems is so great that farming becomes dependent not on the land but on the artificial inputs into the process, such as fertilizers and pesticides. In many ways, our battle against the diverse array of pest species is a battle against the health of the system itself. As we kill pest species, we also kill related species that may be beneficial. We kill predators that could assist our efforts. We reduce the ecosystem’s ability to recover due to reduced diversity, and we interfere with the organisms that affect the biogeochemical processes that maintain the soils in which the plants grow.

Soil is a complex, multifaceted living thing that is far more than the sum of the sand, silt, clay, fungi, microbes, nematodes, and other invertebrates. All biotic components interact as an ecosystem within the soil and at the surface, and in relation to the larger components such as herbivores that move across the land. Organisms grow and dig through the soil, aerate it, reorganize it, and add and subtract organic material. Mature soil is structured and layered and, very importantly, it remains in place. Plowing of the soil turns everything upside down. What was hidden from light is exposed. What was kept at a constant temperature is now varying with the day and night and seasons. What cannot tolerate drying conditions at the surface is likely killed. And very sensitive and delicate structures within the soil are disrupted and destroyed.

Conventional tillage disrupts the entire soil ecosystem

. Tractors and farm equipment are large and heavy; they compact the soil, which removes air space and water-holding capacity. Wind and water erosion remove the smallest soil particles, which typically hold most of the micronutrients needed by plants. Synthetic fertilizers are added to supplement the loss of oil nutrients but often are relatively toxic to many soil organisms. And chemicals such as pre-emergents, fumigants, herbicides, insecticides, acaricides, fungicides, and defoliants eventually kill all but the most tolerant or resistant soil organisms. It does not take long to reduce a native, living, dynamic soil to a relatively lifeless collection of inorganic particles with little of the natural structure and function of undisturbed soil”.

When I told my husband all the reasons we use agricultural chemicals and the harm done, my husband got angry and said “Farmers aren’t stupid, that can’t be right!”

I think there are a number of reasons why farmers don’t go back to sustainable organic farming.

First, there is far too much money to be made in the chemical herbicide, pesticide, and insecticide industry to stop this juggernaut. After reading Lessig’s book “Republic, Lost”, one of the best, if not the best book on campaign finance reform, I despair of campaign financing ever happening. So chemical lobbyists will continue to donate enough money to politicians to maintain the status quo. Plus the chemical industry has infiltrated regulatory agencies via the revolving door for decades and is now in a position to assassinate the EPA, with newly appointed Scott Pruitt, who would like to get rid of the EPA.

Second, about half of farmers are hired guns. They don’t own the land and care about passing it on in good health to their children. They rent the land, and their goal, and the owner’s goal is for them to make as much profit as possible.

Third, renters and farmers both would lose money, maybe go out of business in the years it would take to convert an industrial monoculture farm to multiple crops rotated, or an organic farm.

Fourth, it takes time to learn to farm organically properly. So even if the farmer survives financially, mistakes will be made. Hopefully made up for by the higher price of organic food, but as wealth grows increasingly more unevenly distributed, and the risk of another economic crash grows (not to mention lack of reforms, being in more debt now than 2008, etc).

Fifth, industrial farming is what is taught at most universities. There are only a handful of universities that offer programs in organic agriculture.

Sixth, subsidies favor large farmers, who are also the only farmers who have the money to profit from economies of scale, and buy their own giant tractors to farm a thousand acres of monoculture crops. Industrial farming has driven 5 million farmers off the land who couldn’t compete with the profits made by larger farms in the area.

But farmers will have to go organic whether they like it or not

It’s hard to say whether this will happen because we’ve run out of pesticides, whether from resistance or a financial crash reducing new chemical research, or whether peak oil, peak coal, and peak natural gas will cause the decline of chemical farming. Agriculture uses about 15 to 20% of fossil fuel energy, from natural gas fertilizer, oil-based chemicals, farm vehicle and equipment fuel, the agricultural cold chain, distribution, packaging, refrigeration, and cooking to name a few of the uses.

At some point of fossil decline, there won’t be enough fuel or pesticides to continue business as usual.

Farmers will be forced to go organic at some point. Wouldn’t it be easier to start the transition now?

### Case – Heg

#### Unipolarity wil inevitably fall

Mearsheimer 19 [John J. Professor of IR @ Uchicago, “Bound to Fail.” International Security, Vol. 43, No. 4]

There is an additional problem linked to hyperglobalization that has little to do with the growing political opposition to the international order in liberal countries, and everything to do with the global balance of power. Until Trump came to power in 2017, Western elites, in keeping with their post–Cold War policy of engaging, not containing, China, were deeply committed to integrating China into the world economy, including all of its key economic institutions. An increasingly prosperous and wealthy China, they assumed, would eventually become a liberal democracy and an upstanding member of the liberal international order. What the architects of that policy did not realize, however, is that by helping accelerate Chinese growth, they were actually helping undermine the liberal order, as China has rapidly grown into an economic powerhouse with significant military capability. In effect, they have helped China become a great power, thus undercutting unipolarity, which is essential for maintaining a liberal world order. This problem has been compounded by the resurgence of Russia, which is once again a great power, although clearly a weak one. With the rise of China and Russia’s comeback, the international system has become multipolar, which is a death knell for the liberal international order. To make matters worse, neither China nor Russia has become a liberal democracy. Even if China and Russia had not become great powers and the world remained unipolar, the liberal order would still be falling apart today because of its intrinsic flaws. The election of Donald Trump, who sharply and frequently criticized all the key elements of the post–Cold War order during his presidential campaign, is evidence of how much trouble it was in by 2016. Thus, if the international system had remained unipolar, the liberal world order would have devolved into an agnostic order under President Trump, as realist orders have no place in unipolarity. There is certainly no evidence that he is committed to refashioning the existing liberal order. Indeed, he appears bent on wrecking it. With or without China, the liberal international order was destined to fail, because it was fatally flawed at birth

summary

The various causal processes described above have all played an important role in subverting the liberal international order. Although each one has a distinct logic, they have often operated synergistically. For example, the negative effects of hyperglobalization on the lower and middle classes have combined with the nationalist resentment over immigration and the sense of lost sovereignty to fuel a strong populist backlash against the principles and practices of the liberal order. Indeed, that anger has often been directed at the liberal elites who have benefitted from the order and who vigorously defend it. That resentment, of course, has had significant political consequences. It has caused deep political divisions in the United States and other Western democracies, led to Brexit, helped put Trump in the White House, and fueled support for nationalist leaders around the world.

Where Are We Headed?

One might acknowledge that the liberal international order is in terminal decline, but argue that it can be replaced with a more pragmatic version, one that avoids the excesses of the post–Cold War order.85 This more modest liberal order would pursue a more nuanced, less aggressive approach to spreading liberal democracy, rein in hyperglobalization, and put some significant limits on the power of international institutions. The new order, according to this perspective, would look something like the Western order during the Cold War, although it would be global and liberal, not bounded and realist. This solution is not feasible, however, because the unipolar moment is over, which means there is no chance of maintaining any kind of liberal international order for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, President Trump has no intention of pursuing a “liberal-lite” world order, and without his support, that option is a nonstarter. But even if Trump were not an obstacle and the international system were to remain unipolar, the United States would fail if it lowered its sights and attempted to construct a less ambitious liberal order. Indeed, it would end up building an agnostic international order instead. It is impossible to build a meaningful liberal global order with modest or more passive policies. The enterprise requires too much social engineering in too many places. If it has any chance of succeeding (I think it has none), the liberal unipole and its allies must relentlessly pursue highly ambitious global policies, which is why the United States and its liberal partners acted the way they did in the wake of the Cold War. That approach, however, is now politically infeasible because of past failures. Consequently, the liberal democracies have no choice but to take small steps here and there to remake the world in their own image, while adopting a live and let live approach toward most countries in the world. That humble approach would effectively produce an agnostic order. But that is not going to happen, because the system is multipolar and great power politics are once again at play. Thus, the key question is: What kinds of realist orders will dominate the landscape in the new multipolar world?

#### Heg is unsustainable---retrenchment is gradual now, but recommitting makes it violent and forced.

Kupchan 20, professor of international affairs at Georgetown University and senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. (Charles A., 10-21-2020, "America’s Pullback Must Continue No Matter Who Is President", *Foreign Policy*, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/10/21/election-2020-smart-retrenchment/)

As the Trump era potentially comes to an end, many foreign-policy voices in the United States and abroad relish the prospect of the country’s roaring return to the global stage. But attempting a full-on comeback would be a mistake. If anything, the strategic pullback that President Donald Trump has initiated needs to continue—albeit in a more coherent and judicious manner.

Much of the debate surrounding the next administration’s foreign policy has focused on boldly reasserting U.S. leadership in the world. And it’s true: Global interdependence and upheaval do require steady U.S. leadership and engagement. What’s been largely missing from this debate, however, are the challenges facing the next president when it comes to right-sizing U.S. engagement abroad—especially military involvement—and bringing the nation’s strategic commitments back into line with it means and purposes.

The American electorate has turned sharply inward in response to military overreach in the Middle East, the economic dislocations brought about by innovation and globalization, and the national calamity caused by COVID-19. The nation’s next president would be wise to take note—and craft a brand of global statecraft that is effective but also politically sustainable. Otherwise, the strategic pullback that needs to take place will occur by default rather than by design, risking that U.S. overreach could turn into even more dangerous underreach. Indeed, that’s what’s been happening during Trump’s presidency. He seems to have understood the need to retrench. But his troop withdrawals from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Germany have been haphazard, making a hash of the effort. Retrenchment cannot be done by tweet, in unpredictable fits and starts, and couched in an abrasive “America first” unilateralism that has alienated allies and set the world on edge.

Democratic candidate Joe Biden is far better suited to restore an equilibrium between the nation’s foreign policy and its political will. Throughout his career, he has been a pragmatic and prudent internationalist; looking forward, pragmatism and prudence will require a more selective and discriminating internationalism, not restoration of the status quo ante. Three-quarters of the American public want U.S. troops to leave Afghanistan and Iraq—it is time to downsize the U.S. footprint in the Middle East. U.S. foreign policy has become over-militarized—the next administration should reallocate priorities and resources, putting more emphasis on diplomacy, cybersecurity, global public health, and climate change. Washington should also return to being a team player if it is to lighten its load; retrenchment and multilateral engagement go hand in hand. Meeting the threat posed by China, managing international trade and finance, preventing nuclear proliferation, addressing pandemics—these and other urgent challenges all require broad international cooperation. And as the United States pulls back from its role as global policeman, it will want like-minded partners to help fill the gap. These partnerships become stronger through diplomacy and teamwork.

The top priorities of the next president will be at home: taming the pandemic, repairing the economy, and reviving democratic institutions and norms. Only if the country’s democratic lights come back on can it effectively deal with the rest of the world. In the meantime, the next administration needs to continue Trump’s effort to downsize the nation’s foreign entanglements—but in a smart and measured way. The United States needs to step back without stepping away. “Build back better” applies abroad just as much as it does at home.

#### China decline isn’t inevitable

Robert May 20, Postgraduate Masters’s student in International Relations at Queen Mary University of London. He is also the CEO of a non-profit multinational education provider (ABE) a member of the Royal Overseas League, a member of the Royal Institute for International Affairs, and a Friend of UNESCO, “Is War Inevitable Between the US and China?” Atlas Institute for International Affairs, 9/7/2020, https://www.internationalaffairshouse.org/is-war-inevitable-between-the-us-and-china/

Since 1500 C.E., when a rising power has challenged an established power it has ended in violent conflict 80 percent of the time.4 This indicates that war between America and China is not inevitable, but it is highly probable. The applicability of structural analysis to the changes in relative strength and privilege in world order generates the principle anxieties and pressures that lead to war, but classical realism instead stresses the historical processes and biases that determine political action. Policymakers should realise that China is not Nazi Germany; in 2019, Xi Jinping stated, “Civilisations don’t have to clash, what is needed are eyes to see the beauty in all civilisations”, implying China will not use its role or influence to change the ideologies or political practices of other societies (Cited in Mahbubani, 2020:254-255). Neither is China nor the USSR; ‘The Chinese Communist Party is far more capable and adaptable than the Soviet Communist Party’ (Ibid, 271). China does not seek to export its political system around the world, its objective is international respect, not conversion; the grandest expression of Chinese power, the Great Wall, also denotes a consciousness of its limitations and vulnerability (Kissinger, 2014:214). Nevertheless, America is convinced of an existential threat to its hegemony and the emergence of new world order, which arguably has more to do with the failure of the liberal international order, and the misguided belief system that ‘the end-point of development and modernisation is defined by the contemporary West’ (Barkawi& Laffey, 2006:331). Those under attack feel compelled ‘to defend not only their territory but their basic way of life’ (Kissinger, 2014:366).

A realist recalibration of U.S. foreign policy around current national interest and a reassessment of whether its grand strategy of primacy is worth bleeding for may conclude that the U.S. has no necessity to confront China. America’s borders are not in danger of being breached, U.S. defence spending is still more than the next 10 countries combined and it remains the only superpower capable of projecting a military presence globally5. China’s territorial sphere remains limited to the Indo-Pacific region, ‘with more neighbours than any other country, it is deeply embedded in the Asian economic system’ and must balance multiple threats with nuclear powers on many fronts (Khanna, 2019:147). America must remain mindful that ‘War does not always arise from wickedness or folly. It sometimes arises from mere growth and movement (Murray, cited in Carr, 1940: 191). Washington should replace an improvisational China attitude rooted in exceptionalism, with a strategy to accommodate legitimate Chinese interests. It must strengthen, rather than withdraw from its Asian balancing alliances ‘forcing China to focus most of its attention closer to home’ (Walt, 2020) whilst also rebuilding diplomatic capability with China, and abandoning the temptation to view every Chinese action as inherently aggressive, rather as based on legitimate historical and domestic designs; ‘exaggerating the threat posed by small changes to the status quo and rejecting adaptation to the new balance of power in East Asia… could encourage the U.S. to adopt overly competitive policies’ (Glaser, 2019:52).

#### No Taiwan invasion – geography, and no heg solves because it removes the US from the war which keeps it conventional

Michael A. Cohen, MA, 21 [Fellow @ The Century Foundation, Adjunct Lecturer in School of International and Public Affairs @ Columbia], "No, Neocons, China Is Not About to Invade Taiwan," New Republic, 11-19-2021 <https://newrepublic.com/article/164485/why-china-will-not-invade-taiwan> C.VC

Earlier this month, the Defense Department released its annual report to Congress on “Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China.” While the report lays out the ways in which China’s “People’s Liberation Army” is seeking to modernize its forces, the threat to Taiwan of armed invasion is still minimal at best:

Large-scale amphibious invasion is one of the most complicated and difficult military operations, requiring air and maritime superiority, the rapid buildup and sustainment of supplies onshore, and uninterrupted support. An attempt to invade Taiwan would likely strain PRC’s armed forces and invite international intervention. These stresses, combined with the PRC’s combat force attrition and the complexity of urban warfare and counterinsurgency, even assuming a successful landing and breakout, make an amphibious invasion of Taiwan a significant political and military risk.

One might expect that a country intent on launching the largest and most difficult amphibious invasion in history would be making intense preparations. That’s not happening.

As the Pentagon report notes, Chinese naval investments have focused on building up the capacity to launch “regional and eventually global expeditionary missions rather than the large number of landing ship transports and medium landing craft that would be necessary for a large-scale direct beach assault.” The Pentagon also finds that while China is focusing on conducting joint operations that involve forces from the army, navy, and air force, as of present it currently lacks such capabilities.

That the Chinese military enjoys vast military superiority vis-à-vis Taiwan is not in doubt. But that such resources can be used to mount an amphibious assault is something else altogether. The Chinese military last fought a war in 1979 against Vietnam, and the PLA was badly bloodied. That means that the soldiers and officers who make up China’s military today have virtually no direct combat experience.

China’s own media outlets have, according to the Pentagon, noted the PLA’s shortcomings, which include that “commanders cannot (1) judge situations; (2) understand higher authorities’ intentions; (3) make operational decisions; (4) deploy forces; and, (5) manage unexpected situations.” These problems would be challenging enough in a conventional conflict. For a complex invasion of Taiwan, they would render such efforts virtually impossible.

One big reason is that Taiwan is about as inhospitable an environment as can be imagined for an amphibious invasion. Ian Easton, a defense expert who has written extensively about Taiwan defense strategy, wrote earlier this year that the country’s “coastal terrain … is a defender’s dream come true. Taiwan has only 14 small invasion beaches, and they are bordered by cliffs and urban jungles.” Easton also notes that “many of Taiwan’s outer islands bristle with missiles, rockets, and artillery guns. Their granite hills have been honeycombed with tunnels and bunker systems.”

#### status competition goes nuclear — letting China peacefully surpass the U.S. is the only way to avoid war.

Heath 18, Senior International/Defense Researcher at RAND (Timothy, February 2nd, “The Competition for Status Could Increase the Risk of a Military Clash in Asia,” *RAND*, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2018/02/the-competition-for-status-could-increase-the-risk.html>, Accessed 09-05-2021)

However, while the salience of conflict for the sake of gaining territory may be declining, the importance of status as a potential driver of conflict may be increasing. Status is an ambiguous and elusive concept, but at its core, status consists of a country's ranking in a hierarchy within a peer group. Status can be measured indirectly through estimations of a country's influence and prestige, as well as its reputation. Status matters a great deal because it can confer considerable benefits, as studies on the topic have shown. Jonathon Renshon, an expert on the role of status in international relations, has described how high-status countries enjoy a greater degree of deference from other countries and can thus secure a far larger share of available resources at a far lower cost than their lower-status peers. Status can only be achieved through competition, however. Because rankings are inherently zero-sum, one country's rise in status invariably requires the diminishment of its competitors.

The immense benefits that can accompany high status and the competition required to secure it help explain why status concerns have historically underpinned many inter-state conflicts. Historically, many a country has gone to great lengths and sometimes incurred crippling costs to salvage a faltering status or increase its standing. In the 1956 Suez Crisis, for example, Great Britain pursued an unnecessary and pointless military attack to stave off a challenge from Egypt to its waning status in the Middle East. The ensuing debacle confirmed Britain's decline as a great power. During the 1960s, U.S. anxiety over its status vis-á-vis its primary rival, the Soviet Union, led Presidents Kennedy and Johnson to escalate the country's commitment to a war in Vietnam of dubious prospects, a situation the Soviet Union mirrored in its own disaster in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Conversely, the value of an increase in status can be seen in the aftermath of Japan's stunning defeat of Russia in 1904 and 1905. The outcome shocked Western opinion and earned Japan the status of peer with the world's leading imperial powers. Tokyo subsequently expanded its control of Asia. Similarly, America's victory in the Spanish-American War confirmed Spain's eclipse as a great power in Latin and South America. The United States cemented its status as the leading nation in the Americas and saw its influence expand accordingly.

As these examples suggest, competition for status tends to recede when consensus exists among peer states about relative rankings, as happened briefly in the largely peaceful and stable post-Cold War “unipolar” moment of U.S. global preeminence. However, competition for status also tends to increase in periods of uncertainty. Today, persistent economic stagnation in the developed world and the rise of developing countries have unsettled existing hierarchies and raised afresh anxiety over the standing of many great powers.

Fears of diminished standing can be seen in the immense commentary bemoaning the decline in U.S. and European influence and in the debate over the possibilities of a post-Western age. Such apprehensions have also featured prominently in U.S. policy documents. In its recently released National Security Strategy (PDF), U.S. authorities warned that “China and Russia challenge American power, influence, and interests.” These concerns are particularly acute in Asia, which has seen an intensifying strategic competition for status and influence between China and its principal rivals—the United States, Japan, and India.

For China, status is increasingly vital to realizing its revitalization as a great power. To sustain growth, China seeks to deepen Asia's integration through the Belt and Road Initiative and shape the terms of regional trade. China also seeks to construct a regional security architecture defined by Chinese-led organizations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building. With adequate status, China could gain the deference and cooperation from regional powers needed to control potential flashpoints, improve its security, and secure preferential access to resources and markets at a fraction of the cost in resources than would be required if it had to fight and negotiate its way through every issue. Recognizing the importance of the issue, the 19th Chinese Communist Party Congress report outlined as a long-term goal the ambition to “become a global leader” in “international influence.” Similarly, Chinese leaders have stepped up efforts to strengthen the country's leadership position in the region.

For China, status is increasingly vital to realizing its revitalization as a great power.

China for now has relied on peaceful, albeit intrusive, measures to increase its influence and bolster its standing, such sustained military modernization, massive economic diplomacy initiatives, United Front tactics and the manipulation of diplomatic carrots and sticks. Some observers have seen evidence of China's increasing influence in the Philippines' and South Korea's growing sensitivity to Chinese concerns. But the effectiveness of incremental, peaceful methods is difficult to prove because their effects are harder to perceive. Some commentators, for example, regard Chinese gains in influence as limited. Moreover, peaceful, incremental efforts are also vulnerable to counter-measures. Already, a growing array of countries have begun to raise concern about Chinese economic coercion and influence operations.

The United States and its allies and partners rightfully seek to protect their interests by bolstering their respective positions, even as they continue to cooperate with China. The strategy may succeed, but at its core is the assumption that stability can best be gained if China continues to acquiesce to the international order as established after World War II by the United States and its allies. China's conviction that its security depends on changes to this order sets up a deep, structural contradiction that is unlikely to be resolved any time soon. Beijing can accordingly be expected to persist in peaceful methods to supplant the United States as Asia's leader. If, however, Beijing at some point concludes that the United States and its allies have successfully stymied its aspirations, China may be tempted by riskier methods to assert its status. A precedent for such behavior may be seen in a rising Germany of the 1890s-1900s. Convinced that it had been denied a status befitting its national power by Britain and France, Germany provoked a series of militarized crises around the world. In 1906, Germany threatened war against France after the two feuded about influence over Morocco. And in a second Moroccan crisis five years later, Germany extracted colonial concessions after it deployed a gunboat in response to a French military intervention. In China's case, brinksmanship behavior could be carried out in the contested East or South China Seas with military ships and aircraft. Already, a growing literature by Chinese military writers recommends the skillful exploitation of military crises for strategic gain.

Brinksmanship carries its own risks, of course. Miscalculation could lead to unwanted war. The strategic effects could be severe as well. Rivals like the United States, Japan, and India could be alarmed enough by a clash that they step up military preparations, aggravating China's security situation. Moreover, conflict could imperil China's grand Belt and Road Initiative ambition, if aggrieved neighbors opt out and welcome investments by Japan and India instead. China has many good reasons to never consider military provocations against a neighbor. But Beijing also has compelling reasons to increase the country's standing and diminish that of the United States and its allies. Given that the ruling Chinese Communist Party has staked its reputation towards that end, China's leaders should be expected to consider all available options to achieve it.

#### Balancing solves regional stability by expanding alliance networks and stopping favoritism that encourages regional aggression

Walt 19 [STEPHEN M. WALT is Robert and Renee Belfer Professor of International Affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School and the author of The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy. Foreign Affairs. May/June. “The End of Hubris And the New Age of American Restraint.” <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2019-04-16/end-hubris> My OCR sometimes turns E’s into C’s, I think I got them all, but please let me know if I missed one]

As an offshore balancer, the United States would establish normal relations with all countries in the region, instead of having “special relationships" with a few states and profoundly hostile relations with others. No country in the Middle East is so virtuous or vital that it deserves unconditional U.S. support, and no country there is so heinous that it must be treated as a pariah. The United States should act as China, India, Japan, Russia, and the eu do, maintaining normal working relationships with all states in the region -including Iran. Among other things, this policy would encourage rival regional powers to compete for U.S. support, instead of taking it for granted. For the moment, Washington should also make it clear that it will reduce its support for local partners if they repeatedly act in ways that undermine U.S. interests or that run contrary to core U.S. values. Should any state threaten to dominate the region from within or without in the future, the United States would help the rest balance against it, calibrating its level of effort and local presence to the magnitude of the danger.

#### Heg encourages allies to reduce defense spending and encourages risky behavior – nuke war

Posen ’16 (Barry R; 8/7/2016; Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT, Director of the MIT Security Studies Program Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow; Rockefeller Foundation International Affairs Fellow; Guest Scholar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies; Woodrow Wilson Center Fellow; Smithsonian Institution; Transatlantic Fellow of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, and most recently Visiting Fellow at the John Sloan Dickey Center at Dartmouth College. "The High Costs and Limited Benefits of America’s Alliances," National Interest, <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-skeptics/the-high-costs-limited-benefits-americas-alliances-17273?page=show//)MBA> HBJ

The United States stands at the center of a far flung global alliance system, which commits it to defend the security of countries rich and poor, great and small, liberal and illiberal. The principal U.S. formal alliances are the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the U.S.-Japan security treaty, the Republic of Korea Treaty, and the Australia-New Zealand (ANZUS) treaty. The United States has less formal relationships with Israel and several Arab states, and many others around the world. The foreign-policy establishment insists that all of these alliances are central to our security. The reasons offered since the end of the Cold War to support this judgment are seldom clear, and the costs are always buried, if acknowledged at all. The value of U.S. alliances should be judged on their contribution to U.S. security--the ability to defend the safety, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the United States. The combination of the inherent strengths of the U.S. economy, the nature of modern military technology--both nuclear and conventional, along with the American military's mastery of those technologies--and two vast ocean barriers, make it either unbelievably foolhardy or hugely difficult for others to constitute a major threat to the U.S. homeland. Given the relative ease of ensuring U.S. security without extensive help from others, it is a challenge to show that the security value of these alliances exceeds the costs and risks incurred for them. In no case do current allies directly "defend" the United States, though some do occupy important strategic geography, which contributes to our military power. At best, our allies defend themselves with vast assistance from the United States. What does this assistance cost? Costs The United States bears four principal costs for these alliances: 1) the direct military costs; 2) the costs of wars waged mainly for the purpose of reassuring these allies; 3) the nuclear risks necessary to "extend" nuclear deterrence to these allies and 4) the "moral hazard" consequences of security guarantees, which have the perverse effect of driving down the defense efforts of allies and further driving up U.S. military costs. Supporters of the present alliance system routinely minimize its military costs. The Department of Defense's accounting systems make the calculation of such costs difficult. One cannot find a clear official statement that apportions the DOD budget to Europe, the MIddle East, and Asia. If a lay person attempts such a calculation, they will be brought up short by the defining characteristic of U.S. post-Cold War force structure: the U.S. military is essentially a global strategic reserve that can concentrate in defense of whichever ally is most in need of assistance. Small numbers of U.S. troops live abroad in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, and these small numbers make the effort look tiny. We must therefore try to estimate the cost of the U.S. grand strategy that commits the country to defend all these places. I have argued that if the United States were more judicious in its promises abroad, perhaps a fifth of the defense budget could be cut (excluding the costs of actual wars), amounting to roughly one hundred billion dollars per year at current prices. This is a nontrivial sum with major opportunity costs: it could reduce the deficit; repair the country's crumbling infrastructure; retrain American workers to compete more effectively in the global economy, or simply be returned to the taxpayer. Instead it subsidizes the defense of prosperous allies, providing welfare for the rich. The "credibility" wars that the U.S. fights, or threatens are another cost of the alliance system. The Balkan Wars of the 1990s fall into this category. So far, the post-Cold War world has not seen very expensive wars of this kind, but there was nothing about the Balkan wars that threatened the United States. Currently, members of the foreign-policy establishment argue that the United States should be assisting Ukraine in its fight with Russia and subverting the brutal Assad regime, in part to convince others of U.S. credibility. Once committed to defend allies everywhere, a state becomes obsessed with its political and military prestige, and vulnerable to the claim that "small" wars must be fought in the hope of deterring large ones. This is especially true when the actual strategic value of these allies is modest.A third cost of these alliances is the commitment to nuclear war that they embody. We understood this during the Cold War, but no one discusses this anymore. Europe's principal potential challenger is Russia; Japan's is China; South Korea's is North Korea. To defend these regions or countries from their most plausible challengers, and to deter attack, the United States must convince those challengers that it would, if pressed, wage nuclear war on their behalf. (The difficulty of making its nuclear-escalation commitments plausible further tempts America to fight 'small' wars to build credibility.) Are these nuclear commitments strategically necessary? During the Cold War, at the margin, one could make the argument that they were. We did not want to see what the Soviet Union might extract from rich European states or Japan by way of extra resources, if it could cow or conquer them, and convert their economic assets into military power. Today, however, it is hard to argue that any of the challengers that these countries face today are capable of conquering these allies, or coercing them into making great contributions to the challenger's military war chest. The United States assumes nuclear risks in the absence of a clear case for doing so. To offer an extreme example, the Baltic states are members of NATO. The United States is committed to their defense if they are challenged by Russia. These states cannot defend themselves conventionally, and because of the peculiarities of their geography, neither can the United States (This was seldom discussed when these states were brought into NATO in the George W. Bush administration.) I believe that a full fledged Russian challenge over the Baltics is unlikely, but were it to occur the United States could face the alternative of a potentially irreversible military defeat or a dramatic and dangerous nuclear crisis. Finally, these alliance commitments create a special kind of "moral hazard." The extravagant insurance that we offer these countries encourages them to engage in risky behavior. For the Europeans and Japanese, this consists of buying too little military insurance for themselves. Their defense budgets are too small even to sustain their present force structures. U.S. defense secretaries from both parties dutifully chide allies for their shortfalls and then go on to ignore them as we move to provide more security welfare. In NATO, for example, all but four of the allies fail to spend 2 percent of GDP on defense, an alliance commitment, while the United States spends 3 percent excluding war costs. (Germany, the fourth-most-productive economy in the world and the NATO ally best placed to assist the Baltic states, spends barely 1.2 percent.) Yet in the face of European concerns about Russian adventurism, the United States has rushed into the breach with five billion dollars of additional spending on European security over the last three fiscal years, which the Pentagon smuggled into the budget for Overseas Contingency Operations, whose purpose is to pay for actual unexpected war costs, and which therefore escapes the scrutiny of normal budget politics.

#### Retrenchment doesn’t cause conflict, lashout, or draw-in

Paul K. MacDonald 11, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Williams College, and Joseph M. Parent, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Miami, Spring 2011, “Graceful Decline?: The Surprising Success of Great Power Retrenchment,” International Security, Vol. 35, No. 4, p. 7-44

How do great powers respond to acute decline? The erosion of the relative power of the United States has scholars and policymakers reexamining this question. **The** central **issue is whether** prompt retrenchment **is** **desirable** or probable. Some **pessimists counsel** that **retrenchment is** a **dangerous** policy, because it shows weakness and invites attack. Robert Kagan, for example, **warns, "A reduction** in defense spending . . . **would unnerve** American **allies and undercut** efforts to gain greater **cooperation**. There is already a sense around the world, fed by irresponsible pundits here at home, that the United States is in terminal decline. Many fear that the economic crisis will cause the United States to pull back from overseas commitments. The announcement of a defense cutback would be taken by the world as evidence that the American retreat has begun."1 Robert **Kaplan** likewise **argues**, "Husbanding our power in an effort to slow America's decline in a post-Iraq and post-Afghanistan world would mean avoiding debilitating land entanglements and focusing instead on **being more of an offshore balancer**. . . . While this may be in America's interest, the very signaling of such an aloof intention **may encourage regional bullies**. . . . [L]essening our engagement with the world would have devastating consequences for humanity. The disruptions we witness today are but a taste of what is to come should our country flinch from its international responsibilities."2 The consequences of these views are clear: retrenchment should be avoided and forward defenses maintained into the indefinite future.3

Other observers advocate retrenchment policies, but they are pessimistic [End Page 7] about their prospects.4 Christopher Layne, for instance, predicts, "Even as the globe is being turned upside down by material factors, the foreign policies of individual states are shaped by the ideas leaders hold about their own nations' identity and place in world politics. More than most, America's foreign policy is the product of such ideas, and U.S. foreign-policy elites have constructed their own myths of empire to justify the United States' hegemonic role."5 Stephen Walt likewise advocates greater restraint in U.S. grand strategy, but cautions, "The United States . . . remains a remarkably immature great power, one whose rhetoric is frequently at odds with its conduct and one that tends to treat the management of foreign affairs largely as an adjunct to domestic politics. . . . [S]eemingly secure behind its nuclear deterrent and oceanic moats, and possessing unmatched economic and military power, the United States allowed its foreign policy to be distorted by partisan sniping, hijacked by foreign lobbyists and narrow domestic special interests, blinded by lofty but unrealistic rhetoric, and held hostage by irresponsible and xenophobic members of Congress."6 Although retrenchment is a preferable policy, these arguments suggest that great powers often cling to unprofitable foreign commitments for parochial reasons of national culture or domestic politics.7

**These arguments have** **grim implications for** contemporary **international politics**. With the rise of new powers, such as China, the international pecking order will be in increasing flux in the coming decades.8 Yet, if the pessimists are correct, **politicians and interests groups in the U**nited **S**tates **will be** unwilling or unable to realign resources with overseas commitments. **Perceptions of weakness and** declining U.S. credibility **will encourage policymakers to** hold on to burdensome overseas commitments, **despite their high costs** in blood and treasure.9 **Policymakers** in Washington **will** struggle to retire **from profitless military engagements** and restrain ballooning current accounts and budget deficits.10 For some observers, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan represent the ill-advised last gasps of a declining hegemon seeking to bolster its plummeting position.11

In this article, we question the logic and evidence of the retrenchment pessimists. To date **there has been** neither a comprehensive study **of great power retrenchment** **nor a study that lays out the case** for retrenchment **as a practical or probable policy**. **This article fills these gaps by** systematically examining the relationship between acute relative decline and the responses of great powers. We examine eighteen cases of acute relative decline since 1870 and advance three main arguments.

First, **we challenge the** retrenchment pessimists' **claim that** domestic or international constraints **inhibit the ability of declining great powers to retrench**. In fact, **when states fall in the hierarchy of great powers**, peaceful retrenchment is the most common response, **even over short time spans**. Based on the empirical record, we find that great powers retrenched in no less than eleven and no more than fifteen of the eighteen cases, a range of 61-83 percent. **When international conditions demand it, states renounce risky ties, increase reliance on allies** or adversaries, **draw down** their military **obligations, and impose adjustments on domestic populations**.

Second, we find that the magnitude of relative decline helps explain the extent of great power retrenchment. Following the dictates of neorealist theory, **great powers retrench for the same reason they expand**: the rigors of great power politics compel them to do so.12 Retrenchment is by no means easy, but [End Page 9] necessity is the mother of invention, and **declining great powers face** **powerful incentives to contract their interests in a** **prompt and proportionate manner.** Knowing only a state's rate of relative economic decline explains its corresponding degree of retrenchment in as much as 61 percent of the cases we examined.

Third, we argue that the rate of decline helps explain what forms great power retrenchment will take. How fast great powers fall contributes to whether these retrenching states will internally reform, seek new allies or rely more heavily on old ones, and make diplomatic overtures to enemies. Further, our analysis suggests that **great powers facing acute decline are** less likely to initiate or escalate militarized interstate disputes. **Faced with diminishing resources**, **great powers** moderate their foreign policy ambitions **and offer concessions in areas of lesser strategic value**. Contrary to the pessimistic conclusions **of critics,** retrenchment neither requires aggression nor invites predation. **Great powers** are able to **rebalance their commitments through compromise, rather than conflict**. In these ways, states respond to penury the same way they do to plenty: they seek to adopt policies that maximize security given available means. Far from being a hazardous policy, **retrenchment can be successful**. **States that retrench** often regain their position in the hierarchy of great powers. Of the fifteen great powers that adopted retrenchment in response to acute relative decline, 40 percent managed to recover their ordinal rank. In contrast, none of the declining powers that failed to retrench recovered their relative position.

#### Heg causes war – best data – the Middle East and hard power investments prove.

Fettweis ‘17 (Christopher J, \*Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University, Ph.D. from the University of Maryland, College Park, “Unipolarity, Hegemony, and the New Peace,” Security Studies 26:3, 423-451)//cmr

Overall US interest in the affairs of the Global South has dropped markedly since the end of the Cold War, as has the level of violence in almost all regions. There is less US intervention in the political and military affairs of Latin America compared to any time in the twentieth century, for instance, and also less conflict. Warfare in Africa is at an all-time low, as is relative US interest outside of counterterrorism and security assistance.66 Regional peace and stability exist where there is US active intervention, as well as where there is not. No direct relationship seems to exist across regions. If intervention can be considered a function of direct and indirect activity, of both political and military action, a regional picture might look like what is outlined in Table 1. These assessments of conflict are by necessity relative, because there has not been a “high” level of conflict in any region outside the Middle East during the period of the New Peace. Putting aside for the moment that important caveat, some points become clear. The great powers of the world are clustered in the upper right quadrant, where US intervention has been high, but conflict levels low. US intervention is imperfectly correlated with stability, however. Indeed, it is conceivable that the relatively high level of US interest and activity has made the security situation in the Persian Gulf and broader Middle East worse. In recent years, substantial hard power investments (Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq), moderate intervention (Libya), and reliance on diplomacy (Syria) have been equally ineffective in stabilizing states torn by conflict. While it is possible that the region is essentially unpacifiable and no amount of police work would bring peace to its people, it remains hard to make the case that the US presence has improved matters. In this “strong point,” at least, US hegemony has failed to bring peace. In much of the rest of the world, the United States has not been especially eager to enforce any particular rules. Even rather incontrovertible evidence of genocide has not been enough to inspire action. Washington’s intervention choices have at best been erratic; Libya and Kosovo brought about action, but much more blood flowed uninterrupted in Rwanda, Darfur, Congo, Sri Lanka, and Syria. The US record of peacemaking is not exactly a long uninterrupted string of successes. During the turn-of-the-century conventional war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a highlevel US delegation containing former and future National Security Advisors (Anthony Lake and Susan Rice) made a half-dozen trips to the region, but was unable to prevent either the outbreak or recurrence of the conflict. Lake and his team shuttled back and forth between the capitals with some frequency, and President Clinton made repeated phone calls to the leaders of the respective countries, offering to hold peace talks in the United States, all to no avail.67 The war ended in late 2000 when Ethiopia essentially won, and it controls the disputed territory to this day. The Horn of Africa is hardly the only region where states are free to fight one another today without fear of serious US involvement. Since they are choosing not to do so with increasing frequency, something else is probably affecting their calculations. Stability exists even in those places where the potential for intervention by the sheriff is minimal. Hegemonic stability can only take credit for influencing those decisions that would have ended in war without the presence, whether physical or psychological, of the United States. It seems hard to make the case that the relative peace that has descended on so many regions is primarily due to the kind of heavy hand of the neoconservative leviathan, or its lighter, more liberal cousin. Something else appears to be at work.

#### China rise is peaceful

* China seeks limited predation not outright competition
* Strategy and policy moves show coop over conflict
* Care most about stability
* No evidence they are focused on heg – leaders understand risks of competition

Shifrinson 19 [Joshua Shifrinson is an Assistant Professor of International Relations with the Pardee School of Global Affairs at Boston University. Should the United States Fear China’s Rise? Winter 2019. www.bu.edu/pardeeschool/files/2019/01/Winter-2019\_Shifrinson\_0.pdf]

In short, limited predation—not an overt and outright push to overtake and challenge the United States—is the name of China’s current and highly rational game. As significantly, it appears Chinese leaders are aware of the structural logic of the situation. Despite ongoing debate over the extent to which China has departed from its long-standing “hide strength, bide time” strategy first formulated by Deng Xiaoping in favor a more assertive course seeking to increase Chinese influence in world affairs, Chinese leaders and China watchers have been at pains to point out that Chinese strategy still seeks to avoid provoking conflict with the United States.49 As one analyst notes, China’s decision to carve out a more prominent role for itself in world politics has been coupled with an effort to reassure and engage the United States so as to avoid unneeded competition while facilitating stability.50 Chinese leaders echo these themes, with one senior official noting in 2014 that Chinese policy focused on “properly addressing] conflicts and differences through dialogue and cooperation instead of confrontational approaches.”51 Xi Jinping himself has underlined these currents, arguing even before taking office that U.S.-Chinese relations should be premised on “preventing conflict and confrontation,” and more recently vowing that “China will promote coordination and cooperation with other major countries.”52 Ultimately, as one scholar observes, there is “hardly evidence that [... China has] begun to focus on hegemonic competition.”53 Put another way, China’s leaders appear aware of the risks of taking an overly confrontational stance toward a still-potent United States and have scoped Chinese ambitions accordingly.

#### Framing issue – their authors have been marred by imperialist propaganda.

Fettweis ‘17 (Christopher J, \*Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University, Ph.D. from the University of Maryland, College Park, “Unipolarity, Hegemony, and the New Peace,” Security Studies 26:3, 423-451)//cmr

The Political Psychology of Unipolarity Evidence supporting the notion that US power is primarily responsible for the New Peace is slim, but belief in the connection is quite strong, especially in policy circles. The best arena to examine the proposition is therefore not the world of measurable rationality, but rather that of the human mind. Political psychology can shed more light on unipolarity than can any collection of data or evidence. Just because an outcome is primarily psychological does not mean that it is less real; perception quickly becomes reality for both the unipolar state and those in the periphery. If all actors believe that the United States provides security and stability for the system, then behavior can be affected. Beliefs have deep explanatory power in international politics whether they have a firm foundation in empirical reality or not. Like all beliefs, faith in the stability provided by hegemony is rarely subjected to much analysis.79 Although they almost always have some basis in reality, beliefs need not pass rigorous tests to prove that they match it. No amount of evidence has been able to convince some people that vaccines do not cause autism, for example, or that the world is more peaceful than at any time before, or that the climate is changing due to human activity. Ultimately, as Robert Jervis explains, “we often believe as much in the face of evidence as because of it.”80 Facts may change, but beliefs remain the same. When leaders are motivated to act based on unjustified, inaccurate beliefs, folly often follows. The person who decides to take a big risk because of astrological advice in the morning’s horoscope can benefit from baseless superstition if the risk pays off. Probability and luck suggest that successful policy choices can sometimes flow from incorrect beliefs. Far more often, however, poor intellectual foundations lead to suboptimal or even disastrous outcomes. It is worthwhile to analyze the foundations of even our most deeply held beliefs to determine which ones are good candidates to inspire poor policy choices in those who hold them. People are wonderful rationalizers. There is much to be said for being the strongest country in the world; their status provides Americans both security and psychological rewards, as well as strong incentives to construct a rationale for preserving the unipolar moment that goes beyond mere selfishness. Since people enjoy being “number one,” they are susceptible to perceiving reality in ways that brings the data in line with their desires. It is no coincidence that most hegemonic stability theorists are American. 81 Perhaps the satisfaction that comes with being the unipolar power has inspired Americans to misperceive the positive role that their status plays in the world. Three findings from political psychology can shed light on perceptions of hegemonic stability. They are mutually supportive, and, when taken together, suggest that it is likely that US policymakers overestimate the extent to which their actions are responsible for the choices of others. The belief in the major US contribution to world peace is probably unjustified. The Illusion of Control Could 5 percent of the world’s population hope to enforce rules upon the rest? Would even an internationally hegemonic United States be capable of producing the New Peace? Perhaps, but it also may be true that believers in hegemonic stability may be affected by the very common tendency of people to overestimate their ability to control events. A variety of evidence has accumulated over the past forty years to support Ellen J. Langer’s original observations about the “illusion of control” that routinely distorts perception.82 Even in situations where outcomes are clearly generated by pure chance, people tend to believe that they can exert control over events.83 There is little reason to believe that leaders are somehow less susceptible to such illusions than subjects in controlled experiments. The extensive research on the illusion of control has revealed two further findings that suggest US illusions might be even stronger than average. First, misperceptions of control appear to be correlated with power: individuals with higher socioeconomic status, as well as those who are members of dominant groups, are more likely to overestimate their ability to control events.84 Powerful people tend to be far more confident than others, often overly so, and that confidence leads them to inflate their own importance.85 Leaders of superpowers are thus particularly vulnerable to distorted perceptions regarding their ability to affect the course of events. US observers had a greater structural predisposition than others, for example, to believe that they would have been able to control events in the Persian Gulf following an injection of creative instability in 2003. The skepticism of less powerful allies was easily discounted. Second, there is reason to believe that culture matters as well as power. People from societies that value individualism are more likely to harbor illusions of control than those from collectivist societies, where assumptions of group agency are more common. When compared to people from other parts of the world, Westerners tend to view the world as “highly subject to personal control,” in the words of Richard Nisbett.86 North Americans appear particularly vulnerable in this regard.87 Those who come from relatively powerful countries with individualistic societies are therefore at high risk for misperceiving their ability to influence events. For the United States, the illusion of control extends beyond the water’s edge. An oft-discussed public good supposedly conferred by US hegemony is order in those parts of the world uncontrolled by sovereign states, or the “global commons.” 88 One such common area is the sea, where the United States maintains the only true blue-water navy in the world. That the United States has brought this peace to the high seas is a central belief of hegemonic-stability theorists, one rarely examined in any serious way. Indeed the maritime environment has been unusually peaceful for decades; the biggest naval battles since Okinawa took place during the Falklands conflict in 1982, and they were fairly minor.89 If hegemony is the key variable explaining stability at sea, maritime security would have to be far more chaotic without the US Navy. It is equally if not more plausible to suggest, however, that the reason other states are not building blue-water navies is not because the United States dissuades them from doing so but rather because none feels that trade is imperiled.90 In earlier times, and certainly during the age of mercantilism, zero-sum economics inspired efforts to cut off the trade of opponents on occasion, making control the sea extremely important. Today the free flow of goods is vital to all economies, and it would be in the interest of no state to interrupt it.91 Free trade at sea may no longer need protection, in other words, because it essentially has no enemies; the sheriff may be patrolling a crime-free neighborhood. The threat from the few remaining pirates hardly requires a robust naval presence, and is certainly not what hegemonic-stability advocates mean when they compare the role played by the US Navy in 2016 to that of the Royal Navy in 1816. It is at least possible that shared interest in open, free commons keeps the peace at sea rather than the United States. Oceans unpatrolled by the US Navy may be about as stable as they are with the presence of its carriers. The degree to which 273 active-duty ships exert control over vast common parts is not at all clear. People overestimate the degree to which they control events in their lives. Furthermore, if these observations from political psychology are right about the factors that influence the growth of illusions of power, then US leaders and analysts are particularly susceptible to misperception. They may well be overestimating the degree to which the United States can affect the behavior of others. The rest of the world may be able to get along just fine, on land and at sea, without US attempts to control it. Ego-Centric and Self-Serving Biases in Attribution It is natural for people, whether presidents or commoners, to misperceive the role they play in the thinking process of others. Jervis was the first to discuss this phenomenon, now known as the “ego-centric bias,” which has been put to the test many times since he wrote four decades ago. Building on what was known as “attribution theory,” Jervis observed that actors tend to overestimate their importance in the decisions of others. Rarely are our actions as consequential upon their behavior as we believe them to be.92 This is not merely ego gratification, though that plays a role; actors are simply more conscious of their own actions than the other factors central to the internal deliberations in other capitals. Because people are more likely to remember their contributions to an outcome, they naturally grant themselves more causal weight.93 Two further aspects of the ego-centric bias make US analysts even more susceptible to its effects. First, the bias is magnified when the behavior of others is desirable. People generally take credit for positive outcomes and deflect responsibility for negative ones. This “self-serving bias” is one of the best-established findings in modern psychology, supported by many hundreds of studies.94 Supporters of Ronald Reagan are happy to give him credit for ending the Cold War, for instance, even though evidence that the United States had much influence on Premier Gorbachev’s decision making is scant at best.95 Today, since few outcomes are more desirable than global stability, it stands to reason that perceptions of the New Peace are prime candidates for distortion by ego-centric, self-serving biases. When war breaks out, it is not the fault of US leaders; when peace comes to a region, Washington is happy to take credit. There was for some time a debate among psychologists over just how universal self-serving biases were, or whether their effects varied across cultures. Extensive research has essentially settled the matter, to the extent that academic questions can ever be settled: a direct relationship appears to exist between cultural individualism and susceptibility to the bias, perhaps because of the value individualistic societies place on self-enhancement (as opposed to self-effacement).96 Actors from more collectivist societies tend to have their egos rewarded in different ways, such as through contributions to the community and connections to others. People from Western countries are far more likely to take credit for positive outcomes than those from Eastern, in other words, and subjects in the United States tower over the rest of the West. US leaders are therefore more culturally predisposed to believe that their actions are responsible for positive outcomes like peace. Second, self-perception is directly related to egocentric attributions. Individuals with high self-esteem are more likely to believe that they are at the center of the decision-making process of others than those who think somewhat more modestly. 97 Leaders of any unipolar state may well be more likely to hold their country in high regard, and therefore are more vulnerable to exaggerated egocentric perceptions, than their contemporaries in smaller states. It might not occur to the lead diplomat of other counties to claim, as did Madeleine Albright, that “if we have to use force, it is because we are America; we are the indispensable nation. We stand tall and we see further than other countries into the future.”98 It is not unreasonable to suspect that the US security community may be even more vulnerable to this misperception than the average group of people. For example, many in that community believed that the United States played a decisive role in Vladimir Putin’s decisions regarding Crimea and eastern Ukraine. President Obama’s various critics argued that perceptions of American weakness inspired or even invited Russian aggression. The refusal to act in Syria in particular emboldened Moscow (despite the fact that in 2008, in the face of ample displays of US action in the Middle East, Moscow had proven sufficiently bold to invade Georgia). Other critics suggested that a variety of provocative US behaviors since the end of the Cold War, especially the expansion of NATO and dissolution of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, poisoned US–Russian relations and led to an increase in Kremlin paranoia and eventually to the invasion.99 So, either through provocative weakness or bullying, we were responsible for their actions. Egocentric misperceptions are so ubiquitous and pervasive that they generate something of a law of political psychology: we are probably less influential in others’ decision making than we think we are. This extends to their decisions to resolve contentious issues peacefully. While it may be natural for US policymakers to interpret their role as crucial in the maintenance of world peace, it is very likely that Washington exaggerates its importance in the decision making of others, and in the maintenance of international stability. The effect of the ego-centric bias may be especially difficult for the unipolar United States to resist, because other countries do regularly take Washington’s position into account before acting. But US leaders—and the people who analyze them—should keep in mind that they are still probably less important to calculations made in other capitals than they believe. They may well be especially unlikely to recognize the possibility that hegemony is epiphenomenal, that it exists alongside, but does not affect, global stability and the New Peace. Overestimated Benevolence After three years in the White House, Ronald Reagan had learned something surprising: “Many people at the top of the Soviet hierarchy were genuinely afraid of America and Americans,” he wrote in his autobiography. He continued: “Perhaps this shouldn’t have surprised me, but it did…I’d always felt that from our deeds it must be clear to anyone that Americans were a moral people who starting at the birth of our nation had always used our power only as a force for good in the world…. During my first years in Washington, I think many of us took it for granted that the Russians, like ourselves, considered it unthinkable that the United States would launch a first strike against them.”100 Reagan is certainly not alone in believing in the essential benevolent image of his nation. While it is common for actors to attribute negative motivations to the behavior of others, it is exceedingly difficult for them to accept that anyone could interpret their actions in negative ways. Leaders are well aware of their own motives and tend to assume that their peaceful intentions are obvious and transparent. Both strains of the hegemonic-stability explanation assume not only that US power is benevolent, but that others perceive it that way. Hegemonic stability depends on the perceptions of other states to be successful; it has no hope to succeed if it encounters resistance from the less powerful members of the system, or even if they simply refuse to follow the rules. Relatively small police forces require the general cooperation of large communities to have any chance of establishing order. They must perceive the sheriff as just, rational, and essentially nonthreatening. The lack of balancing behavior in the system, which has been puzzling to many realists, seems to support the notion of widespread perceptions of benevolent hegemony.101 Were they threatened by the order constructed by the United States, the argument goes, smaller states would react in ways that reflected their fears. Since internal and external balancing accompanied previous attempts to achieve hegemony, the absence of such behavior today suggests that something is different about the US version. Hegemonic-stability theorists purport to understand the perceptions of others, at times better than those others understand themselves. Complain as they may at times, other countries know that the United States is acting in the common interest. Objections to unipolarity, though widespread, are not “very seriously intended,” wrote Kagan, since “the truth about America’s dominant role in the world is known to most observers. And the truth is that the benevolent hegemony exercised by the United States is good for a vast portion of the world’s population.” 102 In the 1990s, Russian protests regarding NATO expansion—though nearly universal—were not taken seriously, since US planners believed the alliance’s benevolent intentions were apparent to all. Sagacious Russians understood that expansion would actually be beneficial, since it would bring stability to their western border.103 President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher were caught off guard by the hostility of their counterparts regarding the issue at a summit in Budapest in December 1994.104 Despite warnings from the vast majority of academic and policy experts about the likely Russian reaction and overall wisdom of expansion itself, the administration failed to anticipate Moscow’s position. 105 The Russians did not seem to believe American assurances that expansion would actually be good for them. The United States overestimated the degree to which others saw it as benevolent. Once again, the culture of the United States might make its leaders more vulnerable to this misperception. The need for positive self-regard appears to be particularly strong in North American societies compared to elsewhere.106 Western egos tend to be gratified through self-promotion rather than humility, and independence rather than interdependence. Americans are more likely to feel good if they are unique rather than a good cog in society’s wheel, and uniquely good. The need to be perceived as benevolent, though universal, may well exert stronger encouragement for US observers to project their perceptions onto others. The United States almost certainly frightens others more than its leaders perceive. A quarter of the 68,000 respondents to a 2013 Gallup poll in sixty-five countries identified the United States as the “greatest threat to world peace,” which was more than three times the total for the second-place country (Pakistan).107 The international community always has to worry about the potential for police brutality, even if it occurs rarely. Such ungratefulness tends to come as a surprise to US leaders. In 2003, Condoleezza Rice was dismayed to discover resistance to US initiatives in Iraq: “There were times,” she said later, “that it appeared that American power was seen to be more dangerous than, perhaps, Saddam Hussein.”108 Both liberals and neoconservatives probably exaggerate the extent to which US hegemony is everywhere secretly welcomed; it is not just petulant resentment, but understandable disagreement with US policies, that motivates counterhegemonic beliefs and behavior. To review, assuming for a moment that US leaders are subject to the same forces that affect every human being, they overestimate the amount of control they have over other actors, and are not as important to decisions made elsewhere as they believe themselves to be. And they probably perceive their own benevolence to be much greater than do others. These common phenomena all influence US beliefs in the same direction, and may well increase the apparent explanatory power of hegemony beyond what the facts would otherwise support. The United States is probably not as central to the New Peace as either liberals or neoconservatives believe.

#### Only restraint solves nuke war BUT the transition would be peaceful and create more resilient global governance, which is goldilocks and balances security with cohesion – that straight turns every answer

Pampinella 19 [Stephenis Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations at the State University of New York (SUNY) at New Paltz. 1/23. "The Internationalist Disposition and US Grand Strategy." https://thedisorderofthings.com/2019/01/23/the-internationalist-disposition-and-us-grand-strategy/]

A concert strategy can do what establishment foreign policy cannot, namely de-escalate great power competition by giving up US hegemony. If adopted, the United States would treat other great powers, like Russia, China, and Iran, as equal partners in the maintenance of global stability and incorporate their interests into regional security agreements. The United States would give up its self-assumed role as an unrivaled global hegemon and seek a balance of power based on mutual respect with other great powers as partners rather than enemies. This kind of international posture would result in a more horizontal great power system, one that Stacie Goddard as identified as being productive of status quo rather than revisionist intentions. It would be compatible with recognition of the great power identities of other states and provide them with ontological security.

Transitioning from a hegemonic security strategy to a balance of power one will require that the United States engage in some degree of retrenchment from its already expansive commitments. But supporters of hegemony are wrong when they claim that retrenchment will encourage great power aggression and lead to the abandonment of our allies. The United States can engage in moderate forms of retrenchment consistent with great power recognition while still maintaining commitments to allies that strive to uphold human dignity. For example, were the United States to support a moratorium on NATO expansion, as Michael O’Hanlon suggests, it would signal that the United States is no longer interested in moving the frontiers of its influence to the gates of Moscow and remove the sense of threat experienced by Russian leaders. By recognizing the validity of Russian security interests as well as its great power identity, the equal relationship made possible by a concert strategy will better deal with the threat of interstate conflict compared to US hegemony.

Reviving Global Governance

A concert strategy informed by the internationalist disposition can further enable more robust forms of global governance. Rather than attempt international cooperation based on a priori liberal normative templates, the United States would accept the validity of all claims made by collective actors in world politics in an open-ended and inclusive process of deliberation. The result would be less of a hegemonic order and more of a constitutionalist one, in which the United States binds itself to a truly democratic process of decision-making at the global level. The emergence of global governance norms would be a function less of hegemonic socialization and more of a right held by all actors to contest the validity of standards of expected behavior. In other words, a concert strategy would enable the United States to accept processes of norm contestation as the motor of transnational cooperation and generate more legitimate rules for regulating global governance. It would expand the US order building project initially identified by Ikenberry on the basis of restraint and institutional self-binding, but without retaining its own hierarchical position in world politics or engaging in hypocritical forms of dominance.

#### China’s not evil

Ambrosio et al. 19 -\*professor of political science in the Criminal Justice and Political Science Department at North Dakota State University, [Thomas Ambrosio, Carson Schram, Professor of Political Science at North Dakota State University and teaches courts on international politics and international law & Preston Heopfne, Department of Political Science, North Dakota State University, The American securitization of China and Russia: U.S. geopolitical culture and declining unipolarity, 2019, Eurasian Geography and Economics, DOI: 10.1080/15387216.2019.1702566, DKP]

China

America’s post-Cold War China threat narrative has evolved significantly into one in which China’s growing capabilities have complemented its ambition to establish itself both as a great power with regional dominance and as a global actor – all in the service of transforming the current world order. As seen in Figure 1, 9 which illustrates the overall percentages of references in terms of source of threat, the China threat has been defined in aggregate by capabilities, either by itself or in combination with another source. Indeed, 44.6% of all references to the China threat defined it exclusively in terms of capabilities – i.e. not combined with any other source. One reason is that nearly 39% of all references were about China’s nuclear weapons or growing conventional assets. However, the aggregate view can be misleading, as seen in Figure 2, which details the data from Figure 1 annually. It shows that there were five distinct periods in which references to intentions spiked: 1996-1998, 2001, 2010, 2012, and 2018–2019.10 These corresponded to points of punctuation in which the

A picture containing timeline

Description automatically generated

threat narrative notably intensified, indicating that Chinese actions helped to significantly drive it.

Fueled by its rapid economic growth, strategic geographic location, and large population, China was recognized early as being well-placed to have a greater impact on the regional and world stages. The primary theme of the initial narrative was about China’s potential power. However, whether it would constitute a threat to U.S. interests and the region was placed primarily on the Chinese government and how it would employ its newfound power – that is, whether it would actively seek to undermine American regional dominance. In 1995, for example, China was noted as the chief exception to the global trend of declining military budgets, but special emphasis was placed on how it “might use its military forces” (S.Hrg.104-15 1995, 33). Specifically, “the rapid growth in China’s material strength has raised the importance of China in the Asian security equation” and the “peace, stability, and economic growth in the AsiaPacific region” was, in large part, dependent upon whether China sought friendly relations with its neighbors (S.Hrg.104-15 1995, 43). At this point, the notion that China could threaten American global position and the world order was not discussed. Instead, the possibility only was that China could use its rising power to challenge the regional order.

A significant intensification of the China threat narrative accompanied the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1995–1996, in which China conducted a series of missile tests in waters surrounding Taiwan and mobilized its military across the strait. As seen in Figure 3, which illustrates China’s role in triggering regional instability within East-Asia as a percentage of annual references, there was a significant increase in this issue during the 1996 and 1997 hearings. This crisis was generated in response to a visit to the U.S. by Taiwan’s president, which the Chinese government considered an unacceptable symbolic act of American support for the more independence-leaning leader, and in the context of Taiwan’s 1996 election, in which he was standing for reelection. The U.S. eventually responded by sending two carrier battle groups to the area. The consequences of this crisis were still unfolding when the 1996 threat hearing was held, and it was the first time in which China was described as actually “threatening” and “serious questions” were raised “about Beijing’s intentions” and regional goals (S.Hrg.104- 510 1996, 5). Chinese “saber-rattling” was placed in the context of its preparations for “local and limited conflicts,” which ran counter to China’s claims that it sought constructive relations with its neighbors (S.Hrg.104-510 1996, 47). The reasons for its actions were not provided in the testimony nor were its concerns over Taiwan given any legitimacy. This narrative direction continued in 1997, with greater attention paid to China’s potential, and negative, impact in Asia-Pacific should it choose to become “more assertive and aggressive” (S.Hrg.105-201 1997, 16). The implication of this testimony was that the success of America’s policy of engagement with China was ultimately dependent upon Chinese intentions and not American policy.

Given China’s policies vis-à-vis Taiwan, it is perhaps not surprising that its great power ambitions and revisionist goals were first introduced in 1996 and became recurring themes in American depictions of China over the next several years. By 2001, Chinese ambitions were described as having “come sharply into focus” and “one of the toughest challenges we face” (S.Hrg.107-2 2001, 10). As seen in Figure 3, over 11% of these reports, on average, referenced China’s great power

Chart

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

ambitions in the decade following 1996. Significantly, this impulse stemmed from internal sources: a nationalist impulse to “[redress] what it often proclaims as a hundred years of humiliation at the hands of Western powers” (S.Hrg.106-580 2000, 18);“a centuries-old quest for national wealth and power” (S.Hrg.107-2 2001, 28); and, domestic politics amongst Communist Party elites who feel “obliged to avoid any hint of being soft on the United States” (S.Hrg.107-597 2002, 134).11 This desire ultimately manifested itself in China’s goal to establish itself as the dominant power in East Asia (S.Hrg.107-2 2001, 28). U.S. officials framed China’s economic growth, military spending, and desire for a sphere of influence as connected to, and in many ways a direct consequence of, its great power ambitions, which largely emerged from internal Chinese dynamics.

This narrative was also connected to one which described China as a revisionist power, with a commitment to a “multipolar world” – a phrase which was first used in regard to China in 2000 (S.Hrg.106-580 2000, 7). This goal rejected the U.S.-led unipolar international system and sought to establish a new geopolitical architecture. This assessment of Chinese goals can, in large part, explain why the China threat narrative again spiked in 2001: China was expected to consistently “attempt to limit or forestall American unilateral or US led actions judged adverse to China’s own interests because they seem to strengthen and perpetuate a unipolar world” (S.Hrg.107-2 2001, 28). This new narrative was important because it rearticulated the China threat as directly inimical to America’s global position. While officials recognized that China saw the U.S. as its primary impediment to achieving regional goals, there was no acknowledgment from the U.S. side that its policies were in any way responsible. Furthermore, there was no sense that China had a legitimate concern regarding American unilateralism or its forward military positioning along China’s periphery. Rather, the implication was that Beijing’s perceptions were simply incorrect.

While these themes were repeated during hearings over the first decade of the 2000s, there was a lull in the amount of attention paid to China at this time associated with America’s preoccupation with the Global War on Terrorism. For example, there were only a few score references to China across all reports submitted in 2007, and these were almost entirely focused on recounting China’s conventional and nuclear capabilities. But, after China became far more active in the South China Sea around 2008 and as the U.S. moved further away from 9/11, there was a meaningful intensification in the China threat narrative. The Obama administration’s intention to refocus U.S. foreign policy away from the Middle East and toward the Asia-Pacific region through the so called “pivot” also played a key role in this narrative shift as a means to justify it (Ambrosio et al. 2018).

Thus, the China threat narrative which developed around this time depicted China as a far more active, confident threat, which was willing to assert its great power ambitions regionally and even extra-regionally – the latter reflected its growing engagement with Africa and Latin America (S.Hrg.110-634 2008, 28). Accordingly, China was characterized as dedicated to “assertive . . . behavior” and becoming “a more imposing and potentially difficult international actor” in the future (S.Hrg.112-159 2011, 16). This wider focus was backed by a military which (a)energetically sought to counter America’s military advantages in the region, to the point that it was beginning to emerge as a peer competitor, at least regionally; (b)adopted “an offensive operational [military] doctrine” and “possible preemptive action;” and, (c)was building the capacity to act extraregionally in support of its broader great power interests, such as establishing naval facilities in the Indian Ocean (S.Hrg.110-634 2008, 43). These actions were portrayed as ultimately connected to overturning America’s global position.

This increased threat narrative was evidenced by the 2010 spike in references to China’s great power ambitions, as seen in Figure 3, where nearly a third of all references to China mentioned these designs. This overall characterization was reinforced by an increased focus on Chinese actions in the South China Sea, with references to intentions reaching a high-point in 2012 (see Figure 2). Furthermore, China was depicted as a multifaceted threat dedicated to expanding its geographic profile, with an increased willingness to undertake cyberspace and foreign intelligence operations against the U.S., and prepared for conflicts in which space/counterspace capabilities would prove crucial. Over the next decade, each of these themes continued, becoming significantly more serious as U.S. perceptions of great power threat became central to the American narrative in the latter half of the 2010

**US is worse than Russia or China, makes heg unsustainable**

**Ashford, PhD, 19**

(Emma, PoliSci@UVA, Fellow@CATO, Power and Pragmatism: Reforming American Foreign Policy for the 21st Century, in New Voices in Grand Strategy, 6, CNAS)

Military intervention abroad is **not a bug, but rather a feature of American primacy**. Certainly, some would argue that disasters like the Iraq war are a momentary aberration in a broader pattern of benevolent foreign policy behavior. Yet supporters of primacy are often schizophrenic about this issue. Hal Brands, for example, has argued both that democracy promotion is a core liberal project, and that the norms of nonaggression and sovereignty are paramount to the U.S.-led order.10 Others describe humanitarian or pro-democracy intervention as a necessary – even core – component of maintaining international order.11 In reality, the broad, sweeping goals of liberal internationalism almost inevitably lead to intervention, at least in an era of unipolarity. The rationale may vary from case to case, but illiberal behavior – military conquest –typically is excused as justifiable in the service of liberal goals,12 from nonproliferation in Iraq, to human rights in Libya or Kosovo, to counterterrorism in Niger and Cameroon. Since the end of the Cold War and the end of bipolarity, such interventions have become substantially more numerous; by one estimate, the United States engaged in four times as many military interventions since 1992 as during the whole of the Cold War.13 American endorsement of problematic norms like the Responsibility to Protect have only added to the problem. The results of the intervention trap have been dire. The **few moderate successes have been largely outweighed by an impressive number of failures**. The war in Iraq upset the balance of power in the Middle East and helped to contribute to the rise of ISIS. The U.S.-installed government of Afghanistan continues to slowly lose ground against a resurgent Taliban. The intervention in Libya produced an ongoing civil conflict. And American actions in these cases may be **driving dictators elsewhere – like North Korea’s Kim Jong Un – to pursue the protection that only nuclear weapons can bring.** Even interventions like Kosovo, typically viewed as more benign, can be problematic. As James Goldgeier notes, “Because it ended with NATO victorious and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic irreversibly weakened, it does not get the same level of attention as the 2003 Iraq War or the 2011 intervention in Libya. But it should.”14 Confrontations with both Russia and China during the Kosovo intervention helped to worsen relations, and the intervention itself later served as a precedent for the Bush administration’s unilateral invasion of Iraq. On a broader level, the exponential growth of U.S. counterterrorism commitments overseas – from drone strikes to special ops forces and the deployment of troops to engage in “train-and-equip” missions – **has driven groups with predominantly local grievances into the arms of global terror groups, and has increased radicalization** in various areas.15 Counterterrorism missions are frequently invisible to the American people, and policymakers rarely debate their missions or cost, continuing to rely on the dated 2001 Authorization to use Military Force. Constant interventions squander blood and treasure, all while **chipping away at U.S. military readiness.**16 As Michael Spirtas of Rand describes, “Almost two decades of fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq have resulted in a generation of American service members with little experience in thinking about or preparing for major power conflict.”17 These outcomes are **not the consequence of a few poor decisions, but rather of the core motivating concepts of primacy** and its expansive aims. If we continue to adhere to a strategy that views America as the world’s policeman and savior, we will remain stuck in **the intervention trap.**

#### China doesn’t want zero-sum polarity even with Biden. Xi transitions to avoid lash-out. He will back out of Taiwan and the SCS if Biden stops high-level Taipei visits and cooperate in bilateral agreements which proves Xi is reactionary.

Rudd, 21 (Kevin Rudd, KEVIN RUDD is President of the Asia Society, in New York, and previously served as Prime Minister of Australia, "Short of War," Foreign Affairs, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-02-05/kevin-rudd-usa-chinese-confrontation-short-of-war>, 2021)//ILake-NC

AMERICA THROUGH XI'S EYES Underneath all these strategic choices lies Xi’s belief, reflected in official Chinese pronouncements and CCP literature, that the United States is experiencing a steady, irreversible structural decline. This belief is now grounded in a considerable body of evidence. A divided U.S. government failed to craft a national strategy for long-term investment in infrastructure, education, and basic scientific and technological research. The Trump administration damaged U.S. alliances, abandoned trade liberalization, withdrew the United States from its leadership of the postwar international order, and crippled U.S. diplomatic capacity. The Republican Party has been hijacked by the far right, and the American political class and electorate are so deeply polarized that it will prove difficult for any president to win support for a long-term bipartisan strategy on China. Washington, Xi believes, is highly unlikely to recover its credibility and confidence as a regional and global leader. And he is betting that as the next decade progresses, other world leaders will come to share this view and begin to adjust their strategic postures accordingly, gradually shifting from balancing with Washington against Beijing, to hedging between the two powers, to bandwagoning with China. But China worries about the possibility of Washington lashing out at Beijing in the years before U.S. power finally dissipates. Xi’s concern is not just a potential military conflict but also any rapid and radical economic decoupling. Moreover, the CCP’s diplomatic establishment fears that the Biden administration, realizing that the United States will soon be unable to match Chinese power on its own, might form an effective coalition of countries across the democratic capitalist world with the express aim of counterbalancing China collectively. In particular, CCP leaders fear that President Joe Biden’s proposal to hold a summit of the world’s major democracies represents a first step on that path, which is why China acted rapidly to secure new trade and investment agreements in Asia and Europe before the new administration came into office. Washington, Xi believes, is unlikely to recover its credibility and confidence as a global leader. Mindful of this combination of near-term risks and China’s long-term strengths, Xi’s general diplomatic strategy toward the Biden administration will be to de-escalate immediate tensions, stabilize the bilateral relationship as early as possible, and do everything possible to prevent security crises. To this end, Beijing will look to fully reopen the lines of high-level military communication with Washington that were largely cut off during the Trump administration. Xi might seek to convene a regular, high-level political dialogue, as well, although Washington will not be interested in reestablishing the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, which served as the main channel between the two countries until its collapse amid the trade war of 2018–19. Finally, Beijing may moderate its military activity in the immediate period ahead in areas where the People’s Liberation Army rubs up directly against U.S. forces, particularly in the South China Sea and around Taiwan—assuming that the Biden administration discontinues the high-level political visits to Taipei that became a defining feature of the final year of the Trump administration. For Beijing, however, these are changes in tactics, not in strategy. As Xi tries to ratchet down tensions in the near term, he will have to decide whether to continue pursuing his hard-line strategy against Australia, Canada, and India, which are friends or allies of the United States. This has involved a combination of a deep diplomatic freeze and economic coercion—and, in the case of India, direct military confrontation. Xi will wait for any clear signal from Washington that part of the price for stabilizing the U.S.-Chinese relationship would be an end to such coercive measures against U.S. partners. If no such signal is forthcoming—there was none under President Donald Trump—then Beijing will resume business as usual. Meanwhile, Xi will seek to work with Biden on climate change. Xi understands this is in China’s interests because of the country’s increasing vulnerability to extreme weather events. He also realizes that Biden has an opportunity to gain international prestige if Beijing cooperates with Washington on climate change, given the weight of Biden’s own climate commitments, and he knows that Biden will want to be able to demonstrate that his engagement with Beijing led to reductions in Chinese carbon emissions. As China sees it, these factors will deliver Xi some leverage in his overall dealings with Biden. And Xi hopes that greater collaboration on climate will help stabilize the U.S.-Chinese relationship more generally.