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**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**

**DA**

**Xi is successfully consolidating power now but *legitimacy* is key**

**Hale 11-8-21**

(Erin, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/8/xi-looks-to-consolidate-power-at-key-party-meeting)

Chinese President Xi Jinping is expected to **further consolidate his leadership** at a key meeting of the Communist Party’s Central Committee this week amid a flurry of flattering publicity from state media. The Central Committee is made up of more than 300 of the party’s top leaders who include provincial governors and party secretaries as well as financial and military elites. The Beijing meeting, which continues until Thursday, is expected to further pave the way for Xi to secure an unprecedented third term in office at next year’s Party Congress, one of China’s most important political meetings, which is held once every five years. While the National People’s Congress removed term limits in 2018, enabling Xi to rule China indefinitely, he needs the endorsement of top party leaders, says Tai Wei Lim, a research fellow adjunct at the National University of Singapore’s East Asian Institute. “[**Xi] needs the legitimacy** of leading members of the party for an unprecedented additional term, especially when he is not normatively following a term limit convention – convention, not law – in the post-Mao era,” Lim told Al Jazeera. Xi’s aspirations appear to be to take a place among China’s foremost Communist leaders, including Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, who steered China through its political and economic reopening in the late 1970s and 80s. As the child of one of the party’s founding members and the country’s political elite, Xi is known as a “princeling” and since taking office in 2013, he has obtained a cult of personality not seen since Mao was in power. Earlier this year, the party marked its centenary and the upcoming Central Committee is expected to pass a “historical resolution” reviewing its achievements over the past 100 years, according to Xinhua news agency. The text will also uphold Xi’s “core position” within the party, it said. The party’s public relations blitz around Xi comes as China faces its internal struggles with a resurgence of COVID-19 cases, an ongoing energy crisis and a teetering real estate sector saddled in debt.

**Xi’s rallying the party around space development – its central to his entire agenda**

**Loftus ’19** (Peter; 1st Lieutenant, US Air Force, M.A. in International Relations and Affairs from Johns Hopkins University; Spring 2019; “Counter and Cooperate: How Space Can Be Used to Advance US–China Cooperation While Curbing Beijing’s Terrestrial Excesses”; <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/ASPJ/journals/Volume-33_Issue-1/SEA-Loftus.pdf>; Air & Space Power Journal; accessed 9/1/19; TV)

Since People’s Republic of China (PRC) President Jinping XI came to power in 2012, China’s **diplomatic disposition** has experienced a **profound evolution**. Jinping XI is promoting his vision of the “**Chinese Dream**” and **national rejuvenation**, the goal of which is to **reverse the “Century of Humiliation”** that China suffered, from the start of the First Opium War in 1839 and lasting until the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came to power in 1949. In testimony before the US–China Economic and Security Review Commission, Dr. Alison A. Kaufman, a senior Asia policy researcher with the Center for Naval Analyses, explained that this period provides a key **foundational story** for the CCP. “Today, this narrative has become a **key legitimizer for CCP rule**, because the CCP is portrayed as the only modern Chinese political party that was able to successfully **stand up to foreign aggression**.”2

The dilemma for Beijing is how to ascend without ensnaring itself and the US in **Thucydides’s Trap**. Previously the PRC abided by former paramount leader Deng Xiaoping’s dictum of Tao Guang Yang Hui, which translates to “lay low and bide one’s time.” The purpose of this strategy was to fight the perception that China is an ascendant threat, incurring preemptive hostilities from outside powers. Today, however, China is much more confident on the world stage. Beijing seeks to **promote its vision** for the future on the diplomatic front, and **space policy** plays an important role in this objective. According to James Andrew Lewis, the Center for Strategic & International Studies technology and public policy program director, China’s **space endeavors** are “. . . especially important to show that it has **reclaimed its place** among the **leading nations** of the world. China’s successes in **space** reinforce its claims to **regional dominance** by demonstrating that it is the **most advanced** among Asian nations, with technology and resources that **others cannot match**.”3 China’s space initiatives play an **instrumental role** in showing that it has returned to its place as a **preeminent regional power**. While China’s neighbors question US commitment to the Indo-Asia-Pacific, Beijing’s promulgation of a **multidecade plan** for developing space capabilities demonstrates its staying **power** and **ambition**.

China’s Informational Power

While China’s focus on diplomatic messaging travels outward, the informational element of Chinese space policy is mainly **directed inward**. To this day, the CCP’s legitimacy is premised upon a **Faustian bargain** with its citizens. In exchange for economic results, social improvement, and the respect of the world, the political elite expects **loyalty** and **acquiescence** from the public. The CCP’s **space aspirations** play a fundamental role in demonstrating the government’s ambitions for China’s future. They include landing a rover on the far side of the moon by 2018, landing a Mars rover by 2020, probing asteroids by 2022, sending humans to the moon by 2025, bringing Mars samples back by 2028, sending an exploratory mission to Jupiter by 2029, and establishing a lunar research station manned by robots with occasional astronaut visits by 2050.4 **Shooting for the stars** keeps the Chinese people’s eyes **skyward** and away from **CCP malfeasance**. To borrow Karl Marx’s reference to religion, Beijing’s space policy is an **opiate for the Chinese masses.**

China’s Military Power

The Gulf War had a visceral effect on Chinese military planners. The rapid neutralization of Saddam Hussein’s military demonstrated what decades of Cold War military spending were able to procure for the US armed forces, especially in the realm of command and control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR). The Chinese took this to heart and incorporated **informationized warfare** into their military doctrine in 1993.5 Increasingly, space has become a central focus of China’s **national security strategy**, which continues to expand outward from an immediate defense of the Chinese homeland to **protecting interests overseas** and even in space.

In this capacity, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is pursuing a comprehensive space strategy to allow for it to **compete with near-peer adversaries**. As the US–China Economic and Security Review Commission states:

**Consolidation of power under Xi is vital to prevent CCP collapse.**

**Kuhn 16** — Robert Lawrence Kuhn, Columnist for *China Daily* and *South China Morning Post*, Author of *How China’s Leaders Think: The Inside Story of China's Past, Current and Future Leaders* and *The Man Who Changed China: The Life and Legacy of Jiang Zemin*—the first biography of a living Chinese leader, holds a Ph.D. in Anatomy and Brain Research from the Brain Research Institute at the University of California-Los Angeles and an M.S. in Management from the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2016 (“Why China needs Xi Jinping as its core leader,” *South China Morning Post*, November 20th, Available Online at <http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/2047173/why-china-needs-xi-jinping-its-core-leader>, Accessed 01-27-2017)

When, at a recent party plenum, President Xi Jinping ( 習近平 ) was designated as “core” of the Communist Party’s Central Committee, some Western media were quick to condemn the rise of a new “strongman”. While recognising the significance of Xi as the core was correct, conjuring up visions of an emerging dictator was **not**.

I recalled my meeting with Xi years earlier, when he was still party secretary of Zhejiang (浙江) province. Even then he was criticising “empty talk” and advising, “We should never overestimate our accomplishments or indulge ourselves in our achievements”. I took note of how Xi stressed, “We need to assess ourselves objectively”. Hardly, in retrospect, the ruminations of a gestating dictator.

To understand why Xi is now the core, one must appreciate the complex challenges of our times. China is now facing **multiple challenges:** domestically – slow growth, industrial overcapacity, endemic pollution, imbalanced development, income disparity, social injustice, social service demands; and, internationally – wars, regional conflicts, sluggish economies, volatile markets, trade protectionism, ethnic clashes, terrorism, geopolitical rivalries, and territorial disputes in the South and East China seas.

Most critically, because China must deepen its reforms to achieve its oft-promised goal of a “moderately prosperous society” by 2020, the resistance of entrenched interest groups **must be overcome**. More subtly, there is what some call a pervasive “soft resistance” – local officials who do not do their job and economic elites who migrate.

If reform had been progressing smoothly, then why strengthen central authority by investing Xi with the status of core leader? Xi has encountered obstacles; if there were no obstacles, there would be no need for a core leader.

I have been speaking to party officials and theorists about Xi as core leader. In fact, the necessity of having a leadership core to maintain stability and expedite reform is the first and foremost of what I found to be four factors relating to Xi’s elevation.

A second factor is that not only does Xi have the responsibility for China’s transformation, he is also accountable for it. Moreover, he has shown courage in confronting and dismantling a vast, corrupt system of bribery, patronage and illicit wealth accretion.

A third factor is that Xi as the core does **not** end, and even may not diminish, the cardinal principle of “democratic centralism”. The party bolsters each of the concepts: encouraging the democratic solicitation of input and feedback from members, lower-ranked officials, and the public; and strengthening centralism through Xi’s leadership of the principal levers of power (his positions as party general secretary, head of state, chairman of the Central Military Commission, and head of the “leading groups” on reform, national security and internet security).

A fourth factor is that a core is required to manage the party more strictly and thereby give members and the public **more confidence**. Witness Xi’s relentless and unprecedented anti-corruption campaign, which is altering how government officials and industry managers work and even think. Let no one assume that Xi’s battle against corruption has been risk-free.

Significantly, these four factors undergirding Xi as the core leader map onto his overarching political framework, his strategic blueprint called “The Four Comprehensives” – a moderately prosperous society, reform, rule of law, party discipline.

Xi’s core status arises, we’re told, through the collective will of the party and the people. Becoming party core is not an automatic consequence of being general secretary; a core leader must fit the times and the status must be earned.

Speaking at a press conference following the 18th Central Committee’s sixth plenum last month, Huang Kunming (黄坤明), executive vice-minister of the committee’s Publicity Department, said that the “central and local departments as well as the military all expressed their support” for Xi’s position as party core, adding that this decision was “based on the valuable experience of the party and we feel keenly about it”.

Huang explained that “a core is needed **to ensure that the party will be the governing party**”, describing it as significant for upholding the Central Committee’s authority and maintaining the central, unified leadership of the party and for its “staying true to its mission”.

Therefore, party theorists explain, Xi as core leader is more a ratification of reality than a shift of fundamentals.

What does Xi as core mean in a historical context? It was Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平) who introduced the concept when he designated Jiang Zemin (江澤民) as “core of the third generation” of central leaders, bolstering Jiang’s stature following his unexpected appointment as party leader in 1989. At the time, China was facing the dual impediments of economic stagnation and social uncertainty at home, and economic quarantine and diplomatic isolation abroad. As Deng pointed out: “Any leading group should have a core; a leadership with no core is unreliable.”

Only then did Deng retrospectively apply the novel term to Mao Zedong (毛澤東) and to himself, as core of the first and second generations, respectively. (Of course, Mao was so utterly dominant that calling him core during his lifetime would have seemed a demotion. Deng remained core even when he no longer held any official position.)

Today’s world is more complex. China faces threats at home and abroad. Volatility grows and uncertainty abounds – the Middle East and Donald Trump are offered as evidence. The need to secure China’s stability is **more essential than ever**, and thus to strengthen Xi’s authority is a primary reason, I’m told, for designating Xi as core leader. Party theorists say China **“urgently” requires a political nucleus** that is sophisticated and nuanced, attuned to contemporary times. Though conditions now differ from those in 1989, Deng’s admonition rings timelessly true.

However, that a core leader is needed now does not mean one will always be needed. When China becomes a fully modernised nation, perhaps by mid-century, conditions may change again.

I hear frequently of the “painful lessons of China’s century of blood and tears” and that for China not to have a tested and authoritative leadership core would be “unthinkable”. Party inner talk says “Xi Jinping has passed the test of the people” to be China’s political core, leadership core, and a core of the times.

Chinese scholars argue that “core” is a unique characteristic of Chinese political theory – however inapplicable (even inexplicable) in Western political theory. They call Western concerns that Xi as core leader means that “a new emperor is born” wildly unfounded, even paranoic. In feudal society, the emperor ruled unconditionally with arbitrary imperial power, and in such a “command-obey” system, goes the argument, there is simply no need for a core.

Rather, given today’s party political structure, the concept of a core both **strengthens cohesion** and serves to **prevent** a personality cult, not to promote one. Having a core means acknowledging that the party system is not the “emperor system” – absolute power is rejected – and that the optimum system, at least for the foreseeable future, is a **combination** of concentrated centralism and democratic collective leadership.

Corroborating this functional balance, in the communiqué issued following the sixth plenum, the “collective leadership system” is reconfirmed. It states: “The implementation of collective leadership and personal division of labour is an important component of democratic centralism and must always be adhered to.” And it stresses: “Any organisation or individual shall, under any circumstance, not be allowed to violate this system for any reason.” The three “any’s” seem no accident.

Some analysts see contradictions. On the one hand, the communiqué calls for democracy and constructive criticism internally within the party. On the other, disobeying the central leadership is forbidden, backed by vigilant supervision and tough discipline.

Yet to read these statements as contradictory is to misunderstand what is happening here. Xi appreciates the complex and arduous tasks that lie ahead. He told me so a decade ago, and it is obviously truer today than it was then. The statements are harmonised, first, by the party’s motivation to seek optimum policies for the country, and second, by keeping most of the divergent views internal.

True loyalty is telling leadership in private what one really believes is in their best interests, not pandering and fawning by repeating what one thinks leadership wants to hear. Though there are concerns, no one here worries that Xi will become Mao.

China is now the world’s largest trading nation and its second-largest economy. China’s diplomacy is expanding and its military is growing. From its Belt and Road initiative building infrastructure and facilitating trade in over 60 developing countries to its leading role in the UN peacekeeping forces, China, the “Middle Kingdom”, is involved in every meaningful matter of international affairs.

So, what kind of China do we want? **Certainly not one with weak central leadership and fragmented citadels of power**. With its huge and imbalanced population, and its diverse culture and traditions, China today requires a leader with **sufficient strength and prestige** to **secure social stability**, **drive economic reform**, and guide it in being a **responsible world power**. Xi as core leader should be **good for China and**, thus, **for the world**.

**CCP instability causes extinction.**

**Perkinson 12** — Jessica, Faculty of the School of International Service of American University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs; reviewed by: Quansheng Zhao, Professor of international relations and Chair of Asian Studies Program Research Council at American University, and John C. King, Assistant Professor School of International Service, 2012 (“The Potential for Instability in the PRC: How the Doomsday Theory Misses the Mark,” American University, April 19th, Available Online at http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/10330/Perkinson\_american\_0008N\_10238display.pdf?sequence=1)

Should the CCP undergo some sort of dramatic transformation – whether that be significant reform or complete collapse, as some radical China scholars predict2 – the implications for international and US national security are **vast**. Not only does China and the stability of the CCP play a significant role in the maintenance of **peace in** the **East Asia**n region, but China is also relied upon by many members of the international community for foreign direct investment, **economic stability and trade**. China plays a key role in maintaining **stability on the Korean Peninsula** as one of North Korea’s only allies, and it is argued that instability within the Chinese government could also lead to instability in the already sensitive military and political situation across the **Taiwan Strait**. For the United States, the effect of instability within the CCP would be **widespread and dramatic**. As the United States’ largest holder of US treasury securities, instability or collapse of the CCP could threaten the stability of the **already volatile economic situation** in the US. In addition, China is the **largest trading partner** of a number of countries, including the US, and the US is reliant upon its market of inexpensive goods to feed demand within the US.

It is with this in mind that China scholars within the United States and around the world should be studying this phenomenon, because the potential for reform, instability or even collapse of the CCP is of **critical importance** to the **stability of the international order as a whole**. For the United States specifically, the potential - or lack thereof - for reform of the CCP should dictate its foreign policy toward China. If the body of knowledge on the stability of the Chinese government reveals that the Chinese market is not a stable one, it is in the best interests of the United States to look for investors and trade markets elsewhere to lessen its serious dependence on China for its economic stability, particularly in a time of such uncertain economic conditions within the US.

**Case**

**Heg**

**Decline in hegemony inevitable and good – COVID, Iraq, financial crisis, and Trump thump, and China is stability-oriented.**

**Karabell, PhD IR@Harvard, 07-13-20**

**(Karabell, Zachary (Founder of Progress Network@New America, President@River Twice Research, Contributing Editor@Politico, Snr. Advisor@Business for Social Responsibility, PhD IR/History@Harvard, with a focus on US-USSR relations during the Cold War). “The Anti-American Century,” Foreign Policy Magazine, July 13, 2020. https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/13/anti-american-century-united-states-order//SHL)**

The remainder of the century saw the United States bestride the world as the dominant power, sometimes for better and often for worse. But Luce was correct that it was the American Century (or at least half-century). As of 2020, though, the 21st century has become “the Anti-American Century,” an identity already well-advanced before the pandemic but certainly accelerated and cemented by it. The Anti-American Century may turn out to be aggressively hostile to the United States, but for now it is anti-American mostly in the sense of being antithetical to the American Century. The three pillars of American strength—military, economic, and political—that defined the last century have each been undermined if not obliterated. In this moment, those failures may seem like profound negatives. In his most recent book, the writer Robert Kagan laments that, without American leadership around the world, the jungle will grow back. In the United States’ absence, Beijing may be able to define a less liberal world order. In terms of domestic politics, the left and the right are oddly united in their despair at the erosion of the American Century, as the left bemoans the failure of the American experiment in an age of racial divisions and government ineptitude and the right defends to the hilt “Make America Great Again” redux.

Yet the dawn of the Anti-American Century may be precisely what both the world and the United States need to meet the particular challenges of today. A world of nearly 7.8 billion people demands multiple nodes of support, not one hegemon or two jockeying for power. And a United States of great affluence and great deficiencies needs to accept that it is not ordained to lead and that its past results are, as investors like to disclaim, no guarantee of future success. The first step to solving a problem is acknowledging that you have one; failure to do so—to believe only that one’s country is uniquely powerful and destined by history and culture for greatness—is a recipe for a fall. At the dawn of the new millennium, a scant 20 years ago that feels like an eternity, the United States was able to say to itself and the world that it had found a uniquely potent formula for how to manage democracy. It pointed to its role as a global superpower and its resilient and flourishing economy. It asserted that it had excelled in advanced research, education, and innovation and stood as an example to countries everywhere. All that was never nearly as true as Americans wished it to be, but those strengths were, relative to much of the world, undeniable. The pandemic has exposed structural fissures in the United States. It has also underscored that a country whose central government is constrained not just by the three-branch structure of the federal government but also by substantial local and state autonomy is not particularly well suited to marshaling a forceful national effort that isn’t an actual war. But the tut-tutting and eye-rolling abroad about the anemic U.S. response to the COVID-19 pandemic (“The world is taking pity on us,” went the line in one prominent column and in many other since) is simply the next iteration of a process that has been unfolding for two decades.

The first pillar of the American Century to be knocked aside was military. The U.S. invasion of Afghanistan after 9/11 enjoyed considerable support internationally as a justified response to the Taliban’s sheltering of al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. But the subsequent invasion of Iraq in March 2003 with a paucity of international support followed by a bungled occupation and years of guerrilla war against American troops evoked the Vietnam War. Initial misgivings were exponentially magnified by revelations of American-sanctioned torture in Iraq, at the Guantánamo Bay detention facility, and at various sites around the world, in clear contravention of the Geneva Conventions that the United States had long defended. Add to that revelations of spying on domestic citizens in the name of national security and the war on terrorism, and many of the pieties of American strength crumbled. The United States emerged by 2008 from its Iraq imbroglio with its military still second to none in size and capacity but with its image severely undermined.

The second pillar to crumble was economic. One of the central conceits of Luce’s American Century was that the unique virtues of the American economic system would act as a powerful rebuke of **communism**. And even after the fall of the Soviet Union, the flourishing American economy was a magnet for talent and innovation, with U.S. technology firms defining the first internet boom of the 1990s and then the next wave in the 2000s. Meanwhile, the Washington Consensus that coalesced in the 1980s about how to structure free markets was the blueprint for post-1989 reconstruction of Eastern Europe and Russia. It was also used as a loose framework by both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in their efforts to push countries around the world to drop trade barriers, end state-run businesses, and open up their capital accounts to global flows. While some countries, especially Russia, suffered mightily from this medicine, the sheer economic power of the United States left little alternative for most nations. China was the notable exception, and its size and the widespread perception that it would eventually move toward the U.S. model after joining the World Trade Organization allowed it to evolve along its own path. China’s economic success eroded American dominance, but it was the financial crisis of 2008-2009 that truly knocked away the economic pillar. For years, the question in investors’ minds had been: “When would the bad loans on the books of China’s state-owned banks lead to a crash in China?” It turned out that it wasn’t China’s banks that were the problem; it was banks in the United States. And they were a contagion that went global. The U.S.-led financial system survived, but the economic reputation of the United States—the prestige that Luce understood as a key element of its power—**was devastated**.

The final pillar was democracy. For decades, the United States could boast that it was the oldest and most established democracy in the world, with a singular system for preserving individual freedoms and harnessing collective energies. It routinely nudged and sometimes coerced allies and adversaries to open up and democratize. That in no way precluded dealing with dictators, but the presumption was that democracy was the best bulwark against autocracy and the best path to affluence. The United States, whatever its flaws, got democracy about as right as anyone. It was never quite the “strongest democracy” according to those who measured such things: The Scandinavian countries led there. But it was undoubtedly the strongest of the large and dynamic democracies, which combined with its other two pillars created the American Century. Then Donald Trump was elected president. Already by 2016, American democracy was showing signs of strain. Public faith and participation in government had so declined as to put the system on notice. But the election of Trump severely eroded the ability of Americans to say either to themselves or to the world that their process was uniquely able to withstand the pressures of **populism** and nascent **authoritarianism** that Americans for decades had preached against. Arguably, Trump has done much less damage than his many critics aver, and that may indeed reflect a domestic system of checks and balances that makes it devilishly difficult for any one president to commit major abuses of power. But the strength of American democracy in the world was also as a symbol and a beacon, one that drew immigrants and talent because of the opportunities that the United States offered and nurtured. On that score, the Trump administration dramatically eroded the United States’ global standing. Yes, the image of the United States also suffered mightily in the 1970s, with the humiliation of Vietnam and the revelations of American anti-democratic policies in much of what was then known as the Third World. It is possible that had the economic revival of the 1980s not happened, the American Century would have ended then. It didn’t, but **then came the pandemic**. Much as Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai once famously said of the legacy of the French Revolution that it was too soon to make final judgments, it is premature to start ranking nations conclusively by how well they met a pandemic that is still raging. It is clear, however, that what may be American strengths in other contexts are in this moment a panoply of weaknesses: decentralized domestic governance, highly contested politics, and immense cultural variations across states and regions. All of those inoculate Americans against autocracy and government overreach but leave the country vulnerable to national crises that require a unified response. Coming in the midst of the Trump administration, the American pandemic response has utterly crushed the image of the United States as an ambassador for good governance and democracy—and with it, the last pillar of the American Century.

Many in both the United States and throughout the world may believe that the end of the American Century is tragic, but the dawn of the Anti-American Century holds the promise of better times for the globe and the opportunity for Americans to finally confront their country’s structural problems. After all, unless one believes that the United States has a monopoly on the desire for peace, individual rights, and prosperity, 7.8 billion people and nearly 200 nations large and small are just as capable as Americans of acting in those collective interests. To believe otherwise is to hold that the only formula for international stability and prosperity is an endless continuation of the American Century. That inevitably leads to the question of China and its status as an emerging global power, especially as the United States retreats or is forced to. True, China defines rights differently than the United States, and many outside of China may not find that template an **appealing** one. But the Chinese template remains a Chinese one, propagated by a government that seems quite interested in keeping the global peace even while asserting its power. And whatever one thinks of China’s future, it remains true that you’d have to think that the United States is somehow a freakish and exceptional nation alone committed to peace and prosperity to believe firmly that the end of the American Century spells a backward step for humanity. As for the United State domestically, decades of global preeminence have not done Americans well at home in recent years. Standards of living have stagnated and not kept pace with those in numerous other countries. Racism persists. None of the countries that have excelled at education, health care, and standards of living are as large or complicated as the United States, but even by its own standards, the country has fallen short of what it once achieved. It spends massively on education, infrastructure, poverty alleviation, health care, and defense—but it does not manage to spend smartly. Yes, material life is better now for almost everyone than it was 50 years ago; people live longer, have more health care, eat better, are more educated, live in safer cities and towns, but that is true everywhere in the world. The United States cannot toot its own horn here. The simple fact is that success and strength—military, political, economic, and to that add cultural—are not birthrights. The United States doesn’t get to be great or powerful just because it used to be, although it certainly can help to have a head start. If the country was ever truly exceptional, it was exceptional because successive generations worked and fought and struggled to make it so, not because those generations patted themselves on the back. There have been acute moments of hubris and overreach during the decades of the American Century, but never has the disconnect between what the United States is and what Americans say it is been so profound. Out of this moment, therefore, is the promise not of American exceptionalism but American humility, a moment of recognition that, to move forward, the United States has to let go of the American Century, say goodbye to exceptionalism, and accept that it is a normal country like any other, just richer and with a massive military arsenal and multiple wells of strength and multiple areas of self-delusion. The end of the American Century offers the opportunity to look at where the country falls short and start fixing what is broken. Whether Americans will seize that opportunity, who knows. But **this is not a tragedy; it is the beginning of something new.**

**Pursuit of hegemony leads to Sino-Russia alliance – turns the aff**

**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.

**Hegemony fails and propagates terrorism – it justifies intervention and empirically causes blowback.**

**Bandow 19** (Doug, senior fellow @ Cato Institute and JD Stanford, 6-2-2019, "Understanding the Failure of U.S. Foreign Policy: The Albright Doctrine," National Interest, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/skeptics/understanding-failure-us-foreign-policy-albright-doctrine-60477)> AG

Since 9/11, Washington has been extraordinarily active militarily—invading two nations, bombing and droning several others, deploying special operations forces in yet more countries, and applying sanctions against many. Tragically, **the threat of Islamist violence and terrorism only have metastasized**. Although Al Qaeda lost its effectiveness in directly plotting attacks, it continues to inspire national offshoots. Moreover, while losing its physical “caliphate” the Islamic State added further terrorism to its portfolio.

Three successive administrations have ever more deeply ensnared the United States in the Middle East. War with Iran appears to be frighteningly possible. Ever-wealthier allies are ever-more dependent on America. Russia is actively hostile to the United States and Europe. Washington and Beijing appear to be a collision course on far more than trade. Yet the current administration appears convinced that doing more of the same will achieve different results, the best definition of insanity.

Despite his sometimes abusive and incendiary rhetoric, the president has departed little from his predecessors’ policies. For instance, American forces remain deployed in Afghanistan and Syria. Moreover, the Trump administration has increased its military and materiel deployments to Europe. Also, Washington has intensified economic sanctions on Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Russia, and even penalized additional countries, namely Venezuela.

U.S. foreign policy suffers from systematic flaws in the thinking of the informal policy collective which former Obama aide Ben Rhodes dismissed as “The Blob.” Perhaps no official better articulated The Blob’s defective precepts than Madeleine Albright, United Nations ambassador and Secretary of State.

First is overweening hubris. In 1998 Secretary of State Albright declared 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, and we see the danger here to all of us.”

Even then her claim was implausible. America blundered into the Korean War and barely achieved a passable outcome. The Johnson administration infused Vietnam with dramatically outsize importance. For decades, Washington foolishly refused to engage the People’s Republic of China. Washington-backed dictators in Cuba, Nicaragua, Iran, and elsewhere fell ingloriously. An economic embargo against Cuba that continues today helped turn Fidel Castro into a global folk hero. Washington veered dangerously close to nuclear war with Moscow during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 and again two decades later during military exercises in Europe.

U.S. officials rarely were prepared for events that occurred in the next week or month, let alone years later. Americans did no better than the French in Vietnam. Americans managed events in Africa no better than the British, French, and Portuguese colonial overlords. Washington made more than its share of bad, even awful decisions in dealing with other nations around the globe.

Perhaps the worst failing of U.S. foreign policy was ignoring the inevitable impact of **foreign intervention**. Americans would never passively accept another nation bombing, invading, and occupying their nation, or interfering in their political system. Even if outgunned, they would resist. Yet Washington has undertaken all of these practices, with little consideration of the impact on those most affected—hence **the rise of terrorism** against the United States. Terrorism, horrid and awful though it is, became the weapon of choice of weaker peoples against intervention by the world’s industrialized national states.

The U.S. record since September 11 has been uniquely counterproductive. Rather than minimize hostility toward America, Washington adopted a policy—highlighted by launching new wars, killing more civilians, and ravaging additional societies—guaranteed to create enemies, exacerbate radicalism, and spread terrorism. **Blowback is everywhere**. Among the worst examples: Iraqi insurgents **mutated into ISIS**, which wreaked military havoc throughout the Middle East and turned to terrorism.

**Unipolarity is specifically responsible for the globalization of extremism – that makes heg unsustainable.**

**Ibrahimi 18** (2/19/18; S. Yaqub Ibrahimi, [researcher and instructor of political science. PhD @ Carleton University] “Unipolar politics and global peace: a structural explanation of the globalizing jihad”; taylor and francis <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/17467586.2018.1428763?needAccess=true)>

* JSG = Jihadi-Salafi Groups

Three conclusions can be drawn from this paper. First, the peacefulness of the contemporary unipolar system could be discussed beyond the interstate conflict and the likelihood of great powers competition debate. The new forms of asymmetric warfare, particularly the emergence of JSGs and their violent activities at different levels of the global order, could be assessed as another variable in debates on the peacefulness of the system. These actors DYNAMICS OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICT 59 emerged and operate under the unipolarity conditions**. Unipolarity**, in this sense, **has generated conflict-producing mechanisms** and nonstate actors that drove sovereign states in lengthy wars against JSGs. This argument makes a significant contribution to the unipolarity-peace puzzle, which is conventionally addressed from the interstate conflict perspective. Second, **unipolarity transformed Islamist-oriented terrorism from domestic to global.** In addition to other conflict-generating conditions produced under unipolarity, **the U**nited **S**tates’ **unipolar policies in Muslim regions transformed the traditional near-enemy-centric narrative of jihad into a far-enemy-centric ideology**. As a result of the transformation of this doctrine, new forms of JSGs emerged that posed a threat to peace and security at all levels. Finally, because of the unipolarity of the system, global peace depends largely on the sole great power’s foreign and military policies. The **US interventionism, due to the absence of a challenging great power**, might not generate interstate conflict. However, it **would engage the US in asymmetric warfare with nonstate actors that** would emerge independently or on behalf of states **to disrupt the US hegemony through insurgency, terrorism, and other forms of violence at different levels**. These all might not challenge the durability of unipolarity, drastically, but they would disrupt peace and security at all domestic, regional, and global levels.

**COVID incentivizes engineered bioterror – extinction**

**Walsh, 20** -- Axios Future correspondent [Bryan Walsh, "The coronavirus pandemic reawakens bioweapon fears," Axios, 5-14-2020, https://www.axios.com/coronavirus-pandemic-pathogen-bioweapon-45417c86-52aa-41b1-8a99-44a6e597d3a8.html, accessed 9-7-2020]

The coronavirus pandemic reawakens bioweapon fears

The immense human and economic toll of the COVID-19 pandemic only underscores the threat posed by pathogens that could be deliberately engineered and released.

Why it matters: **New tech**nology like **gene editing** and **DNA synthesis** has made the creation of more virulent pathogens easier. Yet security and regulation efforts haven't kept pace with the science.

What's happening: Despite some claims by the White House, overwhelming scientific evidence indicates that the novel coronavirus was not accidentally released from a lab or deliberately engineered, but naturally spilled over from an animal source.

That doesn't mean the threat from bioweapons isn't dire. Along with AI, **engineered pandemics** are widely considered the **biggest existential risk facing humanity**.

That's in part because a pathogen could be **engineered** in a lab **for maximum contagiousness and virulence**, well beyond what would arise through natural selection.

Case in point: a 2018 pandemic simulation put on by the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security featured a fictional engineered virus called Clade X that combined the contagiousness of the common cold with the virulence of the real-life Nipah virus, which has a mortality rate of 40-75%. The resulting simulated global outbreak killed 150 million people.

COVID-19 isn't anywhere near that fatal, but the pandemic has shown the vulnerability of the U.S. and the world to biological threats both natural and manmade.

"Potential adversaries are of course seeing the same things we’re seeing," says Richard Pilch of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. "Anyone looking for a radical leveling approach — whether a state actor like North Korea or a motivated terrorist organization — may be influenced by COVID-19 to consider pursuing a biological weapons capability."

Background: Bioweapons were officially banned by the Biological Weapons Convention in 1975, though North Korea is suspected of maintaining an offensive bioweapons program.

A particular concern about biowarfare and bioterror, though, is that many of the tools and methods that could be used to create a weaponized virus are largely indistinguishable from those used in the course of legitimate scientific research. This makes biotechnology "dual-use" — and that much more difficult to safely regulate without cutting off research that could be vitally important.

While earlier bioweapons fears focused on the possibility that a state or terror group could try to weaponize a known dangerous agent like smallpox — which would require somehow obtaining restricted pathogens — new technology means that someone could obtain the genetic sequence of a germ online and synthesize it in the lab.

"If you've been trained in a relevant technical discipline, that means you can make almost any potentially harmful agent that you're aware of," says Kevin Esvelt, a biologist at the MIT Media Lab and a member of the CDC's Biological Agent Containment Working Group. That would include the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19, which was recently synthesized from its genetic sequence in a study published in Nature.

How it works: Currently, synthetic DNA is ordered through commercial suppliers. But while most suppliers screen DNA orders for the sequences of dangerous pathogens, they're not required to — and not all do, which means safety efforts are "incomplete, inaccurate, and insecure," says Esvelt.

Screening efforts that look for the genetic sequences of known pathogens also wouldn't necessarily be able to detect when synthetic DNA was being used to make something entirely novel and dangerous.

In the near future, desktop DNA synthesizers may be able to generate synthetic DNA in the lab, cutting out the need for commercial suppliers — and potential security screenings.

The **democratization of biotech**nology could unleash a **wave of** creativity and **innovation**, just as the democratization of personal computing did. But it also increases the number of people who could potentially make a dangerous engineered virus, whether deliberately or by accident.

**Heg structurally causes interventions that create more instability, prolif, and terror.**

**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.**

**(MARKED) The only comprehensive study proves retrenchment is comparatively more peaceful**

**MacDonald & Parent 11**—Professor of Political Science at Williams College & Professor of Political Science at University of Miami [Paul K. MacDonald & Joseph M. Parent, “Graceful Decline? The Surprising Success of Great Power Retrenchment,” International Security, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Spring 2011), pp. 7–44]

Our findings are directly relevant to what appears to be **an impending great power transition** between China and the United States. Estimates of economic performance vary, but most observers expect Chinese GDP to surpass U.S. GDP sometime in the next decade or two.91 This prospect has generated considerable concern. Many scholars foresee major conflict during a Sino-U.S. ordinal transition. Echoing Gilpin and Copeland, John Mearsheimer sees the crux of the issue as irreconcilable goals: China wants to be America's superior and the United States wants no peer competitors. In his words, "[N]o amount [End Page 40] of goodwill can ameliorate the intense security competition that sets in when an aspiring hegemon appears in Eurasia."92

Contrary to these predictions, our analysis suggests some **grounds for optimism**. Based on the historical track record of great powers facing acute relative decline, the United States should be able to retrench in the coming decades. **In the next few years**, the United States is ripe to overhaul its military, shift burdens to its allies, and work to decrease costly international commitments. It is **likely to initiate and become embroiled in fewer militarized disputes** than the average great power and to **settle these disputes more amicably**. Some might view this prospect with apprehension, fearing the steady **erosion of U.S. credibility**. Yet our analysis suggests that **retrenchment need not signal weakness**. Holding on to exposed and expensive commitments simply for the sake of one's reputation is a **greater geopolitical gamble** than withdrawing to cheaper, more defensible frontiers.

Some observers might dispute our conclusions, arguing that hegemonic transitions are more conflict prone than other moments of acute relative decline. We counter that there are **deductive and empirical reasons** to doubt this argument. Theoretically, hegemonic powers should actually find it easier to manage acute relative decline. Fallen hegemons still have **formidable capability**, which **threatens grave harm** to any state that tries to cross them. Further, they are no longer the top target for balancing coalitions, and recovering hegemons may be influential because they can play a pivotal role in alliance formation. In addition, hegemonic powers, almost by definition, possess more extensive overseas commitments; they should be able to more readily identify and eliminate extraneous burdens **without exposing vulnerabilities** or exciting domestic populations. We believe **the empirical record supports these conclusions**. In particular, periods of hegemonic transition **do not appear more conflict prone** than those of acute decline. The last reversal at the pinnacle of power was the Anglo-American transition, which took place around 1872 and was resolved without armed confrontation. The tenor of that transition may have been influenced by a number of factors: both states were democratic maritime empires, the United States was slowly emerging from the Civil War, and Great Britain could likely coast on a large lead in domestic capital stock. Although China and the United [End Page 41] States differ in regime type, similar factors may work to **cushion** the impending Sino-American transition. Both are large, relatively secure continental great powers, a fact that mitigates potential geopolitical competition.93 China faces a variety of domestic political challenges, including strains among rival regions, which may complicate its ability to sustain its economic performance or engage in foreign policy adventurism.94

Most important, **the United States is not in free fall**. Extrapolating the data into the future, we anticipate the United States will **experience a "moderate" decline**, losing from 2 to 4 percent of its share of great power GDP in the five years after being surpassed by China sometime in the next decade or two.95 Given the relatively **gradual rate of U.S. decline** relative to China, the **incentives for either side to run risks by courting conflict are minimal**. The United States would still possess upwards of a third of the share of great power GDP, and would have **little to gain from provoking a crisis** over a peripheral issue. Conversely, China has **few incentives to exploit U.S. weakness**.96 Given the importance of the U.S. market to the Chinese economy, in addition to the critical role played by the dollar as a global reserve currency, it is unclear how Beijing could hope to consolidate or expand its increasingly advantageous position through direct confrontation.

In short, the United States should be able to reduce its foreign policy commitments in East Asia in the coming decades without inviting Chinese expansionism. Indeed, there is evidence that **a policy of retrenchment could reap potential benefits**. The drawdown and repositioning of U.S. troops in South Korea, for example, rather than fostering instability, has resulted in an improvement in the occasionally strained relationship between Washington and Seoul. 97 U.S. moderation on Taiwan, rather than encouraging hard-liners in Beijing, resulted in an improvement in cross-strait relations and reassured U.S. allies that Washington would not inadvertently drag them into a Sino-U.S. conflict. 98 Moreover, Washington’s support for the development of multilateral security institutions, rather than harming bilateral alliances, could work to enhance U.S. prestige while embedding China within a more transparent regional order. 99

A policy of gradual retrenchment need not undermine the credibility of U.S. alliance commitments or unleash destabilizing regional security dilemmas. Indeed, even if Beijing harbored revisionist intent, it is unclear that China will have the force projection capabilities necessary to take and hold additional territory. 100 By incrementally shifting burdens to regional allies and multilateral institutions, the United States can strengthen the credibility of its core commitments while accommodating the interests of a rising China. Not least among the benefits of retrenchment is that it helps alleviate an unsustainable financial position. Immense forward deployments will only exacerbate U.S. grand strategic problems and risk unnecessary clashes. 101

**China’s rise is peaceful and inevitable- military primacy is unsustainable.**

**Heer, PhD, ‘19**

(Paul, DiplomaticHistory@GWU, former NationalIntelligenceOfficerEastAsia@DNI, AdjunctProfInternationalAffairs@GWU, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/skeptics/rethinking-us-primacy-east-asia-40972>, January 18) BW

American policy in the Western Pacific has long been framed in terms of preventing the emergence of an exclusive, hostile hegemon that could threaten vital U.S. interests and deny American access there. The Trump administration’s National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy respectively assert that “China seeks to displace the United States” in East Asia and thus achieve “Indo-Pacific regional hegemony.” Avoiding this possibility has required Washington, also as a matter of policy, to maintain its own hegemony in the region (although we prefer to call it “primacy” or “preeminence”) as the best and only guarantee against such a danger. This mantra was central to the Obama administration’s “rebalance” in East Asia, and remains central to the Trump administration’s advocacy of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific.” But this policy mantra has two fundamental problems: it **mischaracterizes China’s strategic intentions** in the region, and it is based on a U.S. strategic objective that is probably **no longer achievable.** First, China is pursuing hegemony in East Asia, but **not an exclusive hostile hegemony.** It is not trying to extrude the United States from the region or deny American access there. The Chinese have long recognized the utility—and the benefits to China itself—of U.S. engagement with the region, and they have indicated receptivity to **peaceful coexistence** and overlapping spheres of influence with the United States there. Moreover, China is not trying to impose its political or economic system on its neighbors, and it does not seek to obstruct commercial freedom of navigation in the region (because no country is more dependent on freedom of the seas than China itself). In short, Beijing wants to extend its power and influence within East Asia, but **not as part of a “winner-take-all” contest.** China does have unsettled and vexing sovereignty claims over Taiwan, most of the islands and other features in the East and South China Seas, and their adjacent waters. Although Beijing has demonstrated a willingness to use force in defense or pursuit of these claims, it is not looking for excuses to do so. Whether these disputes can be managed or resolved in a way that is mutually acceptable to the relevant parties and consistent with U.S. interests in the region is an open, long-term question. But that possibility should not be ruled out on the basis of—or made more difficult by—**false assumptions** of irreconcilable interests. On the contrary, it should be pursued on the basis of a recognition that **all the parties want to avoid conflict**—and that the sovereignty disputes in the region ultimately are not military problems requiring military solutions. And since Washington has never been opposed in principle to reunification between China and Taiwan as long as it is peaceful, and similarly takes no position on the ultimate sovereignty of the other disputed features, their long-term disposition need not be the litmus test of either U.S. or Chinese hegemony in the region. Of course, China would prefer not to have forward-deployed U.S. military forces in the Western Pacific that could be used against it, but Beijing has long tolerated and arguably could indefinitely tolerate an American military presence in the region—unless that presence is clearly and exclusively aimed at coercing or containing China. It is also true that Beijing disagrees with American principles of military freedom of navigation in the region; and this constitutes a significant challenge in waters where China claims territorial jurisdiction in violation of the UN Commission on the Law of the Sea. But this should not be conflated with a Chinese desire or intention to exclusively “control” all the waters within the first island chain in the Western Pacific. The Chinese almost certainly **recognize** that exclusive control or “domination” of the neighborhood is **not achievable** at any reasonable cost, and that pursuing it would be **counterproductive** by inviting pushback and challenges that would negate the objective. This leads to the second inherent problem with the mantra that the United States must maintain its primacy in the Western Pacific to prevent a hostile rival hegemon: U.S. primacy in the region itself is **not sustainable,** and trying to sustain it will probably be counterproductive. For all intents and purposes, American primacy in East Asia—depending on how it is defined—is arguably already a thing of the past. Since about a decade ago, China has a larger share of East Asian regional trade than the United States, and is now the biggest trading partner of most of its neighbors. If defined in military terms, most net assessments suggest that the American advantage in power projection forces within the region is **eroding** relative to Chinese capabilities; and it is not at all clear in the wake of sequestration and competing budgetary priorities that the United States could or will devote the resources necessary to arrest this trend. American primacy in East Asia has often been characterized in terms of the United States serving as the guarantor of regional security, protecting the “global commons” and providing “public goods” there. The U.S. alliance network in the region certainly extends an umbrella of protection to those countries with which Washington has defense pacts; and its military freedom of navigation operations signal an intention to resist excessive Chinese maritime claims. But even U.S. allies do not perceive that China is being deterred in the South and East China Seas. More broadly, it is not clear what other public goods the United States is actually providing in the East Asian commons. For example, commercial shippers in the Western Pacific do not presume or rely on the protection of the U.S. Navy—which doesn’t have the fleet to provide it. And Washington’s withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership has undermined the idea of U.S. leadership in the region on behalf of shared economic interests. Indeed, most East Asian countries—including U.S. allies—appear **increasingly uncertain** about Washington’s attention to their interests and their security. Questions and even doubts about the substance and sustainability of the American commitment to the region have grown over the past decade, and most of the countries in the region—again, including U.S. allies—have already been **adjusting their foreign and security policies** to hedge against the potential unreliability of the United States. Indeed, such hedging and independent-mindedness by U.S. allies is itself contributing to the erosion of U.S. influence in the region. On balance, it is hard to make the case that the United States retains effective primacy in the Western Pacific when much of the region has doubts about Washington’s ability and willingness to exercise it.

**Advantage**

**asteroid scarcity wrong**

**Nonunique – unchecked commercial appropriation will lead to conflict regardless of China**

**Perez 21** Veronica Delgado-Perez. 12/14/21. Argument | The Commercialization of Space Risks Launching a Militarized Space Race. <https://www.theintlscholar.com/periodical/12/14/2020/analysis-commercialization-space-risk-international-law-military-space-race> [Veronica Delgado-Perez is a Staff Writer at The International Scholar.] // CVHS SR

Fundamentals of the Final Frontier It is a **geopolitical imperative to determine what, if any, commercial activities and use of extraterrestrial resources are permitted** within the confines of international law. Without clear-cut agreements on what activity is recognized by international law, **the world will undoubtedly see states push the boundaries ever further in an attempt to gain the edge over geopolitical competitors — even more-so in an era of renewed great power competition.** **Yet to date, there exists no comprehensive treaty or legal reference to commercial activity in space**. However, this should come as no surprise. It has only been since the turn of the century that technology and markets have progressed to the point where commercial space exploration and exploitation has become possible. Only recently have experts and analysts of geopolitics and international law begun to seriously examine questions surrounding the legal framework that would govern extraterrestrial resource-mining and other commercial activities. In the last decade, the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) dealt with commercial aspects in outer space. In one of their last reports, the Committee expressed that the era of the commercial utilization of outer space’s resources is intrinsically **linked to the escalation of international competition over resources**, which could **threaten international peace and** **security**. By encouraging the international community to engage in outer space’s activities for the benefit of humankind as a whole, “some delegations” have expressed that states should avoid the promotion of laws and regulations related to the commercialization of outer space, arguing that it should be considered the heritage of all humanity. In that regard, states must then ensure that domestic law on the use of outer space complies with international space law, which means that states should respect the principles outlined in the Outer Space Treaty and ensure that national regulations do not contravene international provisions. Even though the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies (which entered into force in 1967), refers to the exploration and use of outer space, it does not address questions of a commercial nature, which compromises the ability of states and international actors to address new challenges to extraterrestrial activities. In several provisions, the treaty highlights that these activities may be carried out for peaceful purposes and the benefit of all people, reaffirming that outer space is not subject to national appropriation. Were outer space not considered a global commons, that would imply that the resources and results of commercial exploration may fall within the jurisdiction of a country. It is thus incumbent upon Washington — and its commercial enterprises — to demonstrate how American commercial exploration of space benefits other countries and complies with international space law, or otherwise to adhere to the spirit of past treaties which emphasize the impartiality of outer space until such time as the law is clarified. International Law is Adrift in Space The potential benefits of commercial space exploration cannot be ignored. From an economic standpoint, the space industry would generate a significant economic boon for both states and private companies, due to the abundance and variety of resources — particularly scarce minerals that are difficult to extract on Earth. As one example of the vastness of resources held in outer space, one asteroid has the potential to contain more than the total supply of platinum extracted throughout the history of mankind. It may very well open the door to an advanced era of space navigation, building extraterrestrial infrastructure that facilitates the exploration and use of space’s resources, and extra-planetary human habitation. Inevitably, **there are significant drawbacks** **to** the **commercialization of space exploration**. These can vary, for instance, from the commercial dominance of space’s natural resources only by those states with the **technical and financial capital** to support space missions, to geopolitical competition over extraterrestrial resources that **threatens world peace and security**, to the potential for the monopolization of extraterrestrial resources by states and private companies. As was the case during the Cold War, the Soviet Union and the United States began a Space Race in which they struggled to achieve supremacy in space exploration and domination of science. Today, the number of space powers has increased thanks to continual advancements in flight, combustion, and fueling technologies. In the three decades since the end of the Cold War, technologically advanced countries like China, Japan, and France which previously had no space program have successfully navigated to the top tier of space-faring agencies and programs. In 2018, the U.S. allocated $41 billion to space programs, followed by China at $5.8 billion, and Russia at $3.1 billion. Collectively, the three major space powers control almost 65% of the global industry, showing space **powers are monopolizing** space and reinforcing the inequality gap between states that do not have sufficient economic and technological capacity to invest. With new actors on the game stage, **conflicts of interest may arise**. **There is a risk that each actor adopts a kind of short-term Realist approach to space policy — one which is driven by self-interest in reaping the greatest benefits of extraterrestrial exploration and commercialization while controlling access to others**. If unmitigated, states may choose to militarize outer space to gain a strategic edge over competitors and adversaries. This process has already begun. Under the Trump administration, the Pentagon established the U.S. Space Force as a new branch of the Armed Forces to protect the country and allied interests in space. Already, Delta 4 — one of the U.S. Space Force’s missions — conducts strategic and theater missile warnings, manages weapon systems, and provides information to missile defense forces. The measure shows that for the U.S., outer space is not only a domain of scientific exploration but has the potential to become increasingly securitized. With the impending expiration of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the U.S. and Russia on February 5, 2021, a number of security dilemmas could arise. If the world’s two largest nuclear powers do not edge toward extending the treaty, Washington and Moscow risk returning to the era of unrestricted expansion of launch platforms and strategically-deployed nuclear warheads — potentially with the aid of military infrastructure in **space**. Although President-elect Biden has expressed his interest in negotiating an extension of New START, how Moscow and Washington might proceed remains an open question. Bilateral progress towards a new arms-control regime would require establishing limits on the number and range of long- and mid-range missiles, establishing measures to limit the expansion of traditional missile deployment to space, and banning the deployment of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction in outer space. More than the risk of the securitization of space, state, and private actors could begin to claim exclusive legal rights over the resources they discover. Indeed, the U.S. Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act, which came into force in 2015, expressly recognizes the right of U.S. Citizens to possess, own, transport, use, and sell space resources. By this means, domestic law already acknowledges the legal claim to property by individuals, which is prohibited by international law. Under the Outer Space Treaty, states renounced any traditional form of acquisition of territories and agreed not to foray unilaterally into space to extend their national policies on Earth or to exercise any kind of sovereignty over celestial bodies or resources. The absence of a modern international treaty that addresses these issues should be received with grave concern, as there is significant potential for risk to become reality. Existing UN treaties lack the technological context and foresight to address legal questions regarding the potential for commercial exploration and exploitation of outer space or its resources. During the sixties and seventies, when international instruments like the Outer Space treaty were conceived, the principal aim of states was to support and expand the scale of the state’s national capacity for operation in space and the development of legal instruments to guide state’s international cooperation in the peaceful exploration of outer space. These instruments were never designed to respond to commercial questions over mining or tourism in space, private investment in space activities, or the emergence of non-state private enterprises operating in space. As a result, private enterprises operating in the vacuum of space also **float in an unstable legal vacuum** which **threatens to implode in geopolitical competition**. Beyond Stars and States In an **increasingly commercial outer space** in which there are **no set limits to the exploitation of resources or claim to property**, states and private companies will inevitably pursue the development of new extraterrestrial industries to suit their geoeconomic interests. If unchecked, the legal protection of outer space as a domain of exploration for the benefit of all humanity **would functionally fail**. To protect investments and profit from national space industries, states would likely resort to military force to protect and secure private assets. Over time, space would ultimately become a fourth border domain over which states claim, exercise, and defend sovereignty — including through the use of force. The challenge is thus to prevent the circumstances that could lead to space-borne conflict before it is made possible. Notwithstanding, commercial exploration and the use of natural resources need not lead to predation among actors involved in space. The potential rewards — both technological and environmental — that could come from investment in the harvesting of resources in space are immense. International law cannot afford to wait for the security dilemma posed by commercial activity in space to manifest before addressing it but must anticipate and proactively adopt measures to address future issues that govern extraterrestrial human activity. The **only remedy for the lack of legal governance over commercial activity in space is the creation of new international laws** through a comprehensive international treaty on commercial operations in space. The new treaty must expressly regulate commercial activities by states and private companies, enshrine an international liability and compensation regime covering damages caused with workable sanction provisions, and reinforce norms that restrict any militarization of outer space. The international community should focus its efforts on establishing a legal regime, with mandatory provisions (rather than non-binding resolutions, observations, commentaries, and conclusions) which generate both international responsibility and provide enforceable sanctions in the event of violations. The effort should be borne out by expanding the scope and strengthening the oversight powers of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), rather than creating a new organ with redundant bureaucracy. Beyond the tasks of encouraging space research programs, studying space activities, and addressing legal questions, COPUOS should be granted the necessary powers to perform control and oversight monitoring functions. Experience has taught the international community that cooperative arrangements between states and international organizations can prevent competition for resources from escalating to kinetic conflict. Through cooperation, there is a chance to preserve extraterrestrial resources for future generations, secure an equitable allocation of resources and benefits with a mind to each country’s specific needs, and prevent the expansion of geopolitical conflict to the domain of space. Space powers must recognize the value in partnering with other states to advance the development of space programs more efficiently. It should be clear now that all nations could reap the benefits of collective action, exploration, and commercialization of resources from beyond Earth’s atmosphere while preventing a drawn-out international conflict to the final frontier. The will of states not to jeopardize the fundamental basis of international law must be reflected in coordination and surveillance efforts to ensure that the advantages derived from space exploration allow humanity to continue evolving.

**But, it doesn't escalate – vulnerability leads to restraint.**

**Pavur 19** [James, DPhil Researcher at the Cybersecurity Centre for Doctoral Training at Oxford University, and Ivan Martinovic, Professor of Computer Science in the Department of Computer Science at Oxford University, “The Cyber-ASAT: On the Impact of Cyber Weapons in Outer Space”, 2019 11th International Conference on Cyber Conflict: Silent Battle, <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.