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#### Text: Space-faring nations including but not limited to the United States, the People’s Republic of China, and the Russian Federation should comply to a Code of Conduct that prohibits harmful interference against human-made space objects and reduces practices that contribute to the weaponization of space.

#### Code of conduct solves weaponization – even if there are no enforcement procedures, the creation of international norms deters violators, a focus on actions solves all their verification concerns, and SSA creates transparency which makes it effective

Krepon, Hitchens, and Katz-Hyman 11 [February 2011, Michael Krepon is the President of the Henry L. Stimson Center, Theresa Hitchens is Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, and Michael Katz-Hyman is a Research Associate at the Henry L. Stimson Center on the Space Security and South Asia Projects “Preserving Freedom of Action in Space: Realizing the Potential and Limits of U.S. Spacepower”, Chapter 20 in “Towards a Theory of Spacepower: Selected Essays”, SM]

We view a code of conduct for responsible spacefaring nations as a necessary complement to a hedging strategy and as an essential element of a space posture that provides for the preservation and growth of U.S. space capabilities. A code of conduct makes sense because, with the increased utilization and importance of space for national and economic security, there is increased need for space operators and spacefaring nations to act responsibly. While some rules and treaty obligations exist, there are many gaps in coverage, including how best to avoid collisions and harmful interference, appropriate uses of lasers, and notifications related to potentially dangerous maneuvers. Because the increased utilization of space for security and economic purposes could lead to friction and diminished space assurance, it serves the interests of all responsible spacefaring nations to establish rules of the road to help prevent misunderstandings, catastrophic actions in space, and grievances. Another reason for pursuing rules of the road is that interactive hedging strategies could generate actions in space that diminish space security by nations concerned about the import of technology demonstrations and flight tests. We have therefore argued that hedging strategies are best accompanied by diplomatic initiatives to set norms that increase the safety and security of satellites vital to U.S. national and economic security. A code of conduct would serve these purposes. No codes of conduct or rules of the road are self-enforcing. Despite traffic laws, some drivers still speed. But having rules of the road reduces the incidence of misbehavior and facilitates action against reckless drivers. We acknowledge that there are no traffic courts for misbehavior in space, but we nonetheless argue that having agreed rules of the road in this domain will also reduce the incidence of misbehavior, while facilitating the isolation of the miscreant as well as the application of necessary remedies. Without rules, there are no rule breakers. Traditional arms control was devised to prevent arms racing between the superpowers. With the demise of the Soviet Union, concerns over arms racing have been replaced by concerns over proliferation and nuclear terrorism. Cooperative threat reduction initiatives have been designed to deal with contemporary threats. These arrangements have taken myriad forms, including rules of the road to prevent proliferation. Since the flight-testing, deployment, and use of weapons in space would increase security concerns, and since security concerns are drivers for proliferation, agreed rules of the road for space could supplement other codes of conduct that seek to prevent proliferation. Codes of conduct supplement, but differ from, traditional arms control remedies. Skeptics of new arms control treaties to prevent ASAT tests and space-based weapons argue that it would be difficult to arrive at an agreed definition of space weapons, and that even if this were possible, it would be hard to monitor compliance with treaty obligations. A code of conduct would focus on responsible and irresponsible activities in space that, in turn, would obviate the need for an agreed definition of space weapons. For example, a code of conduct might seek to prohibit the deliberate creation of persistent space debris. Again, our focus is on behavior, not an agreed definition of space weapons. Moreover, the deliberate creation of persistent space debris is very hard to hide and can be monitored by existing technical means. The United States has championed codes of conduct governing militaries operating in close proximity at sea in the 1972 Incidents at Sea Agreement, as well as in the air and on the ground, in the 1989 Dangerous Military Practices Agreement. More recently, the United States has championed codes of conduct to reduce proliferation threats, including The Hague Code of Conduct (2002) and the Proliferation Security Initiative (2003). The 2001 Space Commission Report chaired by Donald Rumsfeld also endorsed rules of the road for space. 8 Codes of conduct typically take the form of executive agreements in the United States. They can begin as bilateral or multilateral compacts and they can expand with subsequent membership. Codes of conduct are either an alternative to, or a way station toward, more formal treaty-based constraints that often take extended effort. 9 Some rules of the road, formal agreements, and elements of a code of conduct already exist for space. The foundation document that defines the responsibilities of spacefaring nations is the Outer Space Treaty (1967). Other key international agreements and institutions include the Liability Convention and the International Telecommunications Union. There is growing sentiment among space operators to develop and implement several key elements of a code of conduct, including improved data sharing on space situational awareness; debris mitigation measures; and improved space traffic management to avoid unintentional interference or collisions in increasingly crowded orbits. A more comprehensive code of conduct might include elements such as notification and consultation measures; provisions for special caution areas; constraints against the harmful use of lasers; and measures that increase the safety, and reduce the likelihood, of damaging actions against manmade space objects, such as harmful interference against satellites that create persistent space debris. Key elements of a code of conduct are useful individually, but they are even more useful when drawn together as a coherent regime. Situational Awareness Space situational awareness (SSA)—the ability to monitor and understand the constantly changing environment in space—is one of the most important factors in ensuring the safety and security of all operational satellites and spacecraft. SSA provides individual actors with the ability to monitor the health of their own assets, as well as an awareness of the actions of others in space. Transparency measures can be particularly helpful in providing early warning of troubling developments and in dampening threat perceptions. One measure of U.S. spacepower and space prowess is America's unparalleled space situational awareness capabilities. Thus, the United States is in a position to become a leader in building space transparency, which is the foundation stone of norm setting and rules of the road in space.

## Case

### Heg

This aff makes no sense, is bad scholarship, and has no solvency advocate. They don’t have a card that says China would ban its own private companies on behalf of US unilaterial heg with the reason being that they wouldn’t invade Taiwan – there’s no way the Chinese government would ever do this because Taiwan is their number one core issue – and they haven’t read a single piece of evidence advocating for the actual action of the aff – they read the opposite saying that commercial space is wish-list item for the PRC that they’re looking to invest more in – specifically says the development of the space industry is what the government is emphasizing. This is particularly educationally bankrupt when they say you should be skeptical of heg bad arguments because they’re Chinese propaganda when they have no evidence to back this up, that this is something the Chinese government would do or wants to do, how the government operates – etc – their own evidence says Xi loves civil space. Presumption – literally no card in the aff says a ban would resolve the internal link which means Xi would obviously circumvent. No solvency advocate means you should reject them on fairness – can’t read treaty CPs, CPs in general, and solvency deficits if they don’t have an author advocating for the specifics of it.

#### Peak US unipolar heg has passed and isn’t coming back – domestic political polarization makes soft power impossible

Fukuyama, 8/18/2021 – senior fellow at Stanford’s Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies

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THE HORRIFYING images of desperate Afghans trying to get out of Kabul this week after the United States-backed government collapsed have evoked a major juncture in world history, as America turned away from the world. The truth of the matter is that the end of the American era had come much earlier. The long-term sources of American weakness and decline are more domestic than international. The country will remain a great power for many years, but just how influential it will be depends on its ability to fix its internal problems, rather than its foreign policy. The peak period of American hegemony lasted less than 20 years, from the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 to around the financial crisis in 2007-09. The country was dominant in many domains of power back then—military, economic, political and cultural. The height of American hubris was the invasion of Iraq in 2003, when it hoped to be able to remake not just Afghanistan (invaded two years before) and Iraq, but the whole of the Middle East. The country overestimated the effectiveness of military power to bring about fundamental political change, even as it under-estimated the impact of its free-market economic model on global finance. The decade ended with its troops bogged down in two counterinsurgency wars, and an international financial crisis that accentuated the huge inequalities that American-led globalisation had brought about. The degree of unipolarity in this period has been relatively rare in history, and the world has been reverting to a more normal state of multipolarity ever since, with China, Russia, India, Europe and other centres gaining power relative to America. Afghanistan’s ultimate effect on geopolitics is likely to be small. America survived an earlier, humiliating defeat when it withdrew from Vietnam in 1975, but it quickly regained its dominance within a little more than a decade, and today it works with Vietnam to curb Chinese expansionism. America still has many economic and cultural advantages that few other countries can match. The much bigger challenge to America’s global standing is domestic: American society is deeply polarised, and has found it difficult to find consensus on virtually anything. This polarisation started over conventional policy issues like taxes and abortion, but since then has metastasised into a bitter fight over cultural identity. The demand for recognition on the part of groups that feel they have been marginalised by elites was something I identified 30 years ago as an Achilles heel of modern democracy. Normally, a big external threat such as a global pandemic should be the occasion for citizens to rally around a common response; the covid-19 crisis served rather to deepen America's divisions, with social distancing, mask-wearing and now vaccinations being seen not as public-health measures but as political markers. These conflicts have spread to all aspects of life, from sports to the brands of consumer products that red and blue Americans buy. The civic identity that took pride in America as a multiracial democracy in the post-civil rights era has been replaced by warring narratives over 1619 versus 1776—that is, whether the country is founded on slavery or the fight for freedom. This conflict extends to the separate realities each side believes it sees, realities in which the election in November 2020 was either one of the fairest in American history or else a massive fraud leading to an illegitimate presidency. Throughout the cold war and into the early 2000s, there was a strong elite consensus in America in favour of maintaining a leadership position in world politics. The grinding and seemingly endless wars in Afghanistan and Iraq soured many Americans not just on difficult places like the Middle East, but international involvement generally. Polarisation has affected foreign policy directly. During the Obama years, Republicans took a hawkish stance and castigated the Democrats for the Russian “reset” and alleged naïveté regarding President Putin. Former President Trump turned the tables by openly embracing Mr Putin, and today roughly half of Republicans believe that the Democrats constitute a bigger threat to the American way of life than does Russia. A conservative television-news anchor, Tucker Carlson, travelled to Budapest to celebrate Hungary’s authoritarian prime minister, Viktor Orban; “owning the libs” (ie, antagonising the left, a catch-phrase of the right) was more important than standing up for democratic values. There is more apparent consensus regarding China: both Republicans and Democrats agree it is a threat to democratic values. But this only carries America so far. A far greater test for American foreign policy than Afghanistan will be Taiwan, if it comes under direct Chinese attack. Will the United States be willing to sacrifice its sons and daughters on behalf of that island’s independence? Or indeed, would the United States risk military conflict with Russia should the latter invade Ukraine? These are serious questions with no easy answers, but a reasoned debate about American national interest will probably be conducted primarily through the lens of how it affects the partisan struggle. Polarisation has already damaged America’s global influence, well short of future tests like these. That influence depended on what Joseph Nye, a foreign-policy scholar, labelled “soft power”, that is, the attractiveness of American institutions and society to people around the world. That appeal has been greatly diminished: it is hard for anyone to say that American democratic institutions have been working well in recent years, or that any country should imitate America’s political tribalism and dysfunction. The hallmark of a mature democracy is the ability to carry out peaceful transfers of power following elections, a test the country failed spectacularly on January 6th. The biggest policy debacle by President Joe Biden’s administration in its seven months in office has been its failure to plan adequately for the rapid collapse of Afghanistan. However unseemly that was, it doesn’t speak to the wisdom of the underlying decision to withdraw from Afghanistan, which may in the end prove to be the right one. Mr Biden has suggested that withdrawal was necessary in order to focus on meeting the bigger challenges from Russia and China down the road. I hope he is serious about this. Barack Obama was never successful in making a “pivot” to Asia because America remained focused on counterinsurgency in the Middle East. The current administration needs to redeploy both resources and the attention of policymakers from elsewhere in order to deter geopolitical rivals and to engage with allies. The United States is not likely to regain its earlier hegemonic status, nor should it aspire to. What it can hope for is to sustain, with like-minded countries, a world order friendly to democratic values. Whether it can do this will depend not on short-term actions in Kabul, but on recovering a sense of national identity and purpose at home.

#### US hegemony is in terminal decay – Afghanistan proves

Hedges, 7/28/2021 – Former NYT Middle Each Bureau Chief

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The debacle in Afghanistan, which will unravel into chaos with lightning speed over the next few weeks and ensure the return of the Taliban to power, is one more signpost of the end of the American empire. The two decades of combat, the one trillion dollars we spent, the 100,000 troops deployed to subdue Afghanistan, the high-tech gadgets, artificial intelligence, cyber-warfare, Reaper drones armed with Hellfire missiles and GBU-30 bombs and the Global Hawk drones with high-resolution cameras, Special Operations Command composed of elite Rangers, SEALs and air commandos, black sites, torture, electronic surveillance, satellites, attack aircraft, mercenary armies, infusions of millions of dollars to buy off and bribe the local elites and train an Afghan army of 350,000 that has never exhibited the will to fight, failed to defeat a guerrilla army of 60,000 that funded itself through opium production and extortion in one of the poorest countries on earth. Like any empire in terminal decay, no one will be held accountable for the debacle or for the other debacles in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Yemen or anywhere else. Not the generals. Not the politicians. Not the CIA and intelligence agencies. Not the diplomats. Not the obsequious courtiers in the press who serve as cheerleaders for war. Not the compliant academics and area specialists. Not the defense industry. Empires at the end are collective suicide machines. The military becomes in late empire unmanageable, unaccountable and endlessly self-perpetuating, no matter how many fiascos, blunders and defeats it visits upon the carcass of the nation, or how much money it plunders, impoverishing the citizenry and leaving governing institutions and the physical infrastructure decayed. The human tragedy — at least 801,000 people have been killed by direct war violence in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and Pakistan, and 37 million have been displaced in and from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, the Philippines, Libya and Syria, according to the Watson Institute at Brown University — is reduced to a neglected footnote. Nearly all the roughly 70 empires during the last 4,000 years, including the Greek, Roman, Chinese, Ottoman, Hapsburg, imperial German, imperial Japanese, British, French, Dutch, Portuguese and Soviet empires, collapsed in the same orgy of military folly. The Roman Republic, at its height, only lasted two centuries. We are set to disintegrate in roughly the same time. This is why, at the start of World War I in Germany, Karl Liebknecht called the German military, which imprisoned and later assassinated him, "the enemy from within." Mark Twain, who was a fierce opponent of the efforts to plant the seeds of empire in Cuba, the Philippines, Guam, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, wrote an imagined history of America in the 20th century where its "lust for conquest" had destroyed "the Great Republic … [because] trampling upon the helpless abroad had taught her, by a natural process, to endure with apathy the like at home; multitudes who had applauded the crushing of other people's liberties, lived to suffer for their mistake." Twain knew that foreign occupations, designed to enrich the ruling elites, use occupied populations as laboratory rats to perfect techniques of control that soon migrate back to the homeland. It was the brutal colonial policing practices in the Philippines, which included a vast spy network along with routine beatings, torture and executions, that became the model for centralized domestic policing and intelligence gathering in the United States. Israel's arms, surveillance and drone industries test their products on the Palestinians. It is one of the dark ironies that it was the American empire, led by Jimmy Carter's national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, that spawned the mess in Afghanistan. Brzezinski oversaw a multibillion-dollar CIA covert operation to arm, train and equip the Taliban to fight the Soviets. This clandestine effort sidelined the secular, democratic opposition and assured the ascendancy of the Taliban in Afghanistan, along with the spread of its radical Islam into Soviet Central Asia, once Soviet forces withdrew. The American empire would, years later, find itself desperately trying to destroy its own creation. In April 2017, in a classic example of this kind of absurd blowback, the United States dropped the "mother of all bombs" — the most powerful conventional bomb in the American arsenal — on an Islamic State cave complex in Afghanistan that the CIA had invested millions in building and fortifying. The attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 were not an existential threat to the United States. They were not politically significant. They did not disrupt the balance of global power. They were not an act of war. They were acts of nihilistic terror. The only way to fight terrorists is to isolate them within their own societies. I was in the Middle East for The New York Times after the attacks. Most of the Muslim world was appalled and revolted at the crimes against humanity that had been carried out in the name of Islam. If we had the courage to be vulnerable, to grasp that this was an intelligence war, not a conventional war, we would be far safer and secure today. These wars in the shadows, as the Israelis illustrated when they tracked down the assassins of their athletes in the 1972 Olympic games in Munich, take months, even years of work. But the attacks gave the ruling elites, lusting for control of the Middle East, and especially of Iraq, which had nothing to do with the attacks, the excuse to carry out the greatest strategic blunder in American history — the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. The architects of the war, including then-Sen. Joe Biden, knew little about the countries being invaded, did not grasp the limits of industrial and technocratic war or the inevitable blowback that would see the United States reviled throughout the Muslim world. They believed they could implant client regimes by force throughout the region, use the oil revenues in Iraq — since the war in Afghanistan would be over in a matter of weeks — to cover the cost of reconstruction and magically restore American global hegemony. It did the opposite. Invading Iraq and Afghanistan, dropping iron fragmentation bombs on villages and towns, kidnapping, torturing and imprisoning tens of thousands of people, using drones to sow terror from the skies, resurrected the discredited radical jihadists and was a potent recruiting tool in the fight against U.S. and NATO forces. We were the best thing that ever happened to the Taliban and al-Qaida. There was little objection within the power structures to these invasions. The congressional vote was 518-1 in favor of empowering President George W. Bush to launch a war, with Rep. Barbara Lee being the lone dissenter. Those of us who spoke out against the idiocy of the looming bloodlust were slandered, denied media platforms and cast into the wilderness, where most of us remain. Those who sold us the war kept their megaphones, a reward for their service to empire and the military-industrial complex. It did not matter how cynical or foolish they were. Historians call the self-defeating military adventurism of late empires "micro-militarism." During the Peloponnesian War (431-404 B.C.) the Athenians invaded Sicily, suffering the loss of 200 ships and thousands of soldiers and triggering revolts throughout the empire. Britain attacked Egypt in 1956 in a dispute over the nationalization of the Suez Canal and was humiliated when it had to withdraw its forces, bolstering the status of Arab nationalists such as Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser. "While rising empires are often judicious, even rational in their application of armed force for conquest and control of overseas dominions, fading empires are inclined to ill-considered displays of power, dreaming of bold military masterstrokes that would somehow recoup lost prestige and power," historian Alfred McCoy writes in "In the Shadows of the American Century: The Rise and Decline of US Global Power." "Often irrational even from an imperial point of view, these micromilitary operations can yield hemorrhaging expenditures or humiliating defeats that only accelerate the process already under way." The death blow to the American empire will, as McCoy writes, be the loss of the dollar as the world's reserve currency. This loss will plunge the United States into a crippling and prolonged depression. It will force a massive contraction of the global military footprint. The ugly, squalid face of empire, with the loss of the dollar as the reserve currency, will become familiar at home. The bleak economic landscape, with its decay and hopelessness, will accelerate an array of violent and self-destructive pathologies including mass shootings, hate crimes, opioid and heroin overdoses, morbid obesity, suicides, gambling and alcoholism. The state will increasingly dispense with the fiction of the rule of law to rely exclusively on militarized police, essentially internal armies of occupation, and the prisons and jails, which already hold 25 percent of the world's prisoners although the United States represents less than 5 percent of the global population. Our demise will probably come more swiftly than we imagine. When revenues shrink or collapse, McCoy points out, empires become "brittle." An economy heavily dependent on massive government subsidies to produce primarily weapons and munitions, as well as fund military adventurism, will go into a tailspin with a heavily depreciated dollar, falling to perhaps a third of its former value. Prices will dramatically rise because of the steep increase in the cost of imports. Wages in real terms will decline. The devaluation of Treasury bonds will make paying for our massive deficits onerous, perhaps impossible. The unemployment level will climb to Depression-era levels. Social assistance programs, because of a contracting budget, will be sharply curtailed or eliminated. This dystopian world will fuel the rage and hyper-nationalism that put Donald Trump in the White House. It will spawn an authoritarian state to keep order and, I expect, a Christianized fascism. The tools of control on the outer reaches of empire, already part of our existence, will become ubiquitous. The wholesale surveillance, the abolition of basic civil liberties, militarized police authorized to use indiscriminate lethal force, the use of drones and satellites to keep us monitored and fearful, along with the censorship of the press and social media, familiar to Iraqis or Afghans, will define America. We are not the first empire to suffer this fate. It is a familiar ending. Imperialism and militarism are poisons that eradicate the separation of powers designed to prevent tyranny, and extinguish democracy. If those who orchestrated these crimes are not held accountable, and this means organizing sustained mass resistance, we will pay the price, and we may pay it soon, for their hubris and greed.

#### Liberal International Order is structurally UNsustainable – long term, LIO produces and creates anti-liberalism

Khan, 8/7/2021 – Integral University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh Assistant Professor

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WHEN the Soviet Union was on the brink of disintegration, political scientist Francis Fukuyama declared the end of history and victory of liberalism. In his famous essay, The End of History?, he argued, “ what we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold war or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such: that is, the endpoint of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.” It was an expansive claim to make as the interwar period (1919-1939) had already revealed the shortcomings of liberal internationalism. During that period, liberal internationalism had led to the rise of Germany and subsequently to the Second World War. Three decades have passed since Fukuyama declared the victory of liberalism, and it is safe to say that he was wrong. Today, the liberal international order is in retreat due to the results it has produced.

Several core liberal values inform the liberal international order, and prominent among them are (1) individual rights, (2) free trade, and (3) institutionalism. These three values are contingent on each other since individual rights are essential for free trade, and institutions or rules are necessary to safeguard both individual rights and liberal markets. Under the liberal international order, it is expected that more and more countries will comply with standard international rules, and in the long run, will adopt twin political concepts of liberalism and democracy. Thus, the aim is to increase the number of liberal democracies in the international sphere. Liberal democracy, according to American journalist Fareed Zakaria is “a political system marked not only by free and fair elections, but also by the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion and property.” For decades, many have considered the US the leading liberal democracy and the protector and promulgator of the liberal international order, but this may not be entirely true.

The US, it is argued, renewed the liberal international order after the end of the Second World War. Liberal theorist of international relations, John Ikenberry, in his essay The End of liberal international order? argues that “ for seven decades the world has been dominated by a western liberal order.” It suggests that liberal values informed the US-led order during the bipolarity of the Cold war (Ikenberry uses Atlantic Liberal order for the same). However, if the international order led by the US had liberal undertones then it is difficult to explain why the US fostered good ties with Communist China during that era, toppled several democratically elected governments, improved relations with dictatorial regimes, such as the Shah of Iran, and armed the so-called fundamentalist groups like the Taliban. In essence, only under a realist framework can these acts be explained. In his essay Bound to Fail: The Rise and Fall of Liberal International Order, John Mearsheimer—a realist scholar of international relations, argues that the order led by the US during the Cold war was “neither international nor liberal. It was a bounded order that was limited to the West and was a realist in its all-key dimensions.” Essentially, it means that via this bounded order, the US and its allies wanted to pursue their ends by any means possible, liberal or illiberal alike. Moreover, it underscores that the liberal international order cannot emerge under a bipolar or multipolar political system, as under such circumstances, strategic competition undermines almost every liberal value. Thus, as realist scholars of IR argue, the liberal international order can only sprawl when the political system is unipolar, and the hegemonic power is a liberal democracy.

Indeed, when the international system was unipolar, and the hegemonic power was a liberal democracy (the US), the liberal international order sprawled. The years between the disintegration of the USSR and the global financial crisis of 2008 were the “golden years” of the liberal international order. The US, both passively and aggressively, spread liberal values, the liberal ethic attracted large masses around the world, and liberal economics progressed. As Ikenberry writes, “at the end of the Twentieth century, liberal democracies dominated the world—commanding 80% of the global GNP.” However, this “golden period” also led to the rise of China, and Russia regained its geopolitical status. With this, the US lost its hegemonic position, the international system became multipolar, and eventually, the liberal international order faced a crisis. As such, the current challenges to the order is due to the results it has produced.

During the golden years of the liberal international order, one of the ideas that emerged among the liberal circles was liberal interventionism. By virtue of liberal interventionism, liberal states would intervene in the internal affairs of other nation-states to promote liberal principles. Liberal interventionism was put to effect by the US and its allies in the Iraq war. On the pretext of ensuring world peace, the US invaded Iraq, toppled Saddam Hussein’s regime and caused the death of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians. The US invasion also gave birth to terrorist factions, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which have caused much destruction to Iraq. Not only has ISIL left Iraq devastated, but the group which was a result of the US’s actions has led to anti-Muslim bigotry in the West. Other than Iraq, the US also intervened in Libya to promote democracy, which resulted in a decade long crisis in the country. Undoubtedly, the results that liberal interventionism has produced has led many people to adopt anti-liberal views and staunch support for their own cultural/national values. However, the adoption of specific national values is also a result of another liberal phenomenon, interconnectedness.

The interconnectedness between different nation-states is essential to ensure free trade, and the phenomenon operates through the flow of capital and people between these states. For many years, almost every individual enjoyed equal rights in most liberal states. However, more recently, the clash of values among different groups has led to a sudden surge of right-wing groups in liberal states, which has further led to xenophobia and the undermining of liberal values. France provides the best example of this phenomenon as there is an evident clash of values between French Muslims and French Secularists. The French government has adopted several measures to force the former to comply with French ideals and principles. Thus, national values have been given precedence over liberal ones. Conclusively, interconnectedness has fueled parochial nationalism and disregard for individual rights.

The clash of values has also proved detrimental to the growth of liberal democracies in non-western societies. Non-western societies view liberal values as a European product and the result of its certain socio-historical realities. According to Hamza Tzortzis, a Muslim researcher, “ the claim by some liberal ideologues is that Liberalism is universal; however, there are some philosophical issues with this line of thought. Firstly it is a logical fallacy to take something specific and make it general.” As such, there is a rejection of western liberal values in many non-western societies. And any superimposition of liberal values backfires as people tend to adopt more anti-liberal attitudes. With rising illiberal attitudes, the liberal international order cannot survive for long.

The liberal international order underpinned by liberal principles is not as extraordinary as the West often puts it. The order’s quest to remake the world with the help of liberal democracies may bear desirable outcomes for a short period, but in the long run, it produces self-defeating results. The assumption made by many liberal proponents that liberal values will hold centre stage in most societies has fallen flat during the current crisis. In essence, liberal political ideology is as strong as any other ideology. Only during a crisis can any ideology’s weak theoretical and philosophical underpinnings be identified, and nowadays, liberalism is revealing its own weaknesses.

#### US military power causes war and conflict in the Middle East – and makes the U.S. less safe

Parsi, 8/13/2021 – Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft Executive Vice President

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U.S. military domination of the Middle East has been disastrous for the Middle East as well as for the United States itself. It’s not just that the strategy hasn’t worked, it has actually made the United States less safe. To begin withdrawing from the region militarily is not only the right decision; it is long overdue.

The track record of Pax Americana in the Middle East is crystal clear: The region suffered from five armed conflicts in 1998. By 2019, that number had grown to twenty-two. Obviously, these conflicts are not necessarily the fault of the United States, but as the de facto regional hegemon, Washington has designated itself responsible for the region’s stability. By its own misguided preference, the buck stops with the United States. (And not to be discounted, many of these conflicts are spillovers from the Iraq war, which certainly was the fault of the United States.)

But the problem goes deeper than just an erroneous strategy. Washington has long been confused about what its actual interests in the Middle East are. The average Washington foreign policy hand will give a long list of interests—from protecting Israel to safeguarding the region’s energy resources to “standing with our allies”—without the ability to distinguish between the ones justifying the use of military force and the ones that do not. Moreover, the all-encompassing interest of “standing by our allies” renders any discussion about U.S. security interests meaningless, as the United States effectively subordinates its own vaguely defined interests to those of its many (often reckless) security partners.

Hence, the rivals of our partners become our enemies, regardless of whether they actually pose a threat to America’s real interests. As our enemies-by-association accrue, the United States ends up in more wars and conflicts, few of which are necessary to enhance American security though taxing to the American people and the troops nevertheless. Along the way, the United States sets up more military bases in the region, sells more weapons to the region’s authoritarian states, and commits itself to provide security for more countries, all the while making U.S. troops in the Middle East sitting ducks for the growing list of regional entities with grievances against us—most of which are rooted in the United States’ unwanted military presence in the region in the first place.

America’s core interests in the region—the ones that could warrant the use of military force—are limited. Protect the United States from attack and facilitate the free flow of global commerce. By implication, this means that the United States needs to ensure that the region does not fall under the hegemony of a hostile power and that the Strait of Hormuz is kept open. As Eugene Gholz demonstrated in a recent Quincy Paper, neither of these strategic objectives necessitate permanent military bases in the region, let alone U.S. hegemony over the Middle East.

But it gets worse: The presence of U.S. forces in the region and our willingness to get entangled in our partners’ regional disputes with almost no questions asked have disincentivized countries benefiting from the American security umbrella to resolve their conflicts diplomatically. Relying on the United States to resolve their problems more or less cost-free was rationally deemed a better choice than engaging in tricky give-and-take diplomacy that invariably would entail costly compromises. The latter will only be deemed the optimal option once these partners can no longer hide behind U.S. military might.

In this sense, the U.S. military presence has stood in the way of indigenous efforts to resolve regional conflicts, much to the detriment of regional stability. If Afghanistan proves the first step in a broader U.S. withdrawal, the impetus will fall on regional states to shoulder the burden of regional stability themselves. The United States can—and should—support diplomatic efforts to that end. But that is the job of diplomats, not soldiers.

#### Middle East war triggers a global conflagration –

Steinbach, ’02 (John Steinbach, Centre for Research on Globalisation http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/STE203A.html, March 2002)

Meanwhile, the existence of an arsenal of mass destruction in such an unstable region in turn has serious implications for future arms control and disarmament negotiations, and even the threat of nuclear war. Seymour Hersh warns, "Should war break out in the Middle East again,... or should any Arab nation fire missiles against Israel, as the Iraqis did, a nuclear escalation, once unthinkable except as a last resort, would now be a strong probability."(41) and Ezar Weissman, Israel's current President said "The nuclear issue is gaining momentum(and the) next war will not be conventional."(42) Russia and before it the Soviet Union has long been a major (if not the major) target of Israeli nukes. It is widely reported that the principal purpose of Jonathan Pollard's spying for Israel was to furnish satellite images of Soviet targets and other super sensitive data relating to U.S. nuclear targeting strategy. (43) (Since launching its own satellite in 1988, Israel no longer needs U.S. spy secrets.) Israeli nukes aimed at the Russian heartland seriously complicate disarmament and arms control negotiations and, at the very least, the unilateral possession of nuclear weapons by Israel is enormously destabilizing, and dramatically lowers the threshold for their actual use, if not for all out nuclear war. In the words of Mark Gaffney, "... if the familar pattern(Israel refining its weapons of mass destruction with U.S. complicity) is not reversed soon- for whatever reason- the deepening Middle East conflict could trigger a world conflagration." (44)

#### Leadership is unsustainable-- 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.

#### Pursing heg locks in overstretch and a Russia-China axis.

Porter 19, Professor of International Security and Strategy at the University of Birmingham. He is also Senior Associate Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute, London and a Fellow of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft. (Patrick Porter (2019) “Advice for a Dark Age: Managing Great Power Competition”, The Washington Quarterly, 42:1, 7-25, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2019.1590079>)

There is little sign of active “splitting” currently, however. (A notable exception is recent collaboration with Beijing over North Korea’s nuclear program, even if it is marred by tension and distrust.) Rather, the United States is encouraging the perception of a common enemy. By militarily positioning itself within striking distance of Russia and China through a semi-encircling presence in eastern Europe and north-east Asia, expanding alliances, entertaining further expansion, ramping up freedom-of-navigation operations (FONOP) in the South China Sea, reviving the pursuit of an antiballistic missile shield, establishing a reputation as a sponsor of “color revolutions” and as an overthrower of regimes, Washington helps draw Beijing and Moscow closer together into a balancing coalition. A nascent Russia-China alliance is suggested by Russia’s own interagency inquiry into the possibility, the frequency of Putin-Xi contact, deliberate tightening of economic interaction, and overt displays and declarations of close military ties through joint exercises and arms sales.24

It does not have to be this way. The United States has a geopolitical advantage—its distant location. Most powers, most of the time, are more concerned by the potential threat of other nearby land powers than distant sea powers.25Based in the Western hemisphere, the United States has less of a compelling security interest in adversaries ’backyards, allowing Washington the choice of adopting a more distant pose. Russia and China, by contrast, are neighbors so cannot withdraw, both are primarily continental land-based military powers, and historically such proximity can exacerbate rivalries and mutual fears. Sino-Russian antagonism remains a built-in possibility. Only under the right conditions, though, can the rivalries again grow. This is not a plea for a trilateral realignment whereby one state agrees to be the United States’ “geopolitical hammer” and teams up with Washington to contain the other. Rather, it is to suggest that more American restraint in one theater could make space for Russia-China frictions to take effect in another.

This geopolitical principle will prove controversial. The bipartisan consensus among security experts in Washington is to assume that only a state of preponderance over all rivals will suffice. Policymakers assume that the problem lies in Washington’s failure to apply enough power, or to apply enough power efficiently enough. They then call for the allocation of more resources and their smarter use in order to sustain U.S. dominance. The congressionally-mandated2018National Defense Strategy Commission report, appointed to make recommendations, is a case in point. It takes dominance as the obvious U.S. national interest. It complains that as rivals challenge American power, U.S. military superiority and its capacity to wage concurrent wars has eroded, due tor-educed defense expenditure, and advises that it spend more while cutting entitlements.26On this logic, a defense budget that is already10 times the size of Russia’s and four times the size of China’s is not enough, for U.S. grand strategy must go beyond defense and deterrence to achieve unchallengeable strength. That the pursuit of dominance could be the source of the problem, not the answer, is not considered.

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.28After 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 expend-able 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.

#### Russia-China coordination triggers global war.

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While Washington takes a wait-and-see approach, Moscow and Beijing could be coordinating to significantly thwart U.S. interests over the next 15 to 25 years. The two powers may never forge a formal military alliance, but they could still work together in ways that cause major headaches for the United States. Imagine, for example, that Russia and China coordinate the timing of hostile actions on their peripheries. If China made aggressive moves in support of its sovereignty claim in the South China Sea at the same time that Russia made further incursions into Ukraine, U.S. forces would struggle to respond effectively to either gambit.

Nonmilitary collaboration between Russia and China could weaken the United States and even threaten its way of life. Both countries are likely to use their cyber and disinformation capabilities to, as the director of national intelligence put it in January, “steal information, to influence our citizens, or to disrupt critical infrastructure.” China currently does not exhibit Russia’s zeal for using such measures, particularly against the United States; but if U.S.-Chinese relations darken, Beijing could plausibly take a page from Russia’s playbook and mount coordinated, deniable cyberattacks or interference campaigns against the United States.

China and Russia behave very differently in pursuit of their foreign policy objectives, but the combined effect of their actions is often greater than the sum of its parts. In Europe, for example, China has amassed economic influence through growing trade relationships and Belt and Road-related infrastructure investments not contingent on standards for democratic governance and human rights, particularly in eastern Europe, Greece, and Italy. This engagement will ultimately translate into political leverage, as it already has in many countries in Asia. Russia, for its part, appears intent on pursuing hybrid tactics that disrupt democratic processes. On their own, each of these activities is already worrisome for the United States and Europe. But a scenario in which each country’s actions amplify the other’s is not hard to imagine. China, for example, could eventually use its growing ownership of European ports and rail lines to slow a NATO response to Russian aggression. Likewise, Beijing could use the economic leverage it has accrued to quietly dissuade an already reluctant NATO member state such as Hungary or Turkey from responding to Russia’s hybrid tactics, which could ultimately serve to discredit NATO’s commitment to collective defense.

#### Even limited nuclear exchange causes extinction

Rogers 19, Adam, Knight Science Journalism Fellow at MIT, WIRED, “Even a Small Nuclear War Could Trigger a Global Apocalypse”, <https://www.wired.com/story/even-a-small-nuclear-war-could-trigger-a-global-apocalypse/>, Accessed 2/19/22 VD

But now Robock’s back, and his news is not good. India and Pakistan, he says, “have more weapons and they’re more powerful. And they’re the only two countries that have this upward trend.” So for an article in the journal Science Advances this week, his people built a new scenario, something more intense, with about 100 bombs launched by both sides, aimed directly at cities. In that part of the world, those cities are denser, which means more people with more stuff—some percentage of which turns to carbon particles when it burns. And they ran the numbers on carbon again. “There would be between 16 and 37 million tons,” Robock says. “If India and Pakistan had a war, it would be a much larger potential for climate change.” The solutions to that cold equation: 50 to 125 million people dead in the first week. A reduction of as much as 35 percent in sunlight reaching Earth’s surface, translating to a decrease in temperature of up to 5 degrees Celsius, with rainfall decreasing between 15 and 30 percent globally … and the amount of food produced by an equal amount. That’s worldwide famine for a decade. Now, for sure, you have to accept a few approximations here. You have to believe that the Indian and Pakistani arsenals are that big and that powerful, for one thing, and that they’d use them. Not everyone does. “I don’t think either side is going to unload their entire arsenal. Even in the worst case scenario, you have a few countervalue strikes, which are devastating and horrifying,” says Sameer Lalwani, director of the South Asia Program at the Stimson Center, “but not 60 cities being targeted. I don’t see that happening.” You also have to believe in the way Robock’s group says nuclear airbursts and the resulting firestorms will behave. They predict pyrocumulonimbus clouds, thunderheads fueled by fire, that pull in the surrounding air and gunk and send it into the upper atmosphere, high enough that rain doesn’t bring the carbon back down to the ground. And you further have to believe they’re right about how cities burn. That requires knowing how much stuff is in a city in the first place—construction materials, consumer goods, and at what density. For now the team uses a per-capita estimate of 11,000 kg of flammable material per person. This was one of the disagreements between Robock’s team and the LANL group. And you also have to figure out how it all burns, since soot’s the product of inefficient combustion. “We’re also working on explicitly modeling firestorms that would burn in a city and how they would propagate, and we’re doing an inventory of the actual material in specific cities in terms of each building and how much stuff it would have to burn,” Robock says. “Our next result will have much more explicit calculations of how much smoke.” More data would help, of course. Robock’s hoping Google might contribute. “They have 3D images of every building on the planet,” he says. “But we haven’t been able to talk them into it yet.” Whether or not Robock is exactly right might not be the most important part here. (He’s clearly the expert; one climate scientist I asked for perspective said they couldn’t help, because they’d “tend to ask Alan about questions on this, which obviously isn’t a good way of getting an independent opinion.”) The broader point, whether a regional nuclear war causes a global winter or just a regional one—nuclear autumn, maybe?—isn’t even on most strategists’ agendas. George Perkovich, who runs the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and studies India and Pakistan specifically, says that in multiple interviews with people in the US nuclear weapons establishment, his sources say they’ve never even talked about ecological impacts. Few beside Robock even study the possibility. Robock’s studies are “alarming, and I think it points to what should be the political logic for everybody to conduct these studies,” Perkovich says. “Even if the nuclear war is between India and Pakistan and doesn’t involve the US, if these studies are right and US agriculture is going to be devastated and the global food supply is going to be severely undercut, American people are really going to be hurt.” Commonly accepted rules of war demand avoiding civilian casualties—absurd enough if a military targets a city with a nuke, but even more absurd if a local war’s consequences spread globally. That’s the kind of thing that war planners should be building into their theories about the use (or, ideally, non-use) of a nuclear arsenal. But they aren’t. “The basic proposition you can derive from this paper is, we have no earthly conception how bad it’s going to be,” Lalwani says. “That extends to the Korean peninsula, the Middle East, to a Russia-US or a US-China exchange, because the assumptions are really hard to pin down, and could be orders of magnitude greater than we have considered.”

#### Clinging causes great power war—only disengagement solves

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To answer these questions, we need a better understanding of the sources of conflict in a unipolar world. In this chapter, I develop causal mechanisms stemming from a unipolar distribution of military power and lay out a theory of how a unipolar structure of international politics generates important incentives for conflict. My argument is that a unipolar distribution of military power, while removing important incentives for conflict - such as competition among several great powers - is likely to trigger other, specific war-producing causal mechanisms. Furthermore, to the extent that the unipole remains engaged in the world, it is likely to be involved in conflict. This means that any military unipolar strategy other than disengagement will entail a conflict cost. In what follows, I show how each of the strategies the unipole may follow will trigger conflict dynamics that counter the pacifying effect of unipolarity described in extant scholarship on the topic. Therefore I question the view that unipolarity is peaceful.¶ To be more specific, the argument I lay out in this chapter shows how unipolar systems provide incentives for wars of two types: those pitting the sole great power against another state and those involving exclusively other states. I do not question the impossibility of great-power war in a unipolar world, but rather aim at fleshing out the picture by looking beyond great-power wars.

#### No primacy impact

Fettweis 20, Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University. (Christopher J., 6-3-2020, "Delusions of Danger: Geopolitical Fear and Indispensability in U.S. Foreign Policy", *A Dangerous World? Threat Perception and U.S. National Security*, <https://www.cato.org/publications/publications/delusions-danger-geopolitical-fear-indispensability-us-foreign-policy>)

Like many believers, proponents of hegemonic stability theory base their view on faith alone.41 There is precious little evidence to suggest that the United States is responsible for the pacific trends that have swept across the system. In fact, the world remained equally peaceful, relatively speaking, while the United States cut its forces throughout the 1990s, as well as while it doubled its military spending in the first decade of the new century.42 Complex statistical methods should not be needed to demonstrate that levels of U.S. military spending have been essentially unrelated to global stability. Hegemonic stability theory’s flaws go way beyond the absence of simple correlations to support them, however. The theory’s supporters have never been able to explain adequately how precisely 5 percent of the world’s population could force peace on the other 95 percent, unless, of course, the rest of the world was simply not intent on fighting. Most states are quite free to go to war without U.S. involvement but choose not to. The United States can be counted on, especially after Iraq, to steer well clear of most civil wars and ethnic conflicts. It took years, hundreds of thousands of casualties, and the use of chemical weapons to spur even limited interest in the events in Syria, for example; surely internal violence in, say, most of Africa would be unlikely to attract serious attention of the world’s policeman, much less intervention. The continent is, nevertheless, more peaceful today than at any other time in its history, something for which U.S. hegemony cannot take credit.43 Stability exists today in many such places to which U.S. hegemony simply does not extend. Overall, proponents of the stabilizing power of U.S. hegemony should keep in mind one of the most basic observations from cognitive psychology: rarely are our actions as important to others’ calculations as we perceive them to be.44 The so‐​called egocentric bias, which is essentially ubiquitous in human interaction, suggests that although it may be natural for U.S. policymakers to interpret their role as crucial in the maintenance of world peace, they are almost certainly overestimating their own importance. Washington is probably not as central to the myriad decisions in foreign capitals that help maintain international stability as it thinks it is. The indispensability fallacy owes its existence to a couple of factors. First, although all people like to bask in the reflected glory of their country’s (or culture’s) unique, nonpareil stature, Americans have long been exceptional in their exceptionalism.45 The short history of the United States, which can easily be read as an almost uninterrupted and certainly unlikely story of success, has led to a (perhaps natural) belief that it is morally, culturally, and politically superior to other, lesser countries. It is no coincidence that the exceptional state would be called on by fate to maintain peace and justice in the world. Americans have always combined that feeling of divine providence with a sense of mission to spread their ideals around the world and battle evil wherever it lurks. It is that sense of destiny, of being the object of history’s call, that most obviously separates the United States from other countries. Only an American president would claim that by entering World War I, “America had the infinite privilege of fulfilling her destiny and saving the world.“46 Although many states are motivated by humanitarian causes, no other seems to consider promoting its values to be a national duty in quite the same way that Americans do. “I believe that God wants everybody to be free,” said George W. Bush in 2004. “That’s what I believe. And that’s one part of my foreign policy.“47 When Madeleine Albright called the United States the “indispensable nation,” she was reflecting a traditional, deeply held belief of the American people.48 Exceptional nations, like exceptional people, have an obligation to assist the merely average. Many of the factors that contribute to geopolitical fear — Manichaeism, religiosity, various vested interests, and neoconservatism — also help explain American exceptionalism and the indispensability fallacy. And unipolarity makes hegemonic delusions possible. With the great power of the United States comes a sense of great responsibility: to serve and protect humanity, to drive history in positive directions. More than any other single factor, the people of the United States tend to believe that they are indispensable because they are powerful, and power tends to blind states to their limitations. “Wealth shapes our international behavior and our image,” observed Derek Leebaert. “It brings with it the freedom to make wide‐​ranging choices well beyond common sense.“49 It is quite likely that the world does not need the United States to enforce peace. In fact, if virtually any of the overlapping and mutually reinforcing explanations for the current stability are correct, the trends in international security may well prove difficult to reverse. None of the contributing factors that are commonly suggested (economic development, complex interdependence, nuclear weapons, international institutions, democracy, shifting global norms on war) seem poised to disappear any time soon.50 The world will probably continue its peaceful ways for the near future, at the very least, no matter what the United States chooses to do or not do. As Robert Jervis concluded while pondering the likely effects of U.S. restraint on decisions made in foreign capitals, “It is very unlikely that pulling off the American security blanket would lead to thoughts of war.“51 The United States will remain fundamentally safe no matter what it does — in other words, despite widespread beliefs in its inherent indispensability to the contrary.

#### US unipolar global military hegemony a failing, self-fulfilling prophecy – kills millions – endless failing warfighting

Bacevich, 8/6/2021 – Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft

Andrew J. Bacevich is president of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft. “We Are Not an Indispensable Nation”, AUGUST 6, 2021, <https://www.thenation.com/article/world/united-states-hegemony/>, accessed 8/15/21, sb

The 30-year interregnum of US global hegemony,” writes David Bromwich in the journal Raritan, “has been exposed as a fraud, a decoy, a cheat, [and] a sell.” Today, he continues, “the armies of the cheated are struggling to find the word for something that happened and happened wrong.”

In fact, the armies of the cheated know exactly what happened, even if they haven’t yet settled on precisely the right term to describe the disaster that has befallen this nation.

What happened was this: Shortly after the end of the Cold War, virtually the entire American foreign-policy establishment succumbed to a monumentally self-destructive ideological fever.

Call it INS, shorthand for Indispensable Nation Syndrome. Like Covid-19, INS exacts a painful toll of victims. Unlike Covid, we await the vaccine that can prevent its spread. We know that preexisting medical conditions can increase a person’s susceptibility to the coronavirus. The preexisting condition that increases someone’s vulnerability to INS is the worship of power.

Back in 1998, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright not only identified INS, but also captured its essence. Appearing on national TV, she famously declared, “If we have to use force, it is because we are America. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see further into the future.”

Now, allow me to be blunt: This is simply not true. It’s malarkey, hogwash, bunkum, and baloney. Bullshit, in short.

The United States does not see further into the future than Ireland, Indonesia, or any other country, regardless of how ancient or freshly minted it may be. Albright’s assertion was then and is now no more worthy of being taken seriously than Donald Trump’s claim that the “deep state” engineered the coronavirus pandemic. Also bullshit.

Some of us (but by no means all Americans) have long since concluded that Trump was and remains a congenital liar. To charge Albright with lying, however, somehow rates as bad form, impolite, even rude. She is, after all, a distinguished former official and the recipient of many honors.

Trump’s lies have made him persona non grata in polite society. Albright has not suffered a similar fate. And to be fair, Albright herself is not solely or even mainly responsible for the havoc that INS has caused. While the former secretary of state promoted the syndrome in notably expansive language, the substance of her remark was anything but novel. She was merely reiterating what, in Washington, still passes for a self-evident truism: America must lead. No conceivable alternative exists. Leadership implies responsibilities and, by extension, confers prerogatives. Put crudely—more crudely than Albright would have expressed it to a television audience—we make the rules.

More specifically, Albright was alluding to a particular prerogative that a succession of post-Cold War presidents, including Donald Trump and now Joe Biden, have exercised. Our political leaders routinely authorize the elimination, with extreme prejudice, of persons unwilling to acknowledge our indispensability.

Should Irish or Indonesian leaders assert such a prerogative, American officials would roundly condemn them. Indeed, when Russia’s president and the crown prince of Saudi Arabia each had the temerity to bump off an opponent, US officials (in the former case) and the American media (in the latter case) professed profound shock. How could such things be permitted to occur in a civilized world? When an American president does such things, however, it’s simply part of the job description.

THREE STRIKES AND YOU’RE OUT!

Now, allow me to acknowledge the allure of exercising privileges. I once flew on a private jet—very cool, indeed.

Today, however, Bromwich’s armies of the cheated have good reason to feel cheated. Their disappointment is not without justification. The bullshit has lost its mojo. Since the promulgation of the Albright Doctrine, US forces have bombed, invaded, and occupied various countries across the Greater Middle East and Africa with elan. They’ve killed lots of people, unsettling millions more. And our divided, dysfunctional country is the poorer for it, as the cheated themselves have belatedly discovered.

Blame Donald Trump for that division and dysfunction? Not me. I hold the militant purveyors of INS principally responsible. However contemptible, Trump was little more than an accessory after the fact.

To understand how we got here, recall the narrative that ostensibly validates our indispensability. It consists of sequential binaries, pitting freedom and democracy against all manner of evils. In World War I, we fought militarism; in World War II, we destroyed fascism; during the Cold War, we resisted and “contained” communism. And after 9/11, of course, came the Global War on Terrorism, now approaching its 20th anniversary.

Good versus evil, us against them, over and over again. That recurring theme of American statecraft has endowed INS with its historical context.

Today, in Washington, a foreign-policy establishment afflicted with rigor mortis reflexively reverts to the logic of 1917, 1941, 1947, and 2001, even though those past binaries are about as instructive today as the religious conflicts touched off by the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s.

Confronting evil is no longer the name of the game. Understanding the game’s actual nature, however, would require jettisoning a past that purportedly illuminates but actually imprisons Americans in an ongoing disaster.

Today, race dominates the national conversation. And few Americans would deny that we have a race problem. But the United States also has a war problem. And just about no one is keen to talk about that problem.

More specifically, we actually have three problems with war.

Our first is that we have too many of them. Our second is that our wars drag on way too long and cost way too much. Our third is that they lack purpose: When our wars do eventually more or less end, America’s declared political objectives all too often remain unmet. US forces don’t necessarily suffer defeat. They merely fail. For proof, look no further than the conduct and outcomes of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Two trips to the plate. Two whiffs. How could that have happened? In Washington, the question not only goes unanswered but totally unasked, which, of course, leaves open the possibility of yet another similar failure in the future.

As a long-ago soldier of no particular distinction, I’m mystified at the apparent absence of curiosity regarding the inability of the world’s most generously supported military to accomplish its assigned missions. If the January 6th assault on the Capitol deserves a thorough investigation—as surely it does—then how can this nation pass over a succession of failed wars as if they were mere annoyances? Shouldn’t our collective commitment to “supporting the troops” include a modicum of curiosity about why they have been so badly misused, even if the resulting inquiry should prove embarrassing to senior civilian and military officials?

Liberal media outlets characterize Trump’s claim to have won the 2020 election as the Big Lie, as indeed it is. But it’s hardly the only one. Indispensable Nation Syndrome, along with the militarism that it’s spawned in this century, should certainly qualify as—at the very least—the Other Big Lie. Curbing Washington’s susceptibility to INS requires acknowledging that the proximate challenges facing this country are in no way amenable to even the most creative military solutions. Giving yet more taxpayer dollars to the Pentagon helps sustain the military-industrial complex, but otherwise solves nothing.

#### Multipolar leadership solves an impending great power war from the end of the US-led liberal order

Haass / Kupchan, 3/23/2021 – CFR President / Georgetown International Affairs Professor

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History makes clear that such periods of tumultuous change come with great peril. Indeed, great-power contests over hierarchy and ideology regularly lead to major wars. Averting this outcome requires soberly acknowledging that the Western-led liberal order that emerged after World War II cannot anchor global stability in the twenty-first century. The search is on for a viable and effective way forward. The best vehicle for promoting stability in the twenty-first century is a global concert of major powers. As the history of the nineteenth-century Concert of Europe demonstrated—its members were the United Kingdom, France, Russia, Prussia, and Austria—a steering group of leading countries can curb the geopolitical and ideological competition that usually accompanies multipolarity. Concerts have two characteristics that make them well suited to the emerging global landscape: political inclusivity and procedural informality. A concert’s inclusivity means that it puts at the table the geopolitically influential and powerful states that need to be there, regardless of their regime type. In so doing, it largely separates ideological differences over domestic governance from matters of international cooperation. A concert’s informality means that it eschews binding and enforceable procedures and agreements, clearly distinguishing it from the UN Security Council. The UNSC serves too often as a public forum for grandstanding and is regularly paralyzed by disputes among its veto-wielding permanent members. In contrast, a concert offers a private venue that combines consensus building with cajoling and jockeying—a must since major powers will have both common and competing interests. By providing a vehicle for genuine and sustained strategic dialogue, a global concert can realistically mute and manage inescapable geopolitical and ideological differences. A global concert would be a consultative, not a decision-making, body. It would address emerging crises yet ensure that urgent issues would not crowd out important ones, and it would deliberate on reforms to existing norms and institutions. This steering group would help fashion new rules of the road and build support for collective initiatives but leave operational matters, such as deploying peacekeeping missions, delivering pandemic relief, and concluding new climate deals, to the UN and other existing bodies. The concert would thus tee up decisions that could then be taken and implemented elsewhere. It would sit atop and backstop, not supplant, the current international architecture by maintaining a dialogue that does not now exist. The UN is too big, too bureaucratic, and too formalistic. Fly-in, fly-out G-7 or G-20 summits can be useful but even at their best are woefully inadequate, in part because so much effort goes toward haggling over detailed, but often anodyne, communiqués. Phone calls between heads of state, foreign ministers, and national security advisers are too episodic and often narrow in scope. Fashioning major-power consensus on the international norms that guide statecraft, accepting both liberal and illiberal governments as legitimate and authoritative, advancing shared approaches to crises—the Concert of Europe relied on these important innovations to preserve peace in a multipolar world. By drawing on lessons from its nineteenth-century forbearer, a twenty-first-century global concert can do the same. Concerts do lack the certitude, predictability, and enforceability of alliances and other formalized pacts. But in designing mechanisms to preserve peace amid geopolitical flux, policymakers should strive for the workable and the attainable, not the desirable but impossible.

#### Multipolar concert of nations solves climate change and WMD proliferation

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To advance great-power solidarity, the concert should focus on two priorities. One would be to encourage respect for existing borders and resist territorial changes through coercion or force. It would be prejudiced against claims of self-determination—but concert members would retain the option of recognizing new countries as they see fit. Although it would give all nations broad latitude on issues of domestic governance, the concert would deal on a case-by-case basis with failing states or those that systematically violate basic human rights and broadly accepted provisions of international law. The concert’s second priority would be to generate collective responses to global challenges. At times of crisis, the concert would advance diplomacy and galvanize joint initiative, then hand off implementation to the appropriate body—such as the UN for peacekeeping, the International Monetary Fund for emergency credit, or the World Health Organization (WHO) for public health. The concert would also invest in a longer-term effort to adapt existing norms and institutions to global change. Even while defending traditional sovereignty to reduce interstate conflict, it would also discuss how best to adjust international rules and practices to an interconnected world. When national policies have negative international consequences, those policies become the concert’s business. In this regard, the concert could help counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and address nuclear programs in North Korea and Iran. When it comes to diplomacy with Pyongyang and Tehran, enforcing sanctions against both regimes, and responding to potential provocations, the concert would have the right parties in the room. Indeed, as a standing body, the concert would significantly improve on the six-party and P5+1 formats that have historically handled negotiations with North Korea and Iran. The concert could also serve as a venue for addressing climate change. The top greenhouse gas emitters are China, the United States, the EU, India, Russia, and Japan. Together, they produce roughly 65 percent of global emissions. With the world’s leading emitters all around the table, the concert could help set new targets for reducing greenhouse gases and new standards for green development, before handing off implementation to other forums. Similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the who’s inadequacies, and the concert would be the right place to fashion a consensus on reform. Forging rules of the road for managing technological innovation—digital regulation and taxation, cybersecurity, 5G networks, social media, virtual currencies, artificial intelligence—would also be on the concert’s agenda. These important matters often fall between the institutional cracks, and the concert could provide a useful vehicle for international oversight.

#### China isn’t a threat – US military is superior and China’s ambitions are regional – not expansionist/imperial

Bandow, 3/8/2021 – Cato Institute Senior Fellow

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Also important, though often ignored in fevered warnings of the “China threat,” is the fact that China does not pose an existential danger to the United States. The U.S. remains secure an ocean away from China; the U.S. military, including its nuclear arsenal, remains far superior to the People’s Liberation Army and even an inferior U.S. force could deter (very unlikely) Chinese plots to attack the United States in the future. Beijing’s aggressiveness toward its neighbors has grown but remains bounded. So far, at least, China seeks to reclaim what it views as historic territories lost when it was too weak to assert its claims. That is, China wants border territories from India—not provinces or the entire nation—and peripheral islands from Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam—not home territories. The one admittedly important exception is Taiwan. Overall, there is little evidence that the occupants of former Zhongnanhai imperial garden contemplate a maritime blitzkrieg across the Asia-Pacific. The threat today, though real, remains of a vastly different magnitude than imperial Japan’s depredations eight decades ago.

#### Fear of China cause nuclear war – self-fulfilling prophecy

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Former U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt’s famous statement that U.S. citizens had nothing to fear but fear itself was powerfully effective. Despite China’s increasingly fearsome reputation, the United States’ greatest fear of the country should be fearing China too much. Although a rethink of U.S. policy is warranted, given China’s dramatic advances and growing assertiveness, Washington should develop its response from a position of confidence. This certainly is not “the most dangerous time arguably in our lifetime,” as Republican Sen. Jim Inhofe said. The Soviet Union might not have manufactured Apple products, but it was a bristling, paranoid nuclear state—as was, at points, the United States. That fear brought the world close to nuclear war on several occasions, including as late as 1983 with NATO’s exercise Able Archer 83 that almost frightened the Soviets into war.