#### CP: Apply the maritime law of salvage to space debris.

Salter ’16 - Alexander William Salter [Assistant Professor of Economics, Rawls College of Business, Texas Tech University], “SPACE DEBRIS: A LAW AND ECONOMICS ANALYSIS OF THE ORBITAL COMMONS,” 19 STAN. TECH. L. REV. 221 (2016). <https://www-cdn.law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/19-2-2-salter-final\_0.pdf> AT

Assuming a nation-state, even under current international space law, wished to supervise a space debris removal mission, how would it do so? A crucial question concerns the division of responsibility between the private and public sectors. Some impetus would almost certainly fall on the public sector. At a minimum, the public sector’s role involves further clarification of the legal framework —the “rules of the game” —for space debris at the national level. Using the United States as an example, clarifying the framework may be as simple as announcing that the law of salvage, as it exists in current maritime law, will apply to its own space debris. In other words, any private party under the jurisdiction of the United States that wishes to remove US space debris may do so and is entitled to whatever value is recovered thereby.

Companies such as Deep Space Industries and Planetary Resources are planning long-term asteroid mining projects, which will probably require space infrastructure for in-situ manufacturing or, at least, repairs. Because much debris contains valuable material, the chance to access such material without bearing the costs ordinarily associated with bringing it into orbit can be a significant incentive. Building this infrastructure would involve moving existing debris to a parking orbit rather than destroying it, of course. Most important, those companies would be able to remove clearly identifiable US space debris only, and the US government would be liable for any accidents caused by removal operations that damage other nations’ space objects.

#### Increasing space debris levels inevitably set off a chain of collisions.

Chelsea MuñOz-Patchen, 19 - ("Regulating the Space Commons: Treating Space Debris as Abandoned Property in Violation of the Outer Space Treaty," University of Chicago, 2019, 12-6-2021, https://cjil.uchicago.edu/publication/regulating-space-commons-treating-space-debris-abandoned-property-violation-outer-space)//AW

Debris poses a threat to functioning space objects and astronauts in space, and may cause damage to the earth’s surface upon re-entry.29 Much of the small debris cannot be tracked due to its size and the velocity at which it travels, making it impossible to anticipate and maneuver to avoid collisions.30 To remain in orbit, debris must travel at speeds of up to 17,500 miles per hour.31 At this speed even very small pieces of debris can cause serious damage, threatening a spacecraft and causing expensive damage.32 There are millions of these very small pieces, and thousands of larger ones.33 The small-to-medium pieces of debris “continuously shed fragments like lens caps, booster upper stages, nuts, bolts, paint chips, motor sprays of aluminum particles, glass splinters, waste water, and bits of foil,” and may stay in orbit for decades or even centuries, posing an ongoing risk.34 Debris ten centimeters or larger in diameter creates the likelihood of complete destruction for any functioning satellite with which it collides.35 Large nonfunctional objects remaining in orbit are a collision threat, capable of creating huge amounts of space debris and taking up otherwise useful orbit space.36 This issue is of growing importance as more nations and companies gain the ability to launch satellites and other objects into space.37 From February 2009 through the end of 2010, more than thirty-two collision-avoidance maneuvers were reportedly used to avoid debris by various space agencies and satellite companies, and as of March 2012, the crew of the International Space Station (ISS) had to take shelter three times due to close calls with passing debris.38 These maneuvers require costly fuel usage and place a strain on astronauts.39 Furthermore, the launches of some spacecraft have “been delayed because of the presence of space debris in the planned flight paths.”40 In 2011, Euroconsult, a satellite consultant, projected that there would be “a 51% increase in satellites launched in the next decade over the number launched in the past decade.”41 In addition to satellites, the rise of commercial space tourism will also increase the number of objects launched into space and thus the amount of debris.42 The more objects are sent into space, and the more collisions create cascades of debris, the greater the risk of damage to vital satellites and other devices relied on for “weather forecasting, telecommunications, commerce, and national security.”43 The Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines44 were created by UNCOPUOS with input from the IADC and adopted in 2007.45 The guidelines were developed to address the problem of space debris and were intended to “increase mutual understanding on acceptable activities in space.”46 These guidelines are nonbinding but suggest best practices to implement at the national level when planning for a launch. Many nations have adopted the guidelines to some degree, and some have gone beyond what the guidelines suggest.47 While the guidelines do not address existing debris, they do much to prevent the creation of new debris. The Kessler Syndrome is the biggest concern with space debris. The Kessler Syndrome is a cascade created when debris hits a space object, creating new debris and setting off a chain reaction of collisions that eventually closes off entire orbits.48 The concern is that this cascade will occur when a tipping point is reached at which the natural removal rate cannot keep up with the amount of new debris added.49 At this point a collision could set off a cascade destroying all space objects within the orbit.50 In 2011, The National Research Council predicted that the Kessler Syndrome could happen within ten to twenty years.51 Donald J. Kessler, the astrophysicist and NASA scientist who theorized the Kessler Syndrome in 1978, believes this cascade may be a century away, meaning that there is still time to develop a solution.52

#### The cp solves the aff WAY better and avoids the NB.

David **Giordano, 21**- ("Space Debris: Another Frontier in the Commercialization of Space," Columbia Journal of Transnational Law, 11-31-2021, 1-1-2022https://www.jtl.columbia.edu/bulletin-blog/space-debris-another-frontier-in-the-commercialization-of-space)//AW

In the Summer of 2021, we got a glimpse of what some hope will be commonplace in the future: space tourism. While it might be billionaires and their associates for now, if this technology is to follow the arc of many other advancements previously reserved for the rich (cell phones and air travel, for example), eventually there may come a time in the future where space tourism is a realistic financial goal for those of more restricted means. As humanity broaches this great commercial frontier, it will have to clear the great and neglected hurdle of “space junk,” and current trends appear to indicate that industry will shape not only the technology designed to solve the problem, but the policy as well. As satellites and other projectiles blast into orbit, upon collision they can disintegrate into shards, sometimes just centimeters wide, that remain in orbit, risking further collision. Hollywood captured the potential perils of fairly large pieces of space debris in the opening minutes of the 2013 film Gravity, where space junk threatens the lives of astronauts on a mission. Outside the realms of fictional space-thrillers, even the smallest pieces of space junk can present real danger. In 2016, a tiny piece of space junk, believed to be a paint chip or a piece of metal no more than a few thousandths of a millimeter across, cracked the window of the International Space Station. In May 2021, a piece of space debris punctured the robotic arm of the International Space Station. This is seriously concerning, as, according to the European Space Agency, there are 670,000 pieces of space debris larger than 1cm and 170,000,000 between 1mm and 1cm in width. Unfortunately, public action and policy struggles to keep up with these risks. International law affords little clarity on the problem, as its control is a novel, emerging field with many technical tracking and removal challenges. None of the existing space treaties directly tackle the issue, rendering responsibility for it ambiguous. Absent such responsibility, legal incentives are non-existent. Guidelines are occasionally issued by international governing bodies, but provide little legal significance and are more targeted at the practicalities of tracking and removal. The nation best positioned to notify space actors of collision risks is the United States, and the burden of that task currently falls on the Department of Defense. However, the Trump administration issued a directive in 2018, shifting the responsibility from the DoD to the Department of Commerce, and the transition has yet to materialize, leaving DoD struggling to keep pace with increasing commercial activity. In the face of public paralysis, addressing the problem through industry looks more and more attractive. This has led some to call for a new legal order that still leaves room for government, but reframes who the rules exist to serve. Rather than our current, rudimentary treaty regime designed to prevent international conflict, commentators have called for an additional regime resembling maritime law that preserves the interests of a more diverse set of stakeholders, including those in the future that can bring technology and interests to space that may not yet exist. These commentators shun the common conception that space regulation should resemble air-traffic control, which is suited to a narrower set of uses (transport). Under such a “maritime” regime, the light touch of central regulatory bodies, and perhaps their non-existence, is preferred, just as it has been on the seas. This way, individual nations have a degree of flexibility in instituting controls they see fit while leaving room for industry to address problems and introduce new uses for space. Furthermore, governments seem ready and willing to construct the legal and incentive framework in concert with such private action. In a joint statement this summer, G7 members expressed openness to resolving the technical aspects of the debris problem with private institutions, and there is some promising progress. Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak signaled his plans to address the problem through a new company with a telling name: Privateer Space. Astroscale, a UK-based company, successfully launched a pair of satellites in the Spring of 2021 that will remove certain space debris from orbit. Astroscale also stated their desire to work with governments and international governing bodies to craft policy with private efforts to control the problem top of mind. In light of public policy’s silence on space debris, the initiative of actors like Astroscale involving themselves in policy may be advised, as it could promote further private investment in technology for space debris removal. A popular policy recommendation among experts is the establishment of public-private partnerships, and Astroscale has entered several such agreements including with Japan and the European Space Agency. Other actors include ClearSpace, OneWeb, and D-Orbit. Some may want to push back against further private involvement. The congestion of space is, in part, industry’s fault, and if we conceptualize orbital space as a common resource, it might be right to fear the effects of the Tragedy of the Commons. Critics may seek to bolster international treaties, give legal teeth to the guidelines occasionally issued by the UN, and preserve the public posture of the heavens. These may be welcome adjustments, but unlike a pond that industry overfishes or a well that industry dries up, here industry is working to add more fish and water. Moreover, governments stand to benefit from this private decluttering, as well, as they are expected to be major customers of some of these private actors. As for the public posture, space has long been a commercial place. Telecommunications companies and government contractors historically depend on space. As the number of commercial satellites set to launch skyrockets, it seems natural to craft policies that are responsive to their interests and provide incentives to remedy issues created in the course of spacefaring, such as space debris. In light of the long silence of international law on such issues and the demonstrated motivation by private actors, space debris represents the latest frontier in the abdication of space from the public concern to the private.

## Case

### Conflict Turn

#### Space commercialization is a strong constraint on conflict – solves space war

Wendy N. Whitman **Cobb 20**, is currently an associate professor of strategy and security studies at the US Air Force's School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, 7-21-2020, "Privatizing Peace: How Commerce Can Reduce Conflict in Space," Routledge & CRC Press, <https://www.routledge.com/Privatizing-Peace-How-Commerce-Can-Reduce-Conflict-in-Space/Cobb/p/book/9780367337834> // AAli

By the end of the twentieth century, scholars zeroed in on the democratic peace theory which attempts to explain why democracies do not go to war with other democracies and why, in some analyses, they seem to be more prone to peace in general than non-democracies. Similar to the golden arches, what is it about democracy that seems to induce such peacefulness? Academics have proposed everything from the nature of mediating institutions to the restraint of public opinion, to trade relations. While these variations will be explored further in Chapter 3, of interest here are the versions that focus explicitly on trade, commercial ties, and capitalism. Along these lines, Erik Gartzke argues, "peace ensues when states lack differences worthy of costly conflict."31 If the costs of conflict are too high, then states should be more unlikely to engage in it. To this end, economic globalization can provide the means through which costs are raised. “The integration of world markets not only facilitates commerce, but also creates new interests inimical to war. Financial interdependence ensures that damage inflicted on one economy travels through the global system, afflicting even aggressors."32 Focusing his analysis primarily on the influence of capitalism, Gartzke's findings suggest that states with markets more closely tied to the global economy are far less likely to experience a militarized dispute.

In thinking about the space environment today, there are obvious principles of capitalism at work. However, China, a major spacefaring state that has been making capitalist reforms, arguably remains far from a true capitalist country. This is especially true in their space industry which is heavily subsidized by the state and almost wholly integrated with China's military.34 Many other states continue to subsidize space activities heavily as well. A better approach through which to examine conflict in space is presented by an offshoot of the capitalist peace which is termed the commercial peace. The commercial peace thesis emphasizes the role of trade and the connections made through it to explain a lack of conflict. Han Dorussen and Hugh Ward write:

Trade is important not only because it creates an economic interest in peace but also because trade generates 'connections' between people that promote communication and understanding.... Based on these ideas, the flow of goods between countries creates a network of ties and communication links. If two countries are more embedded in this network, their relations should be more

peaceful 35

Given the interconnectedness of the global economy to space-based assets, a version of the commercial peace thesis can be used to argue that the chance of conflict in space is less than is commonly understood or recognized precisely because of the extent to which the global economy has become dependent on space-based assets.

To understand this argument, consider a scenario in which Russia, in preparation for a new assault on Eastern Europe, attacks a key US military satellite with the purpose of disrupting and disabling military communications in Europe. This action would conceivably enable the Russians to undertake their attack under more favorable conditions and prevent a quicker response from America and its allies. However, if the satellite was attacked via an ASAT that kinetically destroyed the US satellite, the debris cloud created from the attack could have disastrous consequences beyond military communications Much like the movie Gravity, the debris cloud could cause a chain reaction, hitting and ~~disabling~~ dismantling other satellites that would in turn disrupt civilian communications, business transactions, and perhaps even Russian military satellites. The economic effects of lost satellites would not be restricted to one country alone; the global economic consequences in terms of lost property (satellites), lost transactions, and financial havoc would echo throughout the world, including in Russia itself. Finally, the attack on one satellite could even ultimately endanger the ISS and its inhabitants, several of which are Russians. Destruction of the ISS would negate billions of dollars in investment from not just Russia, but other countries that have participated in it including Japan, Italy, and Canada. Therefore, an attack on a US military satellite would not just be an attack on one but an attack on all.

While the previous scenario highlights several reasons why it would not be in Russia's best interest to attack a US satellite, this book argues that the economic argument is both the strongest and the most restraining especially as space becomes more congested, competitive, contested, and commercialized. The emergence of private space companies enhances this argument. "In the commercial sector, companies need reliability and legal enforcement mechanisms if they are going to operate profitably in a shared environment."36 In order to foster the growing area of space commercialization, companies must be assured that the activities they undertake in space will be protected in some way or, at a minimum, allowed to proceed to the extent where they can reap the profit. This could be done through international organizations that would provide some sort of space traffic control, but the likelihood of a major international breakthrough on rules regarding space is unlikely in the near term. Therefore, actors must rely on the protections afforded them by an increasingly globalized economy that is ever more dependent on space-based assets.

### No Solvency

#### Government sector will inevitably militarize space

**Shamas & Holden, 2019**, Victor Shamas &, Oslo Metropolitan University, Work Research Institute (AFI), Oslo, Norway; Thomas Holden, Independent scholar, Oslo, Norway, 2019, Palgrave Communications, One giant leap for capitalistkind: private enterprise in outer space, https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-019-0218-9

On the other hand**, outer space still remains firmly within the domain of the state and is likely to do so for the foreseeable future, with the likely continued importance of military uses of satellite technology and the weaponization of Earth’s orbit**—crucially, the Outer Space Treaty only prohibits nuclear arms and other ‘weapons of mass destruction' in space, not conventional weapons, such as ballistic missiles.

#### No space war – it’s hype and systems are redundant

Johnson-Freese and Hitchens 16 [Dr. Joan Johnson-Freese is a member of the Breaking Defense Board of Contributors, a Professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval War College and author of Space Warfare in the 21st Century: Arming the Heavens. Views expressed are those of the author alone. Theresa Hitchens is a Senior Research Scholar at the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland (CISSM), and the former Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in Geneva, Switzerland. Stop The Fearmongering Over War In Space: The Sky’s Not Falling, Part 1. December 27, 2016. https://breakingdefense.com/2016/12/stop-the-fearmongering-over-war-in-space-the-skys-not-falling-part-1/]

In the last two years, we’ve seen rising hysteria over a future war in space. Fanning the flames are not only dire assessments from the US military, but also breathless coverage from a cooperative and credulous press. This reporting doesn’t only muddy public debate over whether we really need expensive systems. It could also become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The irony is that nothing makes the currently slim possibility of war in space more likely than fearmongering over the threat of war in space.

Two television programs in the past two years show how egregious this fearmongering can get. In April 2015, the CBS show 60 Minutes ran a segment called “The Battle Above.” In an interview with General John Hyten, the then-chief of U.S. Air Force Space Command, it came across loud and clear that the United States was being forced to prepare for a battle in space — specifically against China — that it really didn’t want.

It was explained by Hyten and other guests that China is building a considerable amount of hardware and accumulating significant know-how regarding space, all threatening to space assets Americans depend on every day. If viewers weren’t frightened after watching the segment, it wasn’t for lack of trying on the part of CBS.

Using terms like “offensive counterspace” as a 1984 NewSpeak euphemism for “weapons,” it was made clear that the United States had no choice but to spend billions of dollars on offensive counterspace technology to not just thwart the Chinese threat, but control and dominate space. While it didn’t actually distort facts — just omit facts about current U.S. space capabilities — the segment was basically a cost-free commercial for the military-industrial complex.

In retrospect though, “The Battle Above” was pretty good compared to CNN’s recent special, War in Space: The Next Battlefield. The latter might as well have been called Sharknado in Space – because the only far-out weapons technology our potential adversaries don’t have, according to the broadcast, seems to be “sharks with frickin’ laser beams attached to their heads!”

First, CNN needs to hire some fact checkers. Saying “unlike its adversaries, the U.S. has not yet weaponized space” is deeply misleading, like saying “unlike his political opponents, President-Elect Donald Trump has not sprouted wings and flown away”: A few (admittedly alarming) weapons tests aside, no country in the world has yet weaponized space. Contrary to CNN, stock market transactions are not timed nor synchronized through GPS, but a closed system. Cruise missiles can find their targets even without GPS, because they have both GPS and precision inertial measurement units onboard, and IMUs don’t rely on satellite data. Oh, and the British rock group Pink Floyd holds the only claim to the Dark Side of the Moon: There is a “far side” of the Moon — the side always turned away from the Earth — but not a “dark side” — which would be a side always turned away from the Sun.

More nefariously, the segment sensationalized nuggets of truth within a barrage of half-truths, backed by a heavy bass, dramatic soundtrack (and gravelly-voiced reporter Jim Sciutto) and accompanied by sexy and scary visuals.

Make no mistake there are dangers in space, and the United States has the most to lose if space assets are lost. The question is how best to protect them. Here are a few facts CNN omitted.

The Reality

The U.S. has all of the technologies described on the CNN segment and deemed potentially offensive: maneuverable satellites, nano-satellites, lasers, jamming capabilities, robotic arms, ballistic missiles that can be used as anti-satellite weapons, etc. In fact, the United States is more technologically advanced than other countries in both military and commercial space.

That technological superiority scares other countries; just as the U.S. military space community is scared of other countries obtaining those technologies in the future. The U.S. military space budget is more than 10 times greater than that of all the countries in the world combined. That also causes other countries concern.

More unsettling still, the United States has long been leery of treaty-based efforts to constrain a potential arms race in outer space, as supported by nearly every other country in the world for decades. Indeed, under the administration of George W. Bush, the U.S. talking points centered on the mantra “there is no arms race in outer space,” so there is no need for diplomat instruments to constrain one. Now, a decade later, the U.S. military – backed by the Intelligence Community which operates the nation’s spy satellites – seems to be shouting to the rooftops that the United States is in danger of losing the space arms race already begun by its potential adversaries. The underlying assumption — a convenient one for advocates of more military spending — is that now there is nothing that diplomacy can do.

However, it must be remembered that most space-related technologies – with the exception of ballistic missiles and dedicated jammers – have both military and civil/commercial uses; both benign — indeed, helpful — and nefarious uses. For example, giving satellites the ability to maneuver on orbit can allow useful inspections of ailing satellites and possibly even repairs.

Further, the United States is not unable to protect its satellites, as repeated during the CNN broadcast by various interviewees and the host. Many U.S. government-owned satellites, including precious spy satellites, have capabilities to maneuver. Many are hardened against electro-magnetic pulse, sport “shutters” to protect optical “eyes” from solar flares and lasers, and use radio frequency hopping to resist jamming.

Offensive weapons, deployed on the ground to attack satellites, or in space, are not a silver bullet. To the contrary, U.S. deployment of such weapons may actually be detrimental to U.S. and international security in space (as we argued in a recent Atlantic Council publication, Towards a New National Security Space Strategy). Further, there are benefits to efforts started by the Obama Administration to find diplomatic tools to restrain and constrain dangerous military activities in space.

These diplomatic efforts, however, would be undercut by a full-out U.S. pursuit of “space dominance.” This includes dialogue with China, the lack of which Gen. William Shelton, retired commander of Air Force Space Command, lamented in the CNN report.

Given CNN’s “cast,” the spin was not surprising. Starting with Ghost Fleet author Peter Singer set the sensationalist tone, which never altered. The apocalyptic opening, inspired by Ghost Fleet, posited a scenario where all U.S. satellites are taken off-line in nearly one fell swoop. Unless we are talking about an alien invasion, that scenario is nigh on impossible. No potential adversary has such capabilities, nor will they ever likely do so. There is just too much redundancy in the system.

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

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

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

#### Space weapon deployment doesn’t cause an arms race or increase chance of war

Lopez 12 [LAURA DELGADO LO´ PEZ, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Arlington, Virginia. Astropolitics. "Predicting an Arms Race in Space: Problematic Assumptions for Space Arms Control." https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14777622.2012.647391]

The previous discussion demonstrates that although a globalized space arms race could follow U.S. deployment of space weapons, it is also plausible and more likely that it may not happen at all. As Mueller states: ‘‘In the end, most of the inevitability arguments are weak.’’62 The assumptions discussed here break the argument into a series of debatable maxims that other scholars have also considered. Hays, for instance, counters the inevitability argument by pointing out that previous ASAT tests did not have this purported destabilizing effect, to which we can add that even after the Chinese ASAT test, neither Russia nor the United States, who would be both capable and more politically likely to launch space weapons, moved forward in that direction.63 Although some may draw attention to the recent wake-up calls in order to underline a sense of urgency, one should also recall that when it seemed truly inevitable before, it did not happen either. In his detailed account of military space developments from 1945 to 1984, Paul Stares described how superpowers’ assessment of the value of space weapons shifted, with a ‘‘hiatus in testing’’ reflecting the attractiveness of satellites as military targets.64 In this changed landscape, Stares also assumed the inevitability argument, claiming that ‘‘the chances of space remaining a ‘sanctuary’ [absence of weapons] into the 21st century appear today to be remote.’’65 Perhaps the conditions are more conducive now, but the important point to be reiterated is that the outcome is not inevitable, and that any such prediction must be undertaken with caution.

One of the most prominent theorists to propose an alternate picture and pair it with an aggressive pro-space weapons stance is Everett Dolman. In his Astropolitik theory, Dolman summarizes the steps that the United States must take to assume control of space, particularly through withdrawal from the current space regime.66 This move, he argues, would benefit not only the United States, but also the rest of the world, since having a democracy controlling space is a catalyst for peace.67 Elsewhere, he writes: ‘‘Only a liberal world hegemon would be able to practice the restraint necessary to maintain its preponderant balance of hegemonic power without resorting to an attempt at empire.’’68 Accordingly, he believes that this strategy would be ‘‘perceived correctly as an attempt at continuing U.S. hegemony,’’69 but that other countries, correctly assessing U.S. leadership in space, would not seek to deploy their own systems. Having the ability to prevent the stationing of foreign weapons systems in space, he writes, ‘‘makes the possibility of large-scale space war and a military space race less likely, not more.’’70 In fact, he says, ‘‘to suggest that the inevitable result is a space arms competition is the worst kind of mirror-imaging.’’71 Dolman argues that the weaponization of space by the United States would ‘‘decrease the likelihood of an arms race by shifting spending away from conventional weapons systems,’’ which would reduce U.S. capabilities in territorial occupation and would thus be perceived as less threatening to other countries.72

#### Action-reaction cycles don’t happen in space

Lambakis 17 [Dr. Steven Lambakis is a national security and international affairs analyst specializing in space power and policy studies. Dr. Lambakis serves as the Editor-in-Chief of Comparative Strategy, a leading international journal of global affairs and strategic studies whose readership includes key policymakers, academics, and other leaders. Dr. Lambakis was educated in the fields of international politics, with special emphasis on arms control and intelligence issues, American government, and U.S. foreign policy at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois (B.A., 1982) and the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. (M.A., 1984, and Ph.D., 1990). Foreign Space Capabilities: Implications for U.S. National Security. September 2017. www.nipp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Foreign-Space-Capabilities-pub-2017.pdf]

Though history is replete with examples of nations that develop weapons to counter the weapons of other nations to depict the cause of arms development as an “action-reaction” cycle instigated by the United States is often overly simplistic and factually mistaken. Strategic national aims drive weapons development for all nations. The development of a Space Based Interceptor, for example, might fulfill an urgent need to provide effective defenses against ballistic missiles and direct-ascent ASATs, so much so that it justifies the United States being the first to deploy space-based weapons. The deployment of SBI would not necessarily drive other states to deploy such a system if they were not otherwise going to do so, simply because they may not have the technical expertise, capabilities, or the money to do so, or may not have the same requirement to defend against ballistic missile attack or defend space systems. Indeed, it should not surprise us that other nations deploy defenses, potentially including space-based defenses; other states will deploy weapons that are tailored to their strategic aims whether or not we move in a similar manner before or after.

#### Experts agree it’s legitimately zero risk --- the geopolitical climate means nobody would chance attribution

Alver et al, 19 – MA of Int’l Science and Technology Policy (Space Policy) at George Washington

James Alver, Andrew Garza, Christopher May, “An Analysis of the Potential Misuse of Active Debris Removal, On-Orbit

Servicing, and Rendezvous & Proximity Operations Technologies,” Secure World Foundation, May 6, 2019. <https://swfound.org/media/206800/misuse_commercial_adr_oos_jul2019.pdf>

A notable key finding from the survey-driven research effort was the similar response to the quantitative estimation questions. Every expert that was interviewed expressed concerns of the value of trying to capture probability metrics for such unlikely events, with some experts poignantly stating that the international stage would have to shift drastically before it was even worth discussing probability. This is a relevant outlook for the counterargument. The certainty of detection and attribution would make RPO misuse a high-risk venture for any spacefaring nation, and the geopolitical climate is simply not conducive to taking such a risk, nor will it likely be anytime soon. Contemporarily speaking, it would be the equivalent of a country sending a uniformed military officer on a diplomatic mission to another country just to attempt a public assassination. Again, in the face of definitive attribution, an intentional stealth ASAT system is more effective choice.