### 1NC - OFF

#### Interpretation – the aff may not defend that the appropriation of outer space by a certain set of private entities is unjust.

#### Entities is a generic bare plural

**Nebel 20** [Jake Nebel is an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California and executive director of Victory Briefs. He writes a lot of this stuff lol – duh.] “Indefinite Singular Generics in Debate” Victory Briefs, 19 August 2020. no url AG

I agree that if “a democracy” in the resolution just meant “one or more democracy,” then a country-specific affirmative could be topical. But, as I will explain in this topic analysis, that isn’t what “a democracy” means in the resolution. To see why, we first need to back up a bit and review (or learn) the idea of generic generalizations.

The most common way of expressing a generic in English is through a *bare plural*. **A bare plural is a plural noun phrase, like “dogs” and “cats,” that lacks an overt determiner**. (A determiner is **a word that tells us which or how many**: determiners include quantifier words like “all,” “some,” and “most,” demonstratives like “this” and “those,” posses- sives like “mine” and “its,” and so on.) LD resolutions often contain bare plurals, and **that is the most common clue to their genericity**.

We have already seen some examples of generics that are not bare plurals: “A whale is a mammal,” “A beaver builds dams,” and “The woolly mammoth is extinct.” The first two examples use indefinite singulars—singular nouns preceded by the indefinite article “a”—and the third is a definite singular since it is preceded by the definite article “the.” Generics can also be expressed with bare singulars (“Syrup is viscous”) and even verbs (as we’ll see later on). The resolution’s “a democracy” is an indefinite singular, and so it very well might be—and, as we’ll soon see, is—generic.

But it is also important to keep in mind that, just as not all generics are bare plurals, not all bare plurals are generic. “Dogs are barking” is true as long as some dogs are barking. Bare plurals can be used in particular ways to express existential statements. The key question for any given debate resolution that contains a bare plural is whether that occurrence of the bare plural is generic or existential.

The same is true of indefinite singulars. As debaters will be quick to point out, some uses of the indefinite singular really do mean “some” or “one or more”: “A cat is on the mat” is clearly not a generic generalization about cats; it’s true as long as some cat is on the mat. The question is whether the indefinite singular “a democracy” is existential or generic in the resolution.

Now, my own view is that, if we understand the difference between existential and generic statements, and if we approach the question impartially, without any invest- ment in one side of the debate, we can almost always just tell which reading is correct just by thinking about it. **It is clear that “In a democracy, voting ought to be compul- sory” doesn’t mean “There is one or more democracy in which voting ought to be com- pulsory.”** I don’t think a fancy argument should be required to show this any more than a fancy argument should be required to show that “A duck doesn’t lay eggs” is a generic—a false one because ducks do lay eggs, even though some ducks (namely males) don’t. And if a debater contests this by insisting that “a democracy” is existen- tial, the judge should be willing to resolve competing claims by, well, judging—that is, by using her judgment. Contesting a claim by insisting on its negation or demanding justification doesn’t put any obligation on the judge to be neutral about it. (Otherwise the negative could make every debate irresolvable by just insisting on the negation of every statement in the affirmative speeches.) Even if the insistence is backed by some sort of argument, we can reasonably reject an argument if we know its conclusion to be false, even if we are not in a position to know exactly where the argument goes wrong. Particularly in matters of logic and language, speakers have more direct knowledge of particular cases (e.g., that some specific inference is invalid or some specific sentence is infelicitious) than of the underlying explanations.

But that is just my view, and not every judge agrees with me, so it will be helpful to consider some arguments for the conclusion that we already know to be true: that, even if the United States is a democracy and ought to have compulsory voting, that doesn’t suffice to show that, in a democracy, voting ought to be compulsory—in other words, that “a democracy” in the resolution is generic, not existential.

Second, **existential uses of the indefinite, such as “A cat is on the mat,” are upward- entailing.3 This means that if you replace the noun with a more general one, such as “An animal is on the mat,” the sentence will still be true. So let’s do that with “a democracy.” Does the resolution entail “In a society, voting ought to be compulsory”? Intuitively no**t, because you could think that voting ought to be compulsory in democracies but not in other sorts of societies. This suggests that “**a democracy” in the resolution is not existential**.

#### It applies to this topic - entities is an existential bare plural bc it has no determiner

#### Violation – they spec Chinese private entities

#### Standards

#### 1] Limits – they can spec infinite different countries like India, Jordan, Syria, Iran, US, SoKo, NoKo, etc.. - that’s supercharged by the ability to spec combinations of types of entities. This takes out functional limits – it’s impossible for me to research every possible combination of entities, governments, and appropriation.

#### 2] TVA solves – just read your aff as an advantage to a whole rez aff – we don’t stop them from reading new FWs, mechanisms or advantages. PICs aren’t aff offense – a] it’s ridiculous to say that neg potential abuse justifies the aff being non-T b] There’s only a small number of pics on this topic c] PICs incentivize them to write better affs that can generate solvency deficits to PICs

#### Competing interps – it tells the negative what we do and do not have to prepared for – reaosnability is artbirary and causes race to the bottom

#### DTD to deter future abuse and bc we get no new DAs to whole rez in the nr

#### No RVIs – incentivizes baiting theory and illogical – you shouldn’t win for being fair

### 1NC – Case

### Toplevel

#### 1 -- Framing Issue - the companies they reference are state-owned companies

Liu et al 19 (Irina, Evan Linck, Bhavya Lal, Keith W. Crane, Xueying Han, Thomas J. Colvin, IDA Science and Technology Policy Institute) Evaluation of China’s Commercial Space Sector, Institute for Defense Analysis Science & Technology Institute <https://www.ida.org/-/media/feature/publications/e/ev/evaluation-of-chinas-commercial-space-sector/d-10873.ashx> EE

To date, nearly all of China’s accomplishments in space have been achieved by the Chinese government, state-owned enterprises (SOE), or their subsidiaries and suppliers. Historically, China’s space industry has predominantly consisted of SOEs controlled by China’s central or provincial governments. Since 1999, two SOEs, the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC, 中国航天科技集团) and the China Aerospace Science & Industry Corporation (CASIC, 中国航天科工集团),2 have had a near duopoly on launch and space technology in China, with CASC serving as the primary SOE responsible for launch and space technologies.3

#### 2 -- They left off the next paragraph of their own evidence which flows neg and admits Chinese space companies aren’t even private – vote neg on no solvency

\*\*DEBATEDRILLS READS GREEN

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Until recently, China’s space activity has been overwhelmingly dominated by two state-owned enterprises: the China Aerospace Science & Industry Corporation Limited (CASIC) and the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC). A few private space firms have been allowed to operate in the country for a while: for example, there’s the China Great Wall Industry Corporation Limited (in reality a subsidiary of CASC), which has provided commercial launches since it was established in 1980. But for the most part, China’s commercial space industry has been nonexistent. Satellites were expensive to build and launch, and they were too heavy and large for anything but the biggest rockets to actually deliver to orbit. The costs involved were too much for anything but national budgets to handle.

That all changed this past decade as the costs of making satellites and launching rockets plunged. In 2014, a year after Xi Jinping took over as the new leader of China, the Chinese government decided to treat civil space development as a key area of innovation, as it had already begun doing with AI and solar power. It issued a policy directive called Document 60 that year to enable large private investment in companies interested in participating in the space industry.

“Xi’s goal was that if China has to become a critical player in technology, including in civil space and aerospace, it was critical to develop a space ecosystem that includes the private sector,” says Namrata Goswami, a geopolitics expert based in Montgomery, Alabama, who’s been studying China’s space program for many years. “He was taking a cue from the American private sector to encourage innovation from a talent pool that extended beyond state-funded organizations.”

As a result, there are now 78 commercial space companies operating in China, according to a 2019 report by the Institute for Defense Analyses. More than half have been founded since 2014, and the vast majority focus on satellite manufacturing and launch services.

For example, Galactic Energy, founded in February 2018, is building its Ceres rocket to offer rapid launch service for single payloads, while its Pallas rocket is being built to deploy entire constellations. Rival company i-Space, formed in 2016, became the first commercial Chinese company to make it to space with its Hyperbola-1 in July 2019. It wants to pursue reusable first-stage boosters that can land vertically, like those from SpaceX. So does LinkSpace (founded in 2014), although it also hopes to use rockets to deliver packages from one terrestrial location to another.

Spacety, founded in 2016, wants to turn around customer orders to build and launch its small satellites in just six months. In December it launched a miniaturized version of a satellite that uses 2D radar images to build 3D reconstructions of terrestrial landscapes. Weeks later, it released the first images taken by the satellite, Hisea-1, featuring three-meter resolution. Spacety wants to launch a constellation of these satellites to offer high-quality imaging at low cost.

To a large extent, China is following the same blueprint drawn up by the US: using government contracts and subsidies to give these companies a foot up. US firms like SpaceX benefited greatly from NASA contracts that paid out millions to build and test rockets and space vehicles for delivering cargo to the International Space Station. With that experience under its belt, SpaceX was able to attract more customers with greater confidence.

Venture capital is another tried-and-true route. The IDA report estimates that VC funding for Chinese space companies was up to $516 million in 2018—far shy of the $2.2 billion American companies raised, but nothing to scoff at for an industry that really only began seven years ago. At least 42 companies had no known government funding.

And much of the government support these companies do receive doesn’t have a federal origin, but a provincial one. “[These companies] are drawing high-tech development to these local communities,” says Hines. “And in return, they’re given more autonomy by the local government.” While most have headquarters in Beijing, many keep facilities in Shenzhen, Chongqing, and other areas that might draw talent from local universities.

There’s also one advantage specific to China: manufacturing. “What is the best country to trust for manufacturing needs?” asks James Zheng, the CEO of Spacety’s Luxembourg headquarters. “It’s China. It’s the manufacturing center of the world.” Zheng believes the country is in a better position than any other to take advantage of the space industry’s new need for mass production of satellites and rockets alike.

Making friends

The most critical strategic reason to encourage a private space sector is to create opportunities for international collaboration—particularly to attract customers wary of being seen to mix with the Chinese government. (US agencies and government contractors, for example, are barred from working with any groups the regime funds.) Document 60 and others issued by China’s National Development and Reform Commission were aimed not just at promoting technological innovation, but also at drawing in foreign investment and maximizing a customer base beyond Chinese borders.

**“China realizes there are certain things they cannot get on their own,”** says Frans von der Dunk, a space policy expert at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Chinese companies like LandSpace and MinoSpace have worked to accrue funding through foreign investment, escaping dependence on state subsidies. And by avoiding state funding, a company can also avoid an array of restrictions on what it can and can’t do (such as constraints on talking with the media). Foreign investment also makes it easier to compete on a global scale: you’re taking on clients around the world, launching from other countries, and bringing talent from outside China.

Although China is taking inspiration from the US in building out its private industry, the nature of the Chinese state also means these new companies face obstacles that their rivals in the West don’t have to worry about. While Chinese companies may look private on paper, they must still submit to government guidance and control, and accept some level of interference. It may be difficult for them to make a case to potential overseas customers that they are independent. The distinction between companies that are truly private and those that are more or less state actors is still quite fuzzy, especially if the government is a frequent customer. “That could still lead to a lack of trust from other partners,” says Goswami. It doesn’t help that the government itself is often [very cagey about what its national program is even up to](https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-54076895).

And Hines adds that it’s not always clear exactly how separate these companies are from, say, the People’s Liberation Army, given the historical ties between the space and defense sectors. “Some of these things will pose significant hurdles for the commercial space sector as it tries to expand,” he says.

#### 3 -- Their author also admits funding issues make Chinese commercial space exploration extremely difficult

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Other challenges

None of these new companies are yet profitable, and it will be quite some time before they are. “There isn’t any sign of indication that this industry will flop,” says Hines. “But many experts do think a lot of these companies will go out of business.” Apart from the challenge of attracting customers outside China, many companies are still trying to figure out who exactly their customers ought to be.

American companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin had billionaire founders ready to burn cash to take on large risks, push past big failures, and finally get off the ground. And while a Chinese billionaire [entered the industry last year,](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-03/geely-to-make-satellites-as-billionaire-li-follows-musk-to-space?sref=E9Urfma4)“there is no Chinese Elon Musk to push these riskier ventures forward,” says Hines. It’s also unclear whether Chinese companies, even those supported by wealthy backers, will have that appetite for risk.

#### **Sino-Russian Alliance:**

#### 4 -- Off 1AC Curcio – a] this is about the commercial space sector in general, not about the appropriation of outer space. Development of space exploration technology is a huge alt cause to commercial sector growth b] it cites alt causes like russia buying products which the plan doesn’t stop since it’s a question of reducing supply c] lunar bases are non-uq since it’s state based

#### 5 -- Off 1AC Bowman - it concedes the alliance is forming around joint space militarization not commercial good cooperation

#### **ASAT Proliferation:**

#### 6 -- Off 1AC Rajopalan – this is about the Chinese government in space which the plan doesn’t stop – hold the line on 1AR word play

### 1NC – Defense

#### Decline in hegemony inevitable and good – COVID, Iraq, financial crisis, and Trump thump, and China is stability-oriented. Primacy advocates are complicit in a dogmatic delusion of bygone US power.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### US hegemony is dead – there’s no coming back

* COVID, economic downturns, nationalistic politics, security internationally
* Rise in other great powers to rival
* Weaker states can seek alternatives to US support
* Rise in right-wing networks vs liberal policies

Cooley and Nexon 20 (Alexander Cooley is the Claire Tow Professor of Political Science at Barnard College and Director of Columbia University’s Harriman Institute, Daniel H. Nexon is an Associate Professor in the Department of Government and at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, 6/9/2020, Foreign Affairs, “How Hegemony Ends”, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-06-09/how-hegemony-ends>) //EG

Multiple signs point to a crisis in global order. The uncoordinated international response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the resulting economic downturns, the resurgence of nationalist politics, and the hardening of state borders all seem to herald the emergence of a less cooperative and more fragile international system. According to many observers, these developments underscore the dangers of U.S. President Donald Trump’s “America first” policies and his retreat from global leadership.

Even before the pandemic, Trump routinely criticized the value of alliances and institutions such as NATO, supported the breakup of the European Union, withdrew from a host of international agreements and organizations, and pandered to autocrats such as Russian President Vladimir Putin and the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. He has questioned the merits of placing liberal values such as democracy and human rights at the heart of foreign policy. Trump’s clear preference for zero-sum, transactional politics further supports the notion that the United States is abandoning its commitment to promoting a liberal international order.

Some analysts believe that the United States can still turn this around, by restoring the strategies by which it, from the end of World War II to the aftermath of the Cold War, built and sustained a successful international order. If a post-Trump United States could reclaim the responsibilities of global power, then this era—including the pandemic that will define it—could stand as a temporary aberration rather than a step on the way to permanent disarray.

After all, predictions of American decline and a shift in international order are far from new—and they have been consistently wrong. In the middle of the 1980s, many analysts believed that U.S. leadership was on the way out. The Bretton Woods system had collapsed in the 1970s; the United States faced increasing competition from European and East Asian economies, notably West Germany and Japan; and the Soviet Union looked like an enduring feature of world politics. By the end of 1991, however, the Soviet Union had formally dissolved, Japan was entering its “lost decade” of economic stagnation, and the expensive task of integration consumed a reunified Germany. The United States experienced a decade of booming technological innovation and unexpectedly high economic growth. The result was what many hailed as a “unipolar moment” of American hegemony.

But this time really is different. The very forces that made U.S. hegemony so durable before are today driving its dissolution. Three developments enabled the post–Cold War U.S.-led order. First, with the defeat of communism, the United States faced no major global ideological project that could rival its own. Second, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and its accompanying infrastructure of institutions and partnerships, weaker states lacked significant alternatives to the United States and its Western allies when it came to securing military, economic, and political support. And third, transnational activists and movements were spreading liberal values and norms that bolstered the liberal order.

Today, those same dynamics have turned against the United States: a vicious cycle that erodes U.S. power has replaced the virtuous cycles that once reinforced it. With the rise of great powers such as China and Russia, autocratic and illiberal projects rival the U.S.-led liberal international system. Developing countries—and even many developed ones—can seek alternative patrons rather than remain dependent on Western largess and support. And illiberal, often right-wing transnational networks are pressing against the norms and pieties of the liberal international order that once seemed so implacable. In short, U.S. global leadership is not simply in retreat; it is unraveling. And the decline is not cyclical but permanent.

#### Military asymmetry is eroding now – ASAT’s, debris, cyberwar, bureaucracy, A2AD, and adversarial modernization all thump

Schadlow 9/1 [Nadia Schadlow, Nadia Schadlow is a senior fellow at Hudson Institute Dr. Schadlow was most recently U.S. Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategy. Prior to joining the National Security Council, she was a senior program officer in the International Security and Foreign Policy, 9-1-2020, "The End of American Illusion," Foreign Affairs, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/americas/2020-08-11/end-american-illusion, accessed 9-22-2020]LHSBC

* Read green only vs. liberalism

Although liberal internationalism encouraged interdependence and multilateralism, it also rested on a faith in Washington’s ability to indefinitely maintain the uncontested military superiority it enjoyed in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War. In reality, U.S. military dominance is now challenged in virtually every domain. The United States is no longer able to operate freely in the traditional spheres of land, sea, and air, nor in newer ones such as outer space and cyberspace. The spread of new technologies and weapon systems and the pursuit of asymmetric strategies by adversaries have limited the U.S. military’s ability to find and strike targets, supply and safeguard its forces abroad, freely navigate the seas, control sea lines of communication, and protect the homeland. Nothing is likely to reverse these trends.∂ Since the 1990s, the United States has become more dependent on space for its national security, because so many military and intelligence functions depend on assets, such as satellites, that are based there. But China, Russia, and other states now have the ability to field antisatellite weapons systems. Meanwhile, private commercial activities in space have increased exponentially, as well. Since 2014, a majority of satellite launches have been conducted by countries other than the United States—primarily China, India, Japan, and members of the EU, further eroding the United States’ ability to maneuver freely in space and increasing the amount of debris orbiting the earth, which threatens all space assets. ∂ In cyberspace, hardware and software vulnerabilities have emerged across military supply chains, potentially reducing the effectiveness of important platforms. In 2018, David Goldfein, the U.S. Air Force’s chief of staff, described the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter as “[a computer that happens to fly](https://breakingdefense.com/2018/04/a-computer-that-happens-to-fly-usaf-raf-chiefs-on-multi-domain-future/)”—and thus, like all computers, it is vulnerable to cyberattacks. That same year, the Defense Science Board warned that since so many weapons systems were connected, a vulnerability in one could affect others, too. ∂ At the same time, bureaucratic requirements have made it harder for the military to innovate. More than 20 years passed from when the Joint Strike Fighter program was envisioned to when the first combat squadron of F-35s was declared operational. The military demands unrealistically high levels of performance, which companies, hungry for contracts, promise to deliver. Former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates has bemoaned the armed forces’ unwillingness to settle for an [“80 percent” solution](https://archive.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4404) that could actually be built and fielded in a reasonable time frame. Given how quickly countervailing technologies develop, these frictions in the U.S. defense industry pose serious questions about the country’s ability to fight and win wars, especially against near-peer competitors. ∂ Meanwhile, Beijing and Moscow have developed so-called anti-access/area-denial weapons systems, which reduce Washington’s ability to project power in East Asia and Europe. China has developed and modernized its strategic and tactical nuclear weapons and has invested heavily in technologies to improve its conventional forces. Russia has built an array of exotic “doomsday weapons” and low-yield tactical nuclear weapons, despite arms control agreements with the United States. And both countries are also pouring resources into hypersonic weapons whose speed and maneuverability render conventional missile defense systems ineffective. ∂ In addition, smaller rivals such as Iran and North Korea have continued to develop and refine their nuclear programs. Despite visions of a world in which no one could challenge American force, the era of U.S. military dominance proved to be relatively short.

### 1NC – Offense

Not inevitable -

#### 1 -- Counterbalancing

#### Trying to fight back ensures counterbalancing and war

Adams 18 Gordon Adams, Gordon Adams is emeritus faculty from American University and a Distinguished Fellow at the Stimson Center. He oversaw national security budgets in the Clinton White House from 1993-97. “Beyond Hegemony And A Liberal International Order.” May 17, 2018. https://lobelog.com/beyond-hegemony-and-a-liberal-international-order/

America’s place in the world is experiencing an historic turning point. All the mumbo-jumbo about being the “exceptional” and “indispensable” nation, the natural “leader” of something called the “West,” the guarantor of some kind of international system of “rules” is finally being cast into the dustbin of history.

This moment is not just about leaving the Iran nuclear agreement, or even the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Paris climate agreement. It is not simply attributable to the unpredictable, childish impulses of the current president. Nor is it the result of Obama’s failure to enforce a red line in Syria, or “leading from behind” in Libya. It is not even about Bush’s invasion of Iraq with the goal of regime change, setting in motion the destruction of what little political stability existed in the Middle East.

Of course, it is about all these decisions. But in every case, those decisions, and even the critics of those decisions, have failed to realize how they have played into, helped cause, and now accelerate a fundamental shift in global realities—the centrifugal redistribution of power and influence in the international system that has brought to an end the “American century.” The United States has become just another power in a system for which it no longer sets or enforces the rules, if it ever really did.

Both political parties fail to cope with this reality. Democrats and liberals insist that Trump’s foreign-policy decisions threaten the “rules-based” international order America built and dominated. A simple change in leadership, they believe, can restore order and America’s primacy. Republicans [demand](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/03/24/john-bolton-wants-regime-change-in-iran-and-so-does-the-cult-that-paid-him/?utm_term=.68aa7b4e3cce) bellicose American assertiveness, believing that force and military strength guarantee that the world will behave. Columnists bewail America’s declining status, [arguing](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/trump-has-put-america-in-the-worst-of-all-possible-worlds/2018/05/11/ff68940c-5553-11e8-9c91-7dab596e8252_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.76f57dea9018) that greater iinvestment in allies and diplomacy, combined with military engagement might reverse the tide. Think tanks scurry to [define](https://csbaonline.org/research/publications/credibility-matters-strengthening-american-deterrence-in-an-age-of-geopolit) new national security and military policies that can put America back on top.

This debate is a circular firing squad. Both liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans are struggling to recreate a myth: that the US dominates the world by dint of power, values, wisdom, even God’s decisions. America, and only America, can bring order and security to the world. Any other option spells chaos.

Power Shifts

The latest foreign policy whim—withdrawing from the nuclear agreement with Iran—is the most recent nail in the coffin lid in which the myth is buried. Rather than restore leadership, withdrawing from the agreement simply accelerates the global rebalancing already underway, a tectonic shift that began with the disappearance of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The signs are everywhere.

In the Middle East, the power shift is palpable. The United States has treated Iran as a pariah since 1979, trying to stuff the ayatollahs back into some imaginary bottle, hoping that they will go away or be overthrown. This approach has failed, and the withdrawal from the nuclear deal will only make that failure more evident. Iran is a regional power, defending its interests, engaging other powers and movements inside and outside the region, such as Russia. US regime change in Iraq not only destabilized the region but helped usher the Iranians into this active regional role. The other influential countries in the region, particularly Saudi Arabia and Israel, will have to deal with this reality.

In addition to these three countries, Russia is also key to regional stability and instability. There’s no way of pushing the Russians out, short of direct conflict. Nor can Turkey be forced to comply with American policy. It is clearly asserting its own interests and influence in three directions at the same time: Central Asia and Russia, Europe, and the Middle East. The invasion of Iraq may have helped open this Pandora’s box. The US is rapidly becoming a marginal player in the chaotic security environment of the Middle East. In Asia, decades of US condemnation and containment of China have failed. How dare China rise? How dare China steal intellectual property, stifle democracy, arm its artificial islands in the South China Sea, develop a powerful military, mess in Africa (complete with a military base in Djibouti), and intrude into Latin America? And yet, to paraphrase Galileo, “they move.” There is a new, global, competitive player in the system, a reality the United States can not contain or reverse. That player is disrupting that lovely system of rules, acting without U.S. permission or approval. It is even creating new international institutions—an infrastructure development bank and a global trading infrastructure programs (the Belt and Road initiative) to which the US is not even a party. The balance has changed, permanently, and the rules are being rewritten, whether the United States likes it or not.

At the end of the Cold War, American power surrounded Russia, coopting its former satellites, provoking a Russian reaction. Today, the Russian government is, poisoning its citizens overseas, arming Assad, intruding on elections globally, stifling dissent and killing dissenters, and rebuilding its military. Confront Russia, condemn Putin, pretend that they are isolated, treat them with contempt and moral judgment, but Putin does not go away. He is asserting his view of Russia’s interests and Russia’s role in the world, like any great power is likely to do. No amount of US pressure, sanctions, or policy is likely to change that reality. Russia is consciously and actively rebalancing the United States, with some success.

American bullying and presidential rhetoric may have played a role in the apparent, but uncertain, willingness of the North Korean regime to put its nuclear program on the table. But if that program disappears, the putative Nobel Peace Prize may actually belong to President Moon Jae-in of South Korea and even Kim Jong Un, for seizing an opportunity. Even that regional balance and the key players are shifting.

Reckoning with the Shift

America has not been able to use its dominant military to prevent this evolution or restore order. Where it has been deployed in large numbers—Iraq and Afghanistan—U.S. military force has failed. War grinds on in Afghanistan with no light suddenly appearing at the end of the tunnel, despite the promises of generations of officers. Rousting the Islamic State from Iraq has not solved the internal problems of that unhappy country, which is still recovering from a US occupation. Special Operations forces in dozens of countries whack at terrorist moles only to find others arising in their place, stimulated by the confrontation. Order is not restored; the American rules are not being obeyed.

If the US fails to read global rebalancing accurately and tries either to bully the rest of the world or to “restore” the liberal international order, the entire world will find itself at an even more dangerous moment. Bullying will only accelerate the centrifugal trend. Asserting the superiority of an American “order” and American “rules” will no longer persuade other rising powers.

The rules will change with the rebalancing. Eliminating the Trump presidency will not restore the previous order. His actions are not an aberration, but an accelerant, spreading the fires that were already under way.

The challenge is to completely redesign US foreign and national security policy to fit with a world where America is just another power, competing and cooperating for influence. The United States must learn to play well with others in the global sandbox.

#### 2 -- Peaceful Retrenchment

#### Power transitions cause retrenchment and peace, not war.

MacDonald and Parent, PhDs in Political Science, 20

(Paul K., Columbia, Associate Professor of Political Science at Wellesley College, and Joseph M., Columbia, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame, The Authors Respond, *Journal of East Asian Studies*, 20(2): 176-179) BW

How do great powers respond to decline? Do they tend to embrace policies that raise the risk of war with rising challengers? These were the core questions that we set out to answer in our book Twilight of the Titans. We focused on these questions because there is a growing consensus among many policymakers and pundits that shifts in relative power are particularly perilous. In an influential 2015 Atlantic Monthly article, for example, the political scientist Graham Allison argued that “war between the United States and China in the decades ahead is not just possible, but much more likely than recognized at the moment. Indeed, judging by the historical record, war is more likely than not” (Allison 2015; 2017). In 2017, Allison reportedly briefed these findings, which are derived from his accounting of sixteen historical power transitions, to Trump’s National Security Council (Crowley 2017). For better or worse, academic arguments about rising and falling powers are helping to shape contemporary Sino-American relations. Probably for worse, because the marquee finding in our book is that power transition theory is wrong. Ordinal transitions between rising and declining powers tend to be less—rather than more—conflict prone. The main reason why this is the case is because great powers tend to respond to decline not by lashing out against their rising rivals, but by adopting policies of strategic retrenchment. These policies do not always work, and different structural conditions can make it easier or harder for declining powers to use retrenchment to effectively manage decline. Yet to the extent that hawks in the United States are drawing on power transition theory to advocate for “confronting” a rising China or for a strategy of “great power competition,” these policy recommendations are based on flimsy intellectual foundations. We appreciate the care with which all three of the reviewers have engaged with the arguments and evidence we present in our book. All three seem to accept the basic conclusion: that the impending Sino-American power transition may be turbulent, but that conflict is less likely than not. Yet there are some important areas of dispute. One concerns what the chief source of grand strategy is and how that will affects great power relations. Along with Robert Ross, we tend to rely on structural material factors, while David Kang and Ketian Zhang rely more on domestic and/or non-material factors. The other concerns how conflictual the rise of China will be. Ironically, although we tend to share Ross’s analytical focus on systemic factors, we reach a much more optimistic conclusion about the extent to which conditions in the Asia-Pacific are “ripe for rivalry” (Friedberg 1993). Let us start with the question of what shapes grand strategy. Our book follows realist theory and argues that actors in international politics, typically states, are primarily interested in their security and survival. This is precisely why states tend to be alarmed by relative decline, because it exposes them to potential harm. Yet beyond this simple and spare assumption, we accept that states can define their security needs in a wide variety of ways, and that culture, history, and domestic politics can matter a great deal in how they do so. Here we are in complete agreement with Kang that one should not “unproblematically assume that all states are the same in the contemporary world.” He is absolutely right to be frustrated that international relations scholars know much more about European than Asian history, a regrettable legacy of imperialism and the Cold War, which is getting better too slowly. We accept that China’s conception of its security needs and its role in the Asia-Pacific region will inevitably be shaped by cultural and historical legacies, the same way that Britain’s tradition of “splendid isolation” or French conceptions of “grandeur” influenced their grand strategic responses in the cases we explore in our book. Indeed, although our research finds that shifts in relative power are among the most important factors shaping great power grand strategies, we note that the correlation is imperfect. States routinely retrench less than we expect given the depth of their declines, to highlight one notable exception (pp. 53–55). The question for contemporary US–Chinese relations is the extent to which historical or cultural differences override structural conditions or make it simply impossible to compare cases of rising and declining powers. Here we disagree with Kang that China’s experience is not just distinctive, but fundamentally sui generis. It may be true that “the historical East Asian system was hegemonic,” and that as a result, Chinese foreign policy was traditionally oriented more towards monitoring hierarchic relationships rather than managing shifts in the balance of power. Yet British grand strategy was likewise obsessed with questions of imperial management, while the expansion and contraction of contested frontiers were central preoccupations of Russian grand strategy. Similarly, it may well be the case that East Asian history highlights “the dangers of internal challenges rather than external threats.” Yet French policymakers grappled with a rising Germany amidst a contested transition from royalism to republicanism, while domestic unrest and parliamentary protest provided a fatal backdrop for late-tsarist responses to decline. Great powers are inevitably preoccupied with a range of competing concerns—external threats, imperial entanglements, domestic difficulties—all of which are impacted by decline in different ways to varying degrees. Zhang’s core contention is that the making of grand strategy is more complex than we allow for in the book. She notes that there are multiple ways to measure “rising” and “declining,” that grand strategies are sometimes too complex to capture with a single word such as “retrenchment,” and that diplomatic or economic interests can often trump security concerns. We acknowledge all of these points and do our best to defend our choices in the text. We choose one way to measure decline (relative great power share of GDP) and focus on a particular moment of decline (five year windows around an ordinal transition) not because these are the only measures or moments that matter, but because they match those of power transition theorists and are easiest to implement (pp. 5–6, 45–48). We classify and compare grand strategies based on their relative ambition—do they trend towards expansion or retrenchment—not because this is the only or necessarily the best way to think about grand strategy, but because questions of the bearing burdens and managing costs tend to be particularly salient during moments of decline (pp. 6–9, 48–50). Zhang is certainly correct that there are broader shifts in the character of international politics that may mute our findings. Perhaps globalization has fundamentally transformed the boundaries in which great power competition can take place, thereby rendering the concerns of power transition theorists obsolete (nuclear weapons, international institutions, and the spread of democracy are often cited as having a similar pacifying effect). We try to account for this in our discussion of the “conquest calculus”: when it is harder for states to profit from using force, they will be less likely to choose preventive war in response to decline (pp. 70–71). Yet many of our cases of decline come from nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe, when these pacifying forces were relatively weak, and yet great powers still tended to favor retrenchment over war (pp. 40–41, 191–192). Even in familiar and favorable cases, the evidence in favor of power transition theory is thin. Now that trade networks, international institutions, democracy, and nuclear weapons have remade the global landscape, the implications of our argument tend to be more optimistic. Decline is not destiny, and great powers have considerable latitude to manage power transitions using retrenchment, even in seemingly unfavorable circumstances. We were surprised, therefore, that Ross finds our account “especially pessimistic” about the future of Sino-American relations. Ross is right that some of the conditions we emphasize may make the United States reluctant to retrench, notably the United States’ unwillingness to surrender preeminence and the apparent absence of regional allies who are willing or able to balance against a rising China. Nevertheless, there are other conditions that appear to favor accommodation and retrenchment: vast distances separate the two biggest powers; the conquest calculus appears to favor the defense; American security commitments are relatively independent, easing worries about falling dominos; and the United States is falling gradually, which leaves time for experimentation and for reforms to bear fruit (pp. 197–198). We concur with Ross’s observation about the importance of geography, which can mute incentives to use force and provide opportunities for retrenchment (pp. 39–41). Still, we think these opportunities are not unique to maritime environments. In the 1880s, the vast and dispersed character of Russia’s imperial commitments provided it with opportunities to pull back from exposed frontiers while reinforcing key strongpoints. Declining powers often see retrenchment not as a strategy that sacrifices security, but as a means to bolster deterrence and protect vital interests. If so, then the United States was wise to reorient its defense priorities and devote an increasing share of its resources to the Pacific. As for applications, we would like to consider two: balancing and signaling. Kang builds the case that Asian states are not balancing against China because China is not a threat, is working to reassure its neighbors, and by implication does not much threaten the United States. In contrast, we believe that Kang is excessively optimistic about the intensity of the security dilemma in Asia. At root, balance of power theory proposes that, in a self-help world, great powers generally balance against each other mostly by strengthening their own capabilities; for weaker actors, however, their behaviors are more variable. This is exactly what Kang’s Figure 1 shows and exactly what American policymakers fear: China balancing against the United States and most Asian states failing to balance against China. This has led to a rebalancing of US forces to the Asia-Pacific and increasingly fraught relations between the two superpowers. Moreover, and rather than being a sui generis feature of East Asia, this trend is also consistent with historical practice. Our data suggest that rising powers tend to increase defense spending at a faster rate than other great powers, but that they also tend to negotiate more alliance agreements and to get involved in fewer militarized disputes (pp. 64–66). Rising powers often invest in and modernize their militaries, yet also go out of their way to reassure their neighbors. This is a classic balance of power dynamic: great power poles repel each other as weaker states caught in between are generally swept into one orbit or another. Oddly enough, this allows us to close on an ungloomy note. Zhang has pervasive worries about signaling. What if kindness is mistaken for weakness and US defensive measures signal a lack of resolve? We hope our work can dampen some of these anxieties. Over more than a century, the complexities of power and statecraft have changed. In markedly worse circumstances than those in the contemporary Asia-Pacific, great powers have risen and fallen, made contradictory statements, and pursued contradictory policies, yet across many measures, and controlling for many confounding factors, moments of power transition have tended to be peaceful. For all their manifest imperfections, great powers generally sense power trends accurately, and exchange signals as intended, which has powerfully contributed to peace. While this is no reason for complacency—deterrence can break down, reassurance can fail, historical legacies can cast long shadows—it is no reason for undue alarm either. Contra Allison, the United States and China are not trapped in the same old story of war and change; they remain coauthors of their future.

#### The only comprehensive study proves retrenchment is comparatively more peaceful

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

In this article, we question the logic and evidence of the retrenchment pessimists. To date there has been neither a comprehensive study of great power retrenchment nor a study that lays out the case for retrenchment as a practical or probable policy. This article fills these gaps by systematically examining the relationship between acute relative decline and the responses of great powers. We examine eighteen cases of acute relative decline since 1870 and advance three main arguments. First, we challenge the retrenchment pessimists’ claim that domestic or international constraints inhibit the ability of declining great powers to retrench. In fact, when states fall in the hierarchy of great powers, peaceful retrenchment is the most common response, even over short time spans. Based on the empirical record, we find that great powers retrenched in no less than eleven and no more than fifteen of the eighteen cases, a range of 61–83 percent. When international conditions demand it, states renounce risky ties, increase reliance on allies or adversaries, draw down their military obligations, and impose adjustments on domestic populations. Second, we find that the magnitude of relative decline helps explain the extent of great power retrenchment. Following the dictates of neorealist theory, great powers retrench for the same reason they expand: the rigors of great power politics compel them to do so.12 Retrenchment is by no means easy, but necessity is the mother of invention, and declining great powers face powerful incentives to contract their interests in a prompt and proportionate manner. Knowing only a state’s rate of relative economic decline explains its corresponding degree of retrenchment in as much as 61 percent of the cases we examined. Third, we argue that the rate of decline helps explain what forms great power retrenchment will take. How fast great powers fall contributes to whether these retrenching states will internally reform, seek new allies or rely more heavily on old ones, and make diplomatic overtures to enemies. Further, our analysis suggests that great powers facing acute decline are less likely to initiate or escalate militarized interstate disputes. Faced with diminishing resources, great powers moderate their foreign policy ambitions and offer concessions in areas of lesser strategic value. Contrary to the pessimistic conclusions of critics, retrenchment neither requires aggression nor invites predation. Great powers are able to rebalance their commitments through compromise, rather than conflict. In these ways, states respond to penury the same way they do to plenty: they seek to adopt policies that maximize security given available means. Far from being a hazardous policy, retrenchment can be successful. States that retrench often regain their position in the hierarchy of great powers. Of the fifteen great powers that adopted retrenchment in response to acute relative decline, 40 percent managed to recover their ordinal rank. In contrast, none of the declining powers that failed to retrench recovered their relative position. Pg. 9-10

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### 3 -- Proliferation

#### Reducing nuclear proliferation causes a de-facto shift to CBWs

Particularly true of stronger NPT norms

Narang 16 (Neil Narang, Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara, Senior Advisor in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy on a Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellowship, 4/6/2016 “All Together Now? Questioning WMDs as a Useful Analytical Unit for Understanding Chemical and Biological Weapons Proliferation,” The Nonproliferation Review. Volume 22. Issue 3-4. pp. 457-468. Taylor and Francis.)

The first inference that one may be tempted to draw from past findings is that a policy focused on achieving reductions in the global nuclear stockpile could cause a rise in chemical and biological weapons proliferation as more states view them as a “poor man's atomic bomb.” As noted above, our findings suggested that states appear to seek chemical and biological weapons for many of the same reasons as they pursue nuclear weapons. Furthermore, our findings also indicate that states that do not possess nuclear weapons appear to be systematically more likely to pursue chemical and biological weapons than states that do possess them. When combined, it may seem reasonable to suppose that, conditional on some level of demand for one of these types of weapons, reductions in the global supply of nuclear weapons could cause some states to pursue chemical and biological weapons as “imperfect substitutes” for the deterrence and compellence benefits of nuclear weapons.

A second inference that one may be tempted to draw is that a strengthened NPT may increase the risk of chemical and biological weapons proliferation. Understood in the terms of our study, policies and institutions designed to monitor and sanction the unilateral pursuit or dissemination of nuclear weapons material and technical expertise—like the NPT or the Nuclear Suppliers Group—might be understood as supply constraints that effectively increase the transaction costs of nuclear weapons acquisition. Furthermore, previous research has shown that the supply of sensitive nuclear assistance and civilian nuclear assistance are both positively associated with the risk of nuclear weapons pursuit and acquisition across states and over time.17

When combined, it may seem reasonable to suppose that, given some demand for a “weapon of mass destruction,” chemical and biological weapons could seem like relatively cheaper pursuits under a more robust global nuclear nonproliferation regime that further regulates the supply of nuclear weapons.

A third inference that one may be tempted to draw is that reductions in the global supply of nuclear weapons and a strengthening of the nuclear nonproliferation regime could increase the risk of chemical and biological weapons pursuit by terrorist groups. If one is willing to assume terrorist groups aim to influence governments by threatening to impose costs in order to achieve concessions— whether this be through strategies like coercion, provocation, spoiling, or outbidding—then it may seem reasonable to suppose that limiting the availability of nuclear weapons might shift the demand to other coercive instruments such as chemical and biological weapons.18

#### That causes extinction

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In the decades to come, **advanced bioweapons could threaten human existence**. **Although the probability of human extinction from bioweapons may be low**, **the** **expected value** **of** **reducing the risk** **could still be large**, **since such risks jeopardize the existence of all future generations**. We provide an overview of biotechnological extinction risk, make some rough initial estimates for how severe the risks might be, and compare the cost-effectiveness of reducing these extinction-level risks with existing biosecurity work. We find that reducing human extinction risk can be more cost-effective than reducing smaller-scale risks, even when using conservative estimates. This suggests that the risks are not low enough to ignore and that more ought to be done to prevent the worst-case scenarios. How worthwhile is it spending resources to study and mitigate the chance of human extinction from biological risks? The risks of such a catastrophe are presumably low, so a skeptic might argue that addressing such risks would be a waste of scarce resources. In this article, we investigate this position using a cost-effectiveness approach and ultimately conclude that the expected value of reducing these risks is large, especially since such risks jeopardize the existence of all future human lives. Historically, **disease events** **have been responsible for the greatest death tolls on humanity**. **The 1918 flu was responsible for more than 50 million deaths,1 while smallpox killed perhaps 10 times that many in the 20th century alone**.2 **The Black Death was responsible for killing over 25% of the European population**,3 **while other pandemics**, such as the plague of Justinian, **are thought to have killed 25 million in the 6th century**—constituting over 10% of the world's population at the time.4 It is an open question whether a future pandemic could result in outright human extinction or the irreversible collapse of civilization. **A** **skeptic** **would have many good reasons to think that existential risk from disease is unlikely**. **Such a disease would need to spread worldwide to remote populations**, **overcome rare genetic resistances**, **and evade detection, cures, and countermeasures**. Even evolution itself may work in humanity's favor: **Virulence and transmission is often a trade-off**, and so evolutionary pressures could push against maximally lethal wild-type pathogens.5,6 **While these arguments point to a** very **small risk** of human extinction, **they do not rule the possibility out entirely**. Although rare, **there are recorded instances of species going** extinct due to disease—primarily in amphibians, but also in 1 mammalian species of rat on Christmas Island.7,8 There are also historical examples of large human populations being almost entirely wiped out by disease, **especially when multiple diseases were simultaneously introduced into a population without immunity**. **The most striking examples of total population collapse include native American tribes exposed to European diseases,** such as the Massachusett (86% loss of population), Quiripi-Unquachog (95% loss of population), and the Western Abenaki (which suffered a staggering 98% loss of population).9 **In the modern context**, **no single disease currently exists that combines the worst-case levels of transmissibility, lethality, resistance to countermeasures, and global reach**. But many diseases are proof of principle that each worst-case attribute can be realized independently. For example, some diseases exhibit nearly a 100% case fatality ratio in the absence of treatment, such as rabies or septicemic plague. Other diseases have a track record of spreading to virtually every human community worldwide, such as the 1918 flu,10 and seroprevalence studies indicate that other pathogens, such as chickenpox and HSV-1, can successfully reach over 95% of a population.11,12 Under optimal virulence theory, natural evolution would be an unlikely source for pathogens with the highest possible levels of transmissibility, virulence, and global reach. **But advances in biotechnology** **might allow the creation of diseases that combine such traits**. Recent **controversy has already emerged** **over a number of scientific experiments that resulted in viruses with enhanced transmissibility, lethality, and/or the ability to overcome therapeutics**.13-17 **Other experiments demonstrated that mousepox could be modified to have a 100% case fatality rate and render a vaccine ineffective**.18 In addition to transmissibility and lethality, **studies have shown that other disease traits**, such as incubation time, environmental survival, and available vectors, **could be modified as well**.19-21 Although these experiments had scientific merit and were not conducted with malicious intent, their implications are still worrying. This is especially true given that there is also a long historical track record of state-run bioweapon research applying cutting-edge science and technology to design agents not previously seen in nature. The Soviet bioweapons program developed agents with traits such as enhanced virulence, resistance to therapies, greater environmental resilience, increased difficulty to diagnose or treat, and which caused unexpected disease presentations and outcomes.22 **Delivery capabilities** **have** also **been subject to the cutting edge of technical development**, **with Canadian, US, and UK bioweapon efforts playing a critical role in developing the discipline of aerobiology**.23,24 **While there is no evidence of** state-run bioweapons **programs directly attempting to** develop or **deploy bioweapons** that would pose an existential risk, **the logic of deterrence and mutually assured destruction could** **create such incentives** **in more unstable political environments** **or following a breakdown of the Biological Weapons Convention**.25 **The possibility of a war between great powers could also increase the pressure to use such weapons**—during the World Wars, bioweapons were used across multiple continents, with Germany targeting animals in WWI,26 and Japan using plague to cause an epidemic in China during WWII.27

#### Prolif solves war

Cohen, PhD, ‘17

(Michael D., PoliSci@BritishColumbia, SeniorLecturerSecurityStudies@Macquarie, “How nuclear proliferation causes conflict: the case for optimistic pessimism,” The Nonproliferation Review, Volume 23, Issue 3-4) BW

But there is a systematic effect of experience with nuclear weapons on the conflict propensity of states. The Soviet Union stopped challenging the status quo in Berlin and Cuba after 1963. The number of fatalities from terrorist violence in Kashmir in 2012 was almost that of 1989.83 Mao never again challenged Soviet forces after the 1969 Zhenbao conflict. Recent quantitative studies have also concluded that experience with nuclear weapons moderates the conflict propensity of new nuclear powers. Most quantitative scholarship concludes that nuclear proliferation does not lead to conventional conflict because quantitative tests showed no relationship between these variables.84 States that develop nuclear weapons are highly conflict prone, so a high propensity for conflict likely causes nuclear-weapon development and further conflict.85 But statistical research has ignored the role of experience with nuclear weapons. Temporally disaggregating the effect of nuclear proliferation on state conflict uncovers a robust correlation between nuclear-weapon proliferation, experience, and international dispute behavior.

University of Pennsylvania’s Michael Horowitz conducted a statistical analysis and found that the probability of new nuclear states reciprocating disputes quickly increases and then decreases over time.

The probability that a nuclear state will reciprocate a dispute with a non-nuclear state drops from .53 one year after developing nuclear weapons to .23 in year 56. Two new nuclear powers are 67 percent more likely to reciprocate a dispute than two average non-nuclear states. Two experienced nuclear powers are 65 percent less likely to reciprocate than two average non-nuclear states. The probability of dispute reciprocation between an experienced and new nuclear power is 26 percent greater than two non-nuclear states, and the probability of a very experienced state and a somewhat experienced state reciprocating is 42 percent less than two non-nuclear states.86

University of California-San Diego’s Erik Gartzke conducted a similar statistical test when the dependent variable was dispute initiation rather than reciprocation and found similarly robust results.87 Gartzke found that, while the overall effect of nuclear proliferation on conflict propensity is neutral, there is variation in the effect of proliferation over time. Nuclear proliferation influences the timing, rather than the occurrence, of disputes. While new nuclear states are prone to initiate militarized disputes, over time they moderate their policies and become as likely to initiate disputes as they were before nuclear proliferation.88 These effects wash out in statistical tests that do not control for experience with nuclear weapons. In short, if Iran and North Korea develop nuclear weapons and challenge their regional status quo, the historical record suggests that they will not do so for long. Thus James M. Lindsay and Ray Takeyh of the Council on Foreign Relations recently claimed that a nuclear Iran would be most dangerous “at first, when it would likely be at its most reckless.” But, “like other nuclear aspirants before them, the guardians of the theocracy might discover that nuclear bombs are simply not good for diplomatic leverage or strategic aggrandizement.” 89

Conclusion: proliferation pessimism, Iran, and North Korea

Three of the four mechanisms long alleged to make nuclear proliferation cause interstate conflict find little to no empirical support when the endogeneity, omitted-variable bias, and conceptual-confusion issues addressed above are recognized and applied to the evidence. Preventive-war motivations, nonsurvivable arsenals, and organizational logics that lead to accidents do not cause armed conflict. The only mechanism that has systematically led to conflict is conventional aggression by weak revisionists after nuclear proliferation, but a few years of experience with nuclear weapons moderates the conflict propensity of new nuclear states. By failing to specify how frequently we should observe preventive motivations, their effect on nonsurvivable arsenals, or how organizational logics lead to conflict, accidents, and nuclear war, proliferation pessimist claims are unfalsifiable. Pessimist scholars need to specify how much longer we should observe them not leading to conflict before concluding that their threat has been greatly exaggerated.

The undesirability of nuclear use has prevented scholars from coming to terms with what a more careful and systematic reading of the historical record suggests about the relationship between these mechanisms and conflict. Sagan has argued that proliferation fatalism and deterrence optimism reduce incentives to combat proliferation.90 But these same dynamics have led scholars to vastly exaggerate the number of threats posed by the spread of nuclear weapons. If the greatest danger posed by nuclear proliferation is conventional aggression in the short-term, scholars need to rediscover how deterrence can moderate the high conflict propensity of new nuclear states.91 Arguments about the frequency of nuclear escalation, however, say nothing about its cost. Isn’t the possibility of nuclear escalation on the Korean peninsula, for example, evidence against the arguments made throughout this paper? A few cases of accidental, unintentional, or deliberate nuclear escalation could show that the mechanisms offered by pessimist scholars linking nuclear proliferation and conflict survive the criticisms leveled at them here. A lower bar for the proliferation-pessimist theory to pass might be one case of nuclear escalation. But after seventy years, nuclear weapons have not once led to conflict through the mechanisms addressed here.

This is not the place for a lengthier treatment of how the United States and its allies should deal with the challenges posed by a North Korean (or possible Iranian) nuclear bomb. But the historical record suggests that Israeli, South Korean, and others’ preventive motivations to strike will not lead to military action, and that any strike would likely not escalate to conflict unless the United States or its allies decide to topple the regimes in Tehran and Pyongyang. The nonsurvivability of an Iranian or North Korean arsenal will not tempt others to strike. The arguments made here have contrasting findings for preventive-strike considerations. On the one hand, strikes are less costly than many believe because they rarely cause escalation. On the other hand, strikes are less necessary than many believe because the costs of nuclear proliferation are much lower than usually assumed. Nuclear accidents may occur, but these will likely only cause conventional or nuclear escalation if Tehran or Pyongyang have already attempted to revise their status quo. The historical record also suggests that a few years of experience with the bomb will teach Tehran and Pyongyang the limits of nuclear coercion and that any conflict will stop short of nuclear escalation. Future research should further refine proliferation pessimism and integrate it with optimist perspectives through addressing what causes new nuclear states to moderate their aggression and what policies by the United States and its allies might cause this. An optimistic pessimism toward the spread of nuclear weapons can better come to terms with how and when they lead to interstate conflict and form the basis for better policies to reduce the dangers.

#### 4-- Chinese Hegemony Good

#### Chinese hegemony shifts the international order from self-determination to territorial integrity – that creates global stability.

Griffiths, PhD in Political Science, 16

(Ryan D., Columbia, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Government and International Relations at the University of Sydney, States, Nations, and Territorial Stability: Why Chinese Hegemony Would Be Better for International Order, *Security Studies*, 25(3): 519-545) BW

To conclude, a hegemonic China ought to influence international order by shifting the balance from self-determination toward territorial integrity. Its insistence on supporting territorial integrity in the internal sense is significant, and only in instances of consent would the state recognize independence claims. As such, the prohibition on conquest should endure during a time of Chinese hegemony, but the rate of state birth would decrease. State proliferation would be controlled relative to the partly controlled international order that has characterized the post-1945 period. The Pax Sinica How would a future period of Chinese hegemony compare with the current international order or orders of the past? I have argued that Chinese hegemony would privilege territorial integrity at the expense of self-determination. The result would be an international order that would resemble earlier periods in some ways and be unique in others. Sovereign norms would once again be dominant and liberal norms would be subordinated to the right of states. One result of this shift would be a decline, if not disappearance, in nonconsensual secession. However, since a Chinese hegemon is likely to hold on to the territorial integrity norm, conquest would also remain rare. The overall result would be a surprisingly stable international order, a Pax Sinica. To consider this argument it is useful to place this Pax Sinica in historical perspective (See Table 1). Given its emphasis on sovereignty and its internal fragmentary pressures, China would shift the normative balance to a point where secession is only legal in the presence of sovereign consent. Importantly, that move would jettison the constitutive process of statehood, since self-determination would be elevated to a positive right only in the presence of consent. The difficult decision of choosing who counts would be simplified by effectively allocating that choice to sovereign states. Not unlike the pre-Napoleonic era, sovereignty would prevail and the arc of history would bend back toward the right of states. Importantly, this would not simply be a return to the 1800s.67 The politics of recognition in the 19th century possessed a liberal undercurrent and, as Fabry argues, the United States and UK would often disregard the sovereignty of states when recognizing breakaway regions that had prevailed over their central governments.68 In truth, Chinese hegemony would resemble the 18th century more than the 19th, when states hewed closely to the sovereign principle that recognition should only be given in cases of consent. The notion that minority nations should be able to self-determine, that individuals selecting into a group should have rights, was not yet on the map. The liberal tradition was only just emerging and the sovereign tradition was relatively unchallenged. The Pax Sinica would bear those same conservative features. However, Chinese hegemony would also bear modern features. The main difference is the very conception of sovereignty and the corollary development of the norm of territorial integrity. Should the norm of territorial integrity be supported by a Chinese power, state death would remain a rare occurrence. Unlike the 18th and 19th centuries where the number of states was gradually reduced through conquest and accession, very few states would exit the system unless they voluntarily chose to unify with other states. Thus the Pax Sinica would be rather stable. The number of states may gradually increase, but it would be limited to those cases where the sovereign gave its consent—that is, controlled proliferation. This anticipated focus on territorial stability under Chinese hegemony is consistent with both contemporary and historical political doctrine.

The Confucian emphasis on a strong and stable state is echoed in recent political slogans like “Stability and Harmony.”69 There are conservative, statist overtones in China’s policies without any commensurate emphasis on liberal norms. Unlike the United States, Chinese exceptionalism does not promote a set of universal values in its foreign policy.70 Meanwhile, recent scholarship has looked into the past to examine what previous periods of Chinese regional dominance say about patterns in international order.71 One common finding is that imperial China tended to emphasize patterns of informal rule where other polities remained sovereign, yet informally subordinate. Indeed, David C. Kang finds that the China-centered international order that existed in East Asia from the 14th to the 19th centuries—the so-called Tribute System—was characterized by stable borders and infrequent wars of conquest, at least where recognized political units like Vietnam and Korea were concerned.72 The hegemon showed little tolerance for unrecognized, tribal, and/or institutionally dissimilar groups, especially on the western and northern frontiers. Of course, past behavior is not a perfect indicator of future performance, but that approach to international order privileges recognized states and emphasizes the sovereign territorial grid in a manner where the hegemon can exert power and influence without formal conquest. Essentially, there is continuity between China’s imperial past and what this paper predicts for the future should it become a hegemon. I began the article by claiming that the Pax Sinica would be better for international order. In making this claim I define “better” in narrow terms emphasizing territorial stability, which can be assessed in several ways. How often do either external aggressors or internal separatists shift sovereign borders through violence? What is the frequency of secessionist civil war? How much international discord is there on the topic of secession and recognition? This is the ledger I use when comparing the Pax Sinica with the post-1945 American-led order. There are many other factors, to be sure, and critics might point to a number of ways in which Chinese hegemony would be worse. For example, they may question the support for human rights under Chinese leadership. I do not argue that Chinese hegemony would be better in all ways—there are pros and cons to any order—but I contend that there are net benefits where territorial stability is concerned. Analyzed under these terms the key differences between the American order and the imagined Chinese order have to do with the politics of secession and sovereign recognition. International order matters because it determines diplomatic practices and shapes behavior. It sets the rules of the game. The American-led order over the last seventy years has attempted to balance the norms of territorial integrity and self-determination by establishing rules for what nations are eligible for independence. But, as Fabry notes, that is an enormously challenging project because developing clear rules that separate the lucky from the unlucky requires that states derive agreed-upon criteria in a constitutive process.73 Given the politics and conflicting principles of international life (and the evolving nature of normative arguments), inconsistency, ambiguity, and accusations of hypocrisy are unavoidable. The resulting political space creates uncertainty for states and nationalist movements over when self-determination applies and when it should be subordinated to territorial integrity. Incidents like the Ukrainian crisis cast a shadow over separatist crises elsewhere. The leadership in Azerbaijan detects double standards in American policy, wondering why it “punishes Russia for annexing Crimea, but not Armenia for similar behavior in Karabakh.”74 Such uncertainly can makes states feel vulnerable, as it has in Azerbaijan, change the incentives for key actors, and increase the chance of conflict. Secessionist civil war is a common feature of contemporary times. Scholars estimate that at least half of the civil wars since 1945 have involved secessionism, and Barbara F. Walter argues that secessionism is the chief source of violence in the world today.75 Erica Chenowith and Maria Stephan find that secessionism is one of the few (if only) forms of political protest where violent tactics are more effective than nonviolent.76 Meanwhile, Tanisha Fazal and I identify fifty-five secessionist movements as of 2011 and record that many of these movements feel they have a reasonable chance of gaining independence in light of the somewhat flexible practices surrounding recognition.77 Given the strategic environment in which secessionists operate, where violence can be effective and where sovereignty is thought to be obtainable, it should come as no surprise that conflict is common. In regard to territorial stability, the concern of contemporary times is not traditional territorial conquest, but the threat posed by state fragmentation.78 This is where Chinese hegemony ought to improve international order.