### 1NC—CP

#### CP: The appropriation of outer space by private entities in The People's Republic of China is unjust, except for the appropriation of outer space by Origin Space using the Yangwang 1 satellite for nighttime light data collection. Origin Space ought to immediately publicly release said data.

#### It competes.

Jones 21 “Chinese commercial satellite has been spotting meteors and aurora” Andrew Jones [freelance space journalist with a focus on reporting on China's rapidly growing space sector. He began writing for Space.com in 2019 and writes for SpaceNews, IEEE Spectrum, National Geographic, Sky & Telescope, New Scientist and others.] September 28, 2021 <https://www.space.com/chinese-satellite-watching-meteors-aurora> SM

Chinese commercial satellite has been spotting meteors and aurora

Yangwang 1 is focused on near-Earth asteroids, but the bonus observations are stunning.

A small Chinese commercial satellite has been detecting meteors impacting the atmosphere and even filming the aurora.

The Yangwang 1 ("Look Up 1") satellite, belonging to Beijing-based space resources company Origin Space, launched in June along with three other satellites. With its small optical space telescope, Yangwang 1 has been using visible and ultraviolet observations to detect near-Earth asteroids.

#### Satellites are appropriation – that’s the 1AC – multiple cards both very clearly defend satellites as an internal link which means you should reject any 1AC permutation for 1AR shiftiness which makes it impossible to be negative since they can unpredictably redefine the plan text to skirt neg ground – if they don’t solve satellites vote neg on presumption because it’s an alt cause to the aff

#### Here’s one of the cards – we’ll insert re-h/l – they also h/l-ed some of these lines in the aff

#### 1AC Patel

* 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.
* 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.
* But there were a few achievements the rest of the world might not have noticed. One was the November 7 launch of Ceres-1, a new type of rocket that, at just 62 feet in height, is capable of taking 770 pounds of payload into low Earth orbit. The launch sent the Tianqi 11 communications satellite into space.
* What are the market needs that Hines is referring to? Satellites, and rockets that can launch them into orbit. The space industry is undergoing a renaissance thanks to two big trends spurred by the commercial industry: we can make satellites for less money by making them smaller and using off-the-shelf hardware; and we can also make rockets for less money, by using less costly materials or reusing boosters after they’ve already flown (which SpaceX pioneered with its Falcon 9). These trends mean it is now cheaper to send stuff into space, and the services and data that satellites can offer have come down in price accordingly.

#### We’ll read ev.

Thornburg 18 [(Matthew, associate editor at the Michigan Journal of International Law) “Are the Non-appropriation Principle and the Current Regulatory Regime Governing Geostationary Orbit Equitable for All of Earth’s States?,” November 30, 2018 http://www.mjilonline.org/are-the-non-appropriation-principle-and-the-current-regulatory-regime-governing-geostationary-orbit-equitable-for-all-of-earths-states/] TDI

As the law currently stands, geostationary orbit – a constant orbital position above Earth’s equator – is governed by the OST and is therefore subject to the treaty’s attendant ban on national appropriation. Spaces, or slots, in geostationary orbit[2] are desired because they are exceedingly convenient for communicating with earth. They are highly limited and as a consequence, highly valuable. Moreover, these spaces are allotted on a first-come-first-served basis[3] making them virtually unattainable by less scientifically and economically advanced states[4], or those that are just plain late to the game. The ban on national appropriation is enumerated in the Second Article of the OST, which states: “Outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by other means.”[5] The geostationary orbital position is generally agreed upon by experts[6] as part of “outer space” and consequently, forbidden from appropriation. The OST is clear in prohibiting claims of sovereignty, but the subsequent clauses leave much to interpretation when considering what other acts constitute “national appropriation.” In other words, the question surrounding geostationary orbital slots is “whether the continued exclusive occupation by a geostationary satellite of the same physical area is a violation of the ban on national appropriation”[7] by use, occupation, or other means. In his article, Major Legal Issues Arising from the Use of the Geostationary Orbit, Stephen Gorove says that, “it is not clear that a satellite in geostationary orbit would be able to maintain its exact position and occupy the same area over a period of time…” so as to “appropriate” and thus violate Article II of the OST. The analysis should not turn on whether the satellites in geostationary orbit maintain their exact position. Instead, it is the continual use of the orbital slot that should be examined in light of the OST prohibition. The average lifespan of a geostationary satellite is 15-20 years,[8] effectively shutting out any other state’s use of that slot for at least that long. A time frame of this nature seems to be the exact type of “use or occupation” the treaty seeks to foreclose because of the consequent unequal access to the use of space, and the consequent potential to cement the economic interests of certain nations and firms. Compounding this concern is the fact that operators of the geostationary satellites need only refile with the International Telecommunications Union (“ITU”) to “renew” a slot and replace old satellites with new ones.[9] Essentially, such operators keep the orbital slot indefinitely. In light of the OST – a treaty dominated by goals of fair and equitable use and access to space – endless use of these valuable slots should rise to the level of national appropriation by means of use, occupation, or other means.

#### Yangwang-1 is key to nighttime light data – significant advancements over alternatives.

Zhu et al 22 “Assessment of a New Fine-Resolution Nighttime Light Imagery From the Yangwang-1 (“Look up 1”) Satellite” Xiaolin Zhu, Xiaoyue Tan, Minglei Liao, Shuheng Zhao, Yi Nam Xu, and Xintao Liu are with the Department of Land Surveying and GeoInformatics, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University; Tianshu Liu is with the S.T.E.M Academy, Orange Lutheran High School, Meng Su is with the Laboratory for Space Research, The University of Hong Kong. IEEE GEOSCIENCE AND REMOTE SENSING LETTERS, VOL. 19, 2022 6505205 <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=9666911&tag=1> SM

The calibrated radiance of Yangwang-1 was used to estimate the population in 27 districts of Hong Kong and Shenzhen by a linear regression model (Fig. 3). The good performance of this model (R2 = 0.94) suggests that radiance data obtained by Yangwang-1 is capable of evaluating socioeconomic parameters.

B. Spatial Properties

Among three satellites, Yangwang-1 has the highest spatial resolution 38 m, which is higher than 130 m of Luojia-1 and dramatically higher than 750 m of VIIRS (Table II). As a result, Yangwang-1 should be more capable of capturing the spatial pattern of artificial lights, such as bright city blocks (e.g., business districts) and road networks. To investigate the spatial properties of NTL images from different satellites, a subregion covering the Hong Kong–Zhuhai–Macau Bridge (HZMB) was selected to demonstrate the NTL spatial patterns (Fig. 4). It is clear that all three satellites can capture the general spatial pattern of NTL, but Yangwang-1 and Luojia-1 NTL images show much more spatial details than VIIRS image. For example, the images from Luojia-1 and Yangwang-1 can clearly capture the HZMB [bright line in the middle of Fig. 4(c) and (d)], and the regular shape of the Hong Kong International Airport [the bright patch on the right side of Fig. 4(c) and (d)], but VIIRS cannot spot the HZMB and the image hardly show the shape of the airport [Fig. 4(b)]. The comparison between Yangwang-1 and Luojia1 in the zoomed area shows that Yangwang-1 [Fig. 4(h)] captures the road network more clearly than Luojia-1 [Fig. 4(g)]. To quantify the image quality in the spatial domain, the dubbed Blind/Referenceless Image Spatial Quality Evaluator (BRISQUE) index [17] was calculated for the three NTL images using a python package (https://pypi.org/project/imagequality/). BRISQUE quantifies losses of “naturalness” in the image due to distortions and a lower value indicates better image quality. To exclude the impact of the saturation problem of Yangwang-1 on the BRISQUE calculation, pixels in all three images with radiance higher than the saturated value were adjusted to the saturated one and max–min normalization was applied to all images. The results show that Yangwang-1 has a BRISQUE value lower than Luojia-1 and VIIRS (27.4 versus 40.3 and 69.7), indicating that Yangwang-1 has spatial quality better than Luojia-1 and VIIRS by 32% and 61%, respectively.

To further quantify the spatial properties, we estimated the spatial response of Luojia-1 and Yangwang-1 using the HZMB as ground reference samples. Spatial response refers to the satellite’s ability to position ground targets accurately and precisely. The HZMB comprises a 22.9-km long bridge and a 6.7-km long subsea tunnel connected by two artificial islands. To provide illumination, the lighting provisions on the HZMB include lights outlining the boundary of the artificial islands, street and traffic sign lights, high mast lights, etc. Since the bridge has a width of 33.1 m, which is smaller than a pixel of all three satellites, it is ideal to test whether the NTL image is sharp enough to delineate the actual location of the bridge. A transect crossing the bridge was used to investigate the spatial response (Fig. 5). It shows that both Luojia-1 and Yangwang-1 have a peak in NTL that corresponds to the bridge, but the peak of Yangwang-1 has a narrower width than Luojia-1, indicating its superiority in detecting tiny light sources. As for VIIRS, the light is nearly invisible due to the coarse spatial resolution [Fig. 4(b)], so the profile of VIIRS is not included in Fig. 5. In addition, the comparison also indicates that Yangwang-1 is more sensitive than Luojia-1 to low lights (e.g., reflected moonlight or weak emissions), since Yangwang-1 recorded more valid radiance on both sides of the bridge than Luojia-1 (Fig. 5). Further comparisons were conducted on selected sites located in the mountainous areas around cities [yellow points in Fig. 1(a)]. As summarized in Table III, Yangwang-1 and VIIRS/DNB have similar radiances with a difference of less than 1 nW·cm−2·sr−1, whereas Luojia-1 did not record these low radiance values.

C. Spectral Properties

Fig. 6(a) shows the spectral responses of the three satellites for the NTL visible band. Spectral response describes the sensitivity of the sensor to optical radiation of different wavelengths. This is important because spectral responses determine which part of the optical radiation spectrum is measured. The spectral responses of Luojia-1 and VIIRS were collected from previous studies [14], [18]. The spectral response of Yangwang-1 was estimated as the product of the quantum efficiency (QE) and lens transmittance data provided by the Yangwang-1 satellite team [19]. Fig. 6(a) suggests that the spectral response of Yangwang-1 is significantly different from Luojia-1 and VIIRS. It shifts more to the shorter wavelengths, which indicates that Yangwang-1 has some strengths in artificial light monitoring. First, the absorption of the atmosphere mainly happens in the band greater than 650 nm, and Yangwang-1 concentrates on a shorter wavelength ranging from 420 nm to approximately 700 nm, so Yangwang-1 will be less influenced by the absorption of the atmosphere. Second, the energy of three main types of artificial lights (fluorescent, high-pressure sodium, and LED) mainly distributes within the spectral response curve of Yangwang-1 except for the narrow peak of high-pressure sodium [Fig. 6(b)]. Therefore, Yangwang-1 is more suitable to be utilized for observing artificial lights, especially for LEDs of which the first peak of energy is out of the spectral responses of Luojia-1 and VIIRS.

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

From our assessment, NTL imagery from Yangwang-1 has acceptable quality compared to the state of the art in NTL remote sensing (e.g., VIIRS, Luojia-1) and some aspects are even better. For the radiometric property, Yangwang-1 has a detectable minimum radiance lower than the other two satellites, so it can better capture weak light emissions. For spatial properties, Yangwang-1 images have the highest spatial resolution among the currently available NTL satellites except for some images acquired through aerial photography and commercial satellites. Therefore, Yangwang-1 can help monitor human activities and socioeconomic disturbances at fine scales, such as neighborhood scale. For spectral property, based on the comparison of spectral response curves, Yangwang-1 is more suitable to detect artificial light and less influenced by the absorption of the atmosphere. Considering the capability and improvement of Yangwang-1 in NTL imaging, Yangwang-1 NTL data can be applied to various fields, including urban mapping, road network extraction, light pollution, illegal fishing, fires, disaster detection, and human settlements and associated energy infrastructure mapping at fine scales. The sample data used in this study can be downloaded from <https://github.com/XZhu-lab/Yangwang-1-NTLdata-assessment>.

#### Improved NTL data key to fisheries management.

Exeter et al 21 “Shining Light on Data-Poor Coastal Fisheries” 28 January 2021 Owen M. Exeter [Environment and Sustainability Institute, College for Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter, Environmental Biology, College for Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter], Thaung Htut [3Wildlife Conservation Society], Christopher R. Kerry [Environment and Sustainability Institute, College for Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter], Maung Maung Kyi4 [Rakhine Coastal Region Conservation Association] Me'ira Mizrahi [Wildlife Conservation Society], Rachel A. Turner [Environment and Sustainability Institute, College for Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter], Matthew J. Witt [Environment and Sustainability Institute, College for Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter, Environmental Biology, College for Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter] and Anthony W. J. Bicknell [2Environmental Biology, College for Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter] https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2020.625766/full SM

Coastal fisheries provide livelihoods and sustenance for millions of people globally but are often poorly documented. Data scarcity, particularly relating to spatio-temporal trends in catch and effort, compounds wider issues of governance capacity. This can hinder the implementation and effectiveness of spatial tools for fisheries management or conservation. This issue is acute in developing and low-income regions with many small-scale inshore fisheries and high marine biodiversity, such as Southeast Asia. As a result, fleets often operate unmonitored with implications for target and non-target species populations and the wider marine ecosystem. Novel and cost-effective approaches to obtain fisheries data are required to monitor these activities and help inform sustainable fishery and marine ecosystem management. One such example is the detection and numeration of fishing vessels that use artificial light to attract catch with nighttime satellite imagery. Here we test the efficiency and application value of nighttime satellite imagery, in combination with landings data and GPS tracked vessels, to estimate the footprint and biomass removal of an inshore purse seine fishery operating within a region of high biodiversity in Myanmar. By quantifying the number of remotely sensed vessel detections per month, adjusted for error by the GPS tracked vessels, we can extrapolate data from fisher logbooks to provide fine-scale spatiotemporal estimates of the fishery's effort, value and biomass removal. Estimates reveal local landings of nearly 9,000 mt worth close to $4 million USD annually. This approach details how remote sensed and in situ collected data can be applied to other fleets using artificial light to attract catch, notably inshore fisheries of Southeast Asia, whilst also providing a much-needed baseline understanding of a data-poor fishery's spatiotemporal activity, biomass removal, catch composition and landing of vulnerable species.

Introduction

Small-scale coastal fishing fleets are known to exert pressure on marine ecosystems. Without effective management even small-scale operations can deplete fish stocks (Wilson et al., 2010), contribute to species declines through bycatch and intentional targeting (Mangel et al., 2010; Alfaro-Shigueto et al., 2011; Aylesworth et al., 2018) and cause the degradation of coastal habitats through high impact fisheries methods (Blaber et al., 2000; Thrush et al., 2002; Fox and Caldwell, 2006; Shester and Micheli, 2011; Chan and Hodgson, 2017). Small-scale fisheries are also intrinsically linked to food security and livelihoods. Twenty-two of an estimated 50 million fishers globally are involved in small-scale operations (Teh and Sumaila, 2013). With annual yields close to 22 million tons (Pauly and Zeller, 2016), these fisheries are estimated to contribute more than half of reported landings in developing regions (World Bank, 2012) yet are often considered poorly documented and neglected by management authorities (Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2015).

To monitor fisheries, larger vessels are often instrumented with global positioning systems (GPS) including vessel monitoring systems (VMS) and automatic identification systems (AIS) (Witt and Godley, 2007; Jennings and Lee, 2012; Kroodsma et al., 2018). This has allowed fisheries scientists to quantify their spatial footprint (Natale et al., 2015; Kroodsma et al., 2018) and assess the effectiveness of spatial management efforts (White et al., 2017; Ferrà et al., 2018). Small-scale coastal fisheries, notably in developing regions, often lack the capacity to equip such systems or are not currently required to carry them (Dunn et al., 2010; Breen et al., 2015; Kroodsma et al., 2018). Despite being globally distributed, spanning a variety of gear types, vessel sizes, target species, spatial profiles and socioeconomic characteristics (Smith and Basurto, 2019), these fleets largely lack data on spatial and temporal trends in activity (Johnson et al., 2017; Selgrath et al., 2018). As small-scale fleets primarily operate in inshore zones (Stewart et al., 2010), the paucity of spatial data on vessel behavior can seriously hinder effective coastal management, impacting both people and wildlife (Ban et al., 2009; Metcalfe et al., 2017; Cardiec et al., 2020).

In the absence of traditional tracking technologies, a variety of alternate methods have been used to quantify small-scale fisheries in time and space. These include self-reporting logbooks (Vincent et al., 2007), sightings (Breen et al., 2015), participant mapping and interviews (Léopold et al., 2014; Selgrath et al., 2018; Gill et al., 2019), mapping known behaviors (Witt et al., 2012) or combinations of these (Turner et al., 2015). These methods are often only a snapshot in time and can host inaccuracies as a result of observer bias (Brown, 2012, 2017). The novel application of remote sensing systems offers a potential source of long-term monitoring data (Chassot et al., 2011). Remote sensing systems provide high resolution data over large spatial scales and long temporal periods (Chassot et al., 2011; Klemas, 2013). One example is the detection of vessels using sensors on weather satellites at night (Croft, 1978) i.e., the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program Operational Linescan System (DMSP OLS). This has been demonstrated to be useful in detecting vessels that use artificial light to lure fish or squid to the surface before netting or hooking (Liu et al., 2015; Cozzolino and Lasta, 2016; Paulino et al., 2017). More recently, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Suomi National Polar Partnership satellite primary imager, the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) Day/Night Band, has captured a variety of artificial light sources at the Earth's surface (Elvidge et al., 2015). The subsequent development of algorithms by the Earth Observation Group (EOG) for the automatic detection of fishing vessels from VIIRS imagery provides an open-source repository of global nighttime fishing effort (Elvidge et al., 2015). These data have proven highly effective for the monitoring of fisheries closures (Elvidge et al., 2018), identifying fishing grounds (Geronimo et al., 2018; Hsu et al., 2019), estimating capacity of illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries (Oozeki et al., 2018) or combining with government landing statistics to predict stock migration routes (Choi et al., 2008). However, VIIRS imagery has yet to be combined with landings data collected in situ to quantify fine-scale spatiotemporal trends of effort, catch and value in data-poor scenarios. Combination in this manner could enable real-time estimation of biomass removal across large spatial scales and inform targeted fisheries and conservation management.

Fishing fleets using artificial light operate throughout the world's oceans and are prominent across Southeast Asia where these practices are known as “light-boat fishing.” Squid species are generally targeted by these fleets, but small forage fish, such as clupeids, are also targeted in coastal waters (Gorospe et al., 2016). Light-boat fisheries, as with other fish aggregation methods, are often considered high impact, associated with landings of immature fish and have high bycatch rates of vulnerable megafauna due to low-selectivity and small net mesh sizes (Solomon and Ahmed, 2016). Myanmar is one of the top ten fish producing countries of the world, with more than three million metric tons of fish providing 43% of the country's consumed protein per year Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2014; Tezzo et al., 2018). Marine fisheries also provide direct livelihoods to ~1.4 million fishers (Department of Fisheries, 2017). Myanmar's small-scale marine fisheries are characterized as multi-gear, multi-species fisheries, with limited access to external markets (Schneider and Thiha, 2014).

Myanmar is also an example of a country lacking capacity to implement effective management and conduct long-term monitoring. This has led to data on marine fisheries being scarce, especially for the inshore fleet (Tezzo et al., 2018). Government statistics reveal decadal (2003–2012) increases of 121% in landings (Pauly and Zeller, 2016) with small pelagic fish stocks estimated to be at 10% of 1979 levels (Krakstad et al., 2014). Few spatial management areas exist to aid stock recovery (Boon et al., 2016) or protect Myanmar's rich biodiversity and species of conservation concern (Birch et al., 2016). Some gear restrictions exist, including the ban of certain trawl gears in inshore waters, however without enforcement illegal fishing continues unabated (Wildlife Conservation Society, 2018). Whilst the Government of Myanmar has taken steps toward monitoring its marine fisheries through the installation of VMS, this is limited to offshore fishing vessels, with no current monitoring of small-scale vessels. As Myanmar enters a new phase of rapid globalization (Orlov, 2012; Prescott et al., 2017), its marine environment is likely to experience increased pressures in the future. Strengthening governance, improving enforcement capacity and designing community-led initiatives will all be required to resolve wider issues of management capacity. Baseline data on fisheries landings and effort is therefore an important first step to improved marine management for the country.

#### Fish Wars escalate – causes global resource wars and escalates existing hotspots.

Spijkers 20, Jessica. Global patterns of international fisheries conflict. Diss. Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University, 2020. (Postdoctoral Researcher at CSIRO)//Elmer

International conflict over fishery resources is considered to be a growing security concern. Ongoing, high-profile interstate fishery disputes are sparking concerns of future global fish wars (note: for the remainder of this thesis, terms such as fishery conflicts refer to marine fishery conflicts, excluding conflicts over fresh water species). One of those ongoing interstate disputes is the so-called ‘mackerel war’ between Norway, the European Union (EU), Iceland and the Faroe Islands, which erupted in 2007 when the northeast Atlantic mackerel (Scomber scombrus) stock shifted its distribution towards the north-west of the Nordic Seas and their surrounding waters. The conflict has had disruptive social and ecological consequences: it resulted in the overfishing of the mackerel stock, undermined the coastal states’ management plans, and even contributed to Iceland withdrawing its application to become an EU member state (Spijkers & Boonstra 2017). Another prominent example is that of the South China Sea, where fishers often find themselves on the frontlines of international disputes over fishery resources as China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei fail to resolve competing claims over parts of the area (Dupont & Baker 2014). Although these fisheries conflicts are linked to a larger territorial struggle in the region (with China increasingly militarizing what it has determined to be its maritime sphere of influence), the rich fishing grounds are an important, strategic commodity for surrounding states given that fisheries play a vital role in ensuring food security in the region (Dupont & Baker 2014). Some scholars even claim fish is an ‘overlooked destabilizer’ in the region, and that China’s militarization efforts are a power move intended to dominate marine harvest (Baker et al. 2016, Thomspon 2019) Moreover, environmental conditions that might trigger or exacerbate fisheries conflict are likely to become more widespread in the future, further heightening worries about impending security challenges for ocean governance. First, changing ocean conditions are causing shifts in fisheries resources' distribution patterns, 3 affecting potential yields of and revenues generated from exploited marine species (Lam et al. 2016, Sumaila et al. 2011). This redistribution of resources is expected to result in more fishery disputes, as current fisheries management is predicated on the assumption that the geographical distribution of fish populations is largely static (Pinsky et al. 2018, Cheung et al. 2010). However, climate change will lead to a redistribution of resources and a loss of revenue for the global fishing industry (Lam et al. 2016, Sumaila et al. 2011). Such shifts in resources might become a particular menace for countries with a high dependence on fish protein for nutritional security with countries such as Tuvalu and Kiribati likely to experience the largest decreases in their maximum catch potential due to climate change (Blasiak et al. 2017, Lam et al. 2016). Depending on how the impacts of anthropogenic climate change play out in the global ocean, 23-35% of global Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) are projected to receive new transboundary fish stocks by the end of the century (Pinsky et al. 2018). In some EEZs in the already troubled maritime region of East Asia, 10 new stocks are projected to enter as a consequence of climatic changes (Pinsky et al. 2018). In summary, the changes fishery systems will undergo due to climate change are likely to cause disruption to fisheries management globally, and are feared to spark conflict. Second, the global decline in catches, largely as a consequence of overfishing, is also considered to be an accelerating driver of conflict. The abundance of available fishery resources has decreased substantially: 33.1% of fish stocks were fished at biologically unsustainable levels in 2015 (in 1974, this was 10%), and 59.9% fished at their maximally sustainable level (FAO 2018). While effort has increased since the 1950s, catches have stagnated and then slowly declined since the late 1980s (Pauly & Zeller 2017, Pauly & Zeller 2016, Watson et al. 2013). Simultaneously, consumption of and demand for fish is steadily increasing, and the average annual increase in global fish consumption (3.2%) outpaced population growth (1.6%) between 1961 and 2016 (the average annual increase in meat consumption, for example was 2.8% during that 4 same period (FAO 2018)). In combination with disputed maritime boundaries, this increased competition may contribute to volatile situations. International fisheries conflicts are considered a threat to maritime security as they can have far-reaching impacts on marine safety, resource sustainability, geopolitical relations and food security. For example, geopolitical stability and marine safety (safety of seafarers and passengers (Bueger 2015)) were compromised during the infamous Cod Wars that occurred between Great Britain and Iceland during the 1950s and 1970s. The two countries were embroiled in a string of confrontations over fishing rights in the North Atlantic, where Iceland wanted to extend its fishing limit, but Great Britain did not recognize their right to do so. The consequences for geopolitical stability and, at certain stages, marine safety (Bueger 2015) were severe: flash points of the conflict included the use of military vessels to patrol the area and defend fishing boats, patrol boats cutting the nets of trawlers, ships ramming trawlers and frigates, and, ultimately, Iceland threatening to leave NATO (Bakaki 2017). An example of compromised resource sustainability due to an international fisheries conflict is the previously discussed northeast Atlantic mackerel dispute. As a result of the conflict, there are no comprehensive management plans for the stock, and the mackerel has become severely overfished. With countries setting unilateral quotas, their combined catch in 2018 was twice that recommended by the International Council for Exploration of the Sea (ICES), and the fisheries had their Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certifications retracted (Ramsden 2019, Seamon 2018). Lastly, food security has also been jeopardized due to international fisheries conflict, as exemplified by the incidents taking place in the South China Sea. Fishermen from contending countries that operate in the troubled waters, and whose livelihoods depend on the rich fishing grounds, have at times decided to leave their occupation all together, afraid of going out into the waters without any protection (Patience 2013). Moreover, failure to address rising tensions could lead to greater 5 regional instability and severe environmental degradation, further compromising regional food security (Zhang 2016, deLisle 2012).

### CASE—Adv 2

#### No Miscalc:

#### 1] Restraint

Dr. Hu Bo 20, Director of the Center for Maritime Strategy Research and Research Professor at the Institute of Ocean Research at Peking University, Director of the South China Sea Strategic Situation Probing Initiative, “China-US Military Confrontation in the South China Sea: Fact and Fiction”, The Diplomat, 6/12/2020, https://thediplomat.com/2020/06/china-us-military-confrontation-in-the-south-china-sea-fact-and-fiction/

But neither side seems to have much to offer other than peaceful coexistence. If both sides develop normally, in terms of power, the future of the South China Sea would be a bipolar region, regardless what kind of intentions they have. Moreover, most countries in the region are reluctant to take sides in the China-U.S. power competition. Therefore, it is hard for either side to re-establish a dominant order here.

As the power distribution becomes more balanced, the idea of a managed military conflict is fanciful. One side’s provocation will inevitably invite the other’s retaliation, where spiral escalation is highly possible. Considering that both sides have so many weapon platforms and both are major nuclear powers, the feasibility of a military solution has greatly diminished.

The China-U.S. rivalry in the South China Sea is certainly growing, but war is still some way off. There are several maritime encounters between the two sides every day, and thousands every year. Most of them are professional and safe; only a few have involved some risks. The recent pandemic has made both countries and militaries more sensitive, which, to some extent, has heightened the tension of the situation.

Because of COVID-19, China and the United States are more concerned and anxious about each other. In addition to maintaining daily operations in the western Pacific, both sides have some new worries. The United States is concerned that China would take advantage of the temporary power vacuum; thus it has deliberately shown more force and given China more diplomatic pressure. China feels that Washington’s South China Sea policy is increasingly desperate to the point that, even during the pandemic, the United States has not forgotten to provoke China. Beijing is also convinced that the U.S., motivated by power competition, is focusing on China’s activities and ignoring the actions of other claimants.

From mid-April to early May, the U.S. Navy dispatched several warships, including USS America LHA-6, to the so-called standoff area between the Haiyang Dizhi 8 and the West Capella to deter China’s operations. The PLA Navy was believed to have a similar number of warships there at the same time, which aroused heated discussion among the media and experts. Another less publicized but more intense case was the reconnaissance and counter-reconnaissance of China’s aircraft carrier Liaoning formation when it was conducting open sea cross-region mobile training while followed by American warships and multiple military aircraft. An anonymous PLA Navy officer revealed that the confrontation was so intense that one U.S. warship even once came within 100 meters of the Chinese carrier.

Even so, both sides have remained largely professional and restrained. In fact, neither the Chinese military nor the American military has increased its activity significantly compared with the same period of 2019, despite the impression given by most media reports and expert commentaries.

#### 2] Empirics and Stance

Staschwick 20 [Steven; 3-6-2020; Naval Officer, International Security MA from the University of Chicago; “A Cold War Movie’s (Wrong) Lessons About US-China Competition,” the Diplomat, https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/a-cold-war-movies-wrong-lessons-about-u-s-china-competition/]

Since both the United States and China have nuclear weapons, and especially in light of China’s efforts to improve the survivability of its nuclear missile submarines, a major armed conflict between the two should be deterred by the threat of mutual nuclear attack. The possibility of a non-nuclear conflict between them rests on the logic of the stability-instability paradox. This theory posits that two nuclear-armed countries both desire to avoid total destruction and therefore will avoid conflicts that risk escalating to that level of force. But as a result of that strategic-level stability, each feels secure in engaging in lower-intensity conflict, confident that the other would not risk nuclear escalation over comparatively minor provocations.

This is likely part of the reason that Chinese planes and ships, like the Soviets before them, have felt secure to engage in “games of chicken” with U.S. planes and ships resulting in incidents from the 2001 EP-3 collision in which a Chinese pilot died to near-collisions between warships in 2013 and 2018. The Hunt for Red October also suggests, incorrectly (or at least exaggeratedly), that dangerous incidents like these might lead to cataclysm.

In a scene where the National Security Advisor admonishes the Soviet Ambassador, he warns that U.S. and Soviet warships and planes operating close together was highly dangerous, and that “wars have begun that way.” It’s a concern both the United States and China have invoked about interactions between their navies when operating in the South China Sea, on the theory that an unintended incident might spark an armed clash and escalate from there. But as straightforward as the logic seems, the worry that incidents like these might lead to miscalculation and escalation appears unfounded, and historically, wars haven’t ever begun that way.

#### Russia Thumps – Russia also develops Space Weapons – their ev doesn’t reverse causally solve Russian development

#### No China space war - Chinese military plans prove

Cheng 17 [Dean Cheng, Senior Research Fellow, Asian Studies Center, Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy Heritage. The U.S.-Japan Alliance and Deterring Gray Zone Coercion in the Maritime, Cyber, and Space Domains. Chapter 6. Space Deterrence, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and Asian Security: A U.S. Perspective. Rand Corporation. 2017]

But while there may be clashes in space, the actual source of any Sino-American conflict will remain earthbound, most likely stemming from tensions associated with the situation in the East China Sea, the Taiwan Strait, or the South China Sea. This suggests that U.S. and allied decisionmakers (both in Asia and Europe) should be focusing on deterring aggression in general, rather than concentrating primarily on trying to forestall actions in space. Indeed, there is little evidence that Chinese military planners are contemplating a conflict limited to space. While there may be actions against space systems, Chinese writings suggest that they would either be limited in nature, as part of a signaling and coercive effort, or else would be integrated with broader terrestrial military operations.

#### No ASATs

Bloomfield 13 [Lincoln Palmer Bloomfield Jr. is a United States Defense Department and State Department official. Bloomfield was educated at Harvard University, graduating cum laude with an A.B. in 1974. He later attended The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, receiving an M.A. in Law and Diplomacy in 1980. Bloomfield is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Henry L. Stimson Center. Anti-satellite Weapons, Deterrence and Sino-American Space Relations. September 2013. www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/space-weapons/issues/Anti-Satellite%20Weapons,%20Deterrence%20and%20Sino-American%20Space%20Relations.pdf]

In the first-ever severe crisis between major powers in space, both contestants will possess the capacity to deny each others pursuit of space dominance. In this way, the nature of the space domain, where offense easily trumps defense, is like the nuclear domain. Consequently, the contestants will be unable confidently to ensure decisive victory by means of surprise attack. Just as protection from fallout in nuclear exchanges cannot be secured, so, too, will the first use of kinetic-energy ASATs be self-denying: mutating debris fields will make large swaths of space inoperable to one’s own satellites, either quickly or over time. The use of non-kinetic-energy ASATs on a modest scale invites retaliation in kind or retaliation across domains. The use of non-kinetic-energy ASATs on a massive scale invites massive retaliation, if not in kind, then across domains. In the event of a severe crisis between Washington and Beijing, would a Chinese leader risk everything with this cosmic throw of the dice?

#### No Escalation over Satellites:

#### 1] Planning Priorities

Bowen 18 Bleddyn Bowen 2-20-2018 “The Art of Space Deterrence” <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/commentary/the-art-of-space-deterrence/> (Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Leicester)//Elmer

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

#### 2] Military Precedent

Zarybnisky 18, Eric J. Celestial Deterrence: Deterring Aggression in the Global Commons of Space. Naval War College Newport United States, 2018. (Senior Materiel Leader at United States Air Force)//Elmer

PREVENTING AGGRESSION IN SPACE While deterrence and the Cold War are strongly linked in the public’s mind through the nuclear standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union, the fundamentals of deterrence date back millennia and deterrence remains relevant. Thucydides alludes to the concept of deterrence in his telling of the Peloponnesian War when he describes rivals seeking advantages, such as recruiting allies, to dissuade an adversary from starting or expanding a conflict.6F 6 Aggression in space was successfully avoided during the Cold War because both sides viewed an attack on military satellites as highly escalatory, and such an action would likely result in general nuclear war.7F 7 In today’s more nuanced world, attacking satellites, including military satellites, does not necessarily result in nuclear war. For instance, foreign countries have used highpowered lasers against American intelligence-gathering satellites8F 8 and the United States has been reluctant to respond, let alone retaliate with nuclear weapons. This shift in policy is a result of the broader use of gray zone operations, to which countries struggle to respond while limiting escalation. Beginning with the fundamentals of deterrence illuminates how it applies to prevention of aggression in space.

#### No miscalc from satellite disruptions or ASAT attacks – empirically denied

Mazur 12 [Jonathan Mazur, Manager Engineering at Northrop Grumman, writing in Space & Defense, from the Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies. Past U.S. Actions: Redlines in Space. Space & Defense, Volume 6, Number 1, Fall 2012. https://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/97/Space\_and\_Defense\_6\_1.pdf?ver=2018-09-06-135424-147]

U.S. Reactions To Foreign Disruption Of U.S. Capabilities

In the 1970s, it was suspected that a U.S. maritime communications satellite was turned off by the Soviets when it was outside of the range of U.S. tracking stations.25 There does not appear to be any documented U.S. reaction, and I suspect there was none. In the mid-1990s, satellite hackers in Brazil began hijacking U.S. military communication satellite signals to broadcast their own information, though it took until 2009 for Brazil to crack down on the illegal activity with the support of the DoD.26 In 1998, a U.S.-German satellite known as ROSAT was rendered useless after it turned suddenly toward the sun. NASA investigators later determined the accident was possibly linked to a cyber-intrusion by Russia.

The fallout? Though there was an ongoing criminal investigation as of 2008; NASA security officials have seemed determined to publicly minimize the seriousness of the threat.27 In 2003, a signal originating from Cuba—later determined to be coming from Iranian embassy property— was jamming a U.S. communications satellite that was transmitting Voice of America programming over Iran, which was publicly referred to as an “act of war” by a U.S. official. 28 Press reporting indicates the U.S. administration was [frozen]“paralyzed” about how to cope with the jamming that continued for at least a month, even after U.S. diplomatic protests to Cuba.29 In 2005, U.S. diplomats protested to the Libyan government after two international satellites were illegally jammed disrupting American diplomatic, military, and FBI communications.30 In 2006, press reporting indicates that China hit a U.S. spy satellite with a ground-based laser. This action was acknowledged by the then director of the NRO, though the DoD remained tight lipped about the incident.31

“We’re at a point where the technology’s out there, and the capability for people to do things to our satellites is there. I’m focused on it beyond any single event.” – Air Force Space Command Commander, General Chilton, 2006 32

In 2009, a U.S. commercial Iridium communications satellite—extensively used by the DoD—was accidently destroyed by a collision with a dead Russian satellite.33 The U.S. company, Iridium, was able to minimize any loss of service by implementing a network solution within a few days.34 As of early 2011, no legal action had been taken by the company either because it is not clear who was at fault or because it might be politically problematic for the United States, which is trying to enter into bi-lateral transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBM) with Russia regarding space activities.35 Since August of 2010, North Korea has been intermittently using GPS jamming equipment, which reportedly has been interfering with U.S. and South Korean military operations and civilian use south of the North Korean border.36 Reportedly, only South Korea and the United Nations International Telecommunications Union—at the request of South Korea—have issued letters to Pyongyang demanding the cessation of disruptive communications signals in South Korea.37

It appears that the only time the U.S. military has responded with force to a disruption in U.S. space capabilities was in 2003, a few days after the start of the Iraq war.38 According to U.S. officials, Iraq was using multiple GPS jammers—which supposedly did not affect military GPS functionality. However, the U.S. military bombed the jammers anyway after a diplomatic complaint to Russia.39 The use of military force against the GPS jamming threat was possibly because the United States was already intervening in Iraq, and the bombing probably would not have occurred if the United States was not at war.

### CASE—Adv 1

#### Pursuit of hegemony leads to Sino-Russia alliance and is unsustainable.

Porter, DPhil, 19

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

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

#### A strong Sino-Russian alliance combined with expanded US military presence ensures joint retaliation — that escalates to the use of nuclear force

Klare 18 – Professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College. (Michael T., “The Pentagon Is Planning a Three-Front ‘Long War’ Against China and Russia,” April 4, 2018, https://fpif.org/the-pentagon-is-planning-a-three-front-long-war-against-china-and-russia/)//sy

In relatively swift fashion, American military leaders have followed up their claim that the U.S. is in a new long war by sketching the outlines of a containment line that would stretch from the Korean Peninsula around Asia across the Middle East into parts of the former Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and finally to the Scandinavian countries. Under their plan, American military forces — reinforced by the armies of trusted allies — should garrison every segment of this line, a grandiose scheme to block hypothetical advances of Chinese and Russian influence that, in its global reach, should stagger the imagination. Much of future history could be shaped by such an outsized effort. Questions for the future include whether this is either a sound strategic policy or truly sustainable. Attempting to contain China and Russia in such a manner will undoubtedly provoke countermoves, some undoubtedly difficult to resist, including cyber attacks and various kinds of economic warfare. And if you imagined that a war on terror across huge swaths of the planet represented a significant global overreach for a single power, just wait. Maintaining large and heavily-equipped forces on three extended fronts will also prove exceedingly costly and will certainly conflict with domestic spending priorities and possibly provoke a divisive debate over the reinstatement of the draft. However, the real question — unasked in Washington at the moment — is: Why pursue such a policy in the first place? Are there not other ways to manage the rise of China and Russia’s provocative behavior? What appears particularly worrisome about this three-front strategy is its immense capacity for confrontation, miscalculation, escalation, and finally actual war rather than simply grandiose war planning. At multiple points along this globe-spanning line — the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, Syria, the South China Sea, and the East China Sea, to name just a few — forces from the U.S. and China or Russia are already in significant contact, often jostling for position in a potentially hostile manner. At any moment, one of these encounters could provoke a firefight leading to unintended escalation and, in the end, possibly all-out combat. From there, almost anything could happen, even the use of nuclear weapons. Clearly, officials in Washington should be thinking hard before committing Americans to a strategy that will make this increasingly likely and could turn what is still long-war planning into an actual long war with deadly consequences.

#### Pursuit of heg ensures war with Iran.

Ghoreishi 6/8 Shahed Ghoreishi [a U.S. foreign policy analyst, focusing on U.S. grand strategy and the Middle East. He’s previously published pieces for the Huffington Post, the Atlantic, and CSIS’s cogitASIA program. He graduated from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies with concentrations in American foreign policy and Middle East studies], May 08, 2019, "Bolton, Iran, and Hegemonic Hubris," LobeLog, <https://lobelog.com/bolton-iran-and-hegemonic-hubris/> SM

Bolton, Iran, And Hegemonic Hubris MAY 8, 2019GUEST CONTRIBUTOR 7 COMMENTS John Bolton (Gage Skidmore via Flickr) by Shahed Ghoreishi On Sunday, National Security Advisor John Bolton announced that the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln and Air Force bombers were rerouted to the Persian Gulf because of “new threats” emanating from Iran and its Shiite militias in Iraq and Syria. U.S. officials have privately declared that the vague intelligence, which Israel apparently passed to the United States, is “completely blown out of proportion.” As Vali Nasr, dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, told The New York Times, “in the absence of some solid evidence about what triggered this action, it feels like the U.S. is picking and choosing what it considers a threat.” The threat inflation of Iran, a country with a far smaller defense budget than its neighbors, attracts the attention of hawks like Bolton for one specific reason. They want to prevent Iran from becoming a legitimate, independent power outside the U.S. orbit. In their view, this requires capitulation or regime change. It is the latest example of America’s hegemonic hubris. Bolton’s view of the world is a mix of what realist scholar Stephen Walt calls “hegemonic hubris” with a dash of hawkish unilateralism. According to Walt, the post-Cold War era was one of “hubristic fantasy,” leading the foreign policy elite to “believe they had the right, the responsibility, and the wisdom to shape political arrangements in every corner of the world.” Mix in Bolton’s hatred of multilateralism and it’s a recipe for strategic disaster. There’s a reason why Bolton framed the executive order President Trump signed that pulled United States out of the Iran nuclear deal (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA). It’s everything Bolton stands for. It’s also a complete refutation of President Obama’s foreign policy doctrine on the Middle East. Whereas the United States mostly accepted Russia and China as independent powers worthy of engagement, Iran had largely remained a pariah since its revolution in 1979. The Obama administration wanted to change that by pursuing diplomacy. The successful result, the JCPOA, could have become a diplomatic foundation to discuss other issues and might have led the United States to accept Iran’s role in its region. In such a case, the United States could have pursued offshore balancing in the Middle East and pivot away, allowing Saudi Arabia and Iran, in President Obama’s own words, to “share the region.” In other words, the JCPOA was an attempt to refocus U.S. foreign policy on more pressing issues, like the major role China is now playing on the global stage, while avoiding another costly Middle Eastern quagmire. Bolton, on the other hand, views the United States as a unilateral hegemon that can pressure any country, small or large, as desired. He has threatened not only Iran (“bomb Iran”), but also Venezuela, Cuba, and North Korea. However, this is an outdated and misplaced take on U.S. power. After Bolton rerouted the United States towards confronting Iran, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani announced reduced compliance with the JCPOA. This outcome is not in the interest of the United States. It undermines U.S. allies, handicaps global disarmament efforts, and limits U.S. strategic flexibility in the Middle East by locking in relations with intransigent allies. Meanwhile, regular Iranians are the real victims of this strategy. The Trump administration’s “maximum pressure” strategy against Iran has caused the country’s economy to shrink by 3.9 percent in 2018 and inflation to skyrocket to 31 percent. The costs of red meat and poultry, cheese and eggs, and vegetables increased by 57 percent, 37 percent, and 47 percent respectively. The economy is expected to shrink another 6 percent in 2019. If Iran’s human rights track record were an honest concern, then the Trump administration would realize that sanctions only make the situation worse for regular Iranians. By limiting the country’s access to foreign markets, for instance, the United States is strengthening the Revolutionary Guard’s influence over the economy. If Iran’s foreign policy were the main concern, then the Trump administration would have stayed in the JCPOA as a way to address outstanding concerns all while not undermining an agreement that prevents Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. Instead, the Trump administration’s foreign policy team demands regime change. As a senior Trump foreign policy official puts it: “we can collapse their economy – it’s not that difficult. But it’s up to the Iranian people.” This is not moral leadership. It’s not even a strategy. It’s economic torture. It also won’t work. As veteran diplomat William Burns explains in Foreign Policy, “false assumptions about how a muscular, unilateralist U.S. approach can produce the capitulation or implosion of this Iranian regime, which I think is an assumption untethered to history.”

#### Conflict escalates – heg creates a self-fulfilling prophecy that puts both countries on edge and means even small conflicts become deadly.

Giglio 19 Mike Giglio, 7-23-2019, "Iran Is Acting Like the International Villain of Trump’s Prophecy," Atlantic, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/07/dangers-multiply-us-iran-standoff/594505/> SM

Iran Is Acting Like the International Villain of Trump’s Prophecy Any number of relatively mundane scenarios now have the potential to escalate U.S.-Iran tensions—from a fire at a militia base to the seizure of an oil tanker to the signal-jamming of a drone. MIKE GIGLIO JUL 23, 2019 2 more free articles this month Sign in Subscribe Now A military speedboat sails close to a tanker. A boat of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard sails close to Stena Impero, the British-flagged tanker recently seized by IranFARS NEWS AGENCY / WANA VIA REUTERS It was an explosion at an Iran-aligned Shiite militia base in an obscure corner of Iraq—at worst, it could have had global implications, by plunging the United States and Iran into a dangerous new round of escalation. The speculation on social media about the incident last week was rife: Perhaps it was a U.S. or Israeli air strike against Iranian weapons or proxies. On the heels of the U.S. downing of an Iranian drone in the Strait of Hormuz, either seemed possible, especially since Iraq’s militia already had the potential to become the next flashpoint in the U.S.-Iran crisis. The fevered conjecture even led the U.S. to issue a statement, saying Washington was not involved in the incident. The reports that emerged in the following hours and days suggested more mundane scenarios. The Iraqi military said the base had been hit by a grenade dropped from a drone—a relatively unsophisticated style of attack that ISIS often deploys and that anyone with a consumer drone and some mechanical skill could carry out. Then, on Monday, an Iraqi media report said the militia had launched its own investigation into the explosion and determined it was caused by a fire. The confusion over the explosion—and the fact that such an obscure event came into such intense focus in the first place—underlines the unease now gripping the region. A tangled web of actors and incidents, from Iranian proxies in Iraq to the seizure of oil tankers and destruction of military drones in the Persian Gulf, now holds the potential for the next escalation. It might even be sparked by an ISIS militant flying a drone overnight, the artificial intelligence running a drone-jamming system aboard a U.S. warship, or a random fire. Michael Pregent, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute who worked as a U.S. intelligence officer in Iraq, told me that Iran-linked militia members in the country are indeed “fearful of U.S. air strikes inside Iraq against their bases,” which would be an unprecedented escalation. (U.S. strikes in Iraq exclusively target ISIS). At the same time, bases housing U.S. troops in Iraq have occasionally been subject to murky rocket and mortar attacks in which the perpetrators haven’t been clearly identified. “These types of attacks can be attributed to whatever group the Iraqi government says committed the attack,” Pregent said. All of this is taking place against the backdrop of very real Iranian escalations. Iranian forces shot down a U.S. drone in June, nearly provoking a U.S. response that Trump reportedly canceled at the last minute. Iran then used its own drone to harass the USS Boxer in the Strait of Hormuz, prompting the U.S. to bring down the drone. Iran later broadcast footage of the Boxer, filmed either by that drone or another one, in an apparent taunt. (Keeping up its aggressive posture, Iran also claimed to have captured more than a dozen CIA spies and sentenced some to death, though Trump was quick to deny this.) Iran also seized a UAE-based tanker in the Strait of Hormuz on Thursday and a British-flagged tanker on Friday. MORE STORIES The Atlantic Politics Daily: This Was Not a Trump-Kim Summit SHAN WANG Kim Myong Gil stands on the steps of the North Korean embassy holding a paper. On North Korea, the Chickens Are Coming Home to Roost URI FRIEDMAN Trump Is Killing a Fatally Flawed Syria Policy KATHY GILSINAN A U.S. soldier watches Syrian Democratic Forces raise a flag in the background. The Danger of Abandoning Our Partners JOSEPH VOTEL ELIZABETH DENT Those incidents remind Tobias Schneider, a research fellow at the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin, of the so-called Tanker Wars of the 1980s, in which, during the disastrous Iran-Iraq War, both sides began targeting the shipping interests of their rival and its allies, eventually drawing Gulf countries and then the U.S. Navy into the conflict. “There is historical precedent for Iranian brinkmanship,” he told me. “In the first Tanker Wars in the late ’80s, the [Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy] consistently escalated, even in the face of U.S.-led international convoys, up to the point where they went after the naval escorts.” Iran only backed down, Schneider added, after the U.S. military “heavily retaliated with Operation Praying Mantis,” sinking five Iranian vessels and killing more than 50 Iranians. (America’s downing of the civilian airliner Iran Air Flight 655 also factored into Iran’s decision to de-escalate, he noted.) The Iranian seizure of the U.K. vessel last week came after Britain’s seizure of an Iranian oil tanker near the Strait of Gibraltar earlier this month. That vessel, U.K. authorities said, was carrying crude to Syria in violation of EU sanctions against Bashar al-Assad’s regime. Yet Iranian leadership, Schneider told me, appears to view the U.K. seizure “not as enforcement of EU sanctions but as a British accession to the Trump administration’s ‘maximum pressure’ campaign.” Read: The woman at the center of Trump’s Iran policy Iran’s reaction points to a key development that might be easy to miss amid the day-to-day escalations: Washington’s campaign of maximum pressure appears to be succeeding in driving Iran’s leadership to act like the international deviants the Trump administration has long made them out to be. Ever since Secretary of State Mike Pompeo took his post in April 2018, he has insisted that the world’s problems with Iran extend beyond the nuclear issue to a wide range of global troublemaking. After Trump pulled out from the Obama administration’s nuclear deal with Iran, America’s European allies remained signatories—and European leaders tended to paint Iran as the victim of the Trump administration’s increasing confrontationalism. (To be sure, European leaders, like the Obama administration, recognized the problems of Iran’s support for proxy groups and missile development, but argued that they could be addressed outside the nuclear deal.) Yet now Iran is fulfilling the prophecy of itself as a villain on the world stage, planning attacks against regime opponents in Europe and harassing international vessels in clear violation of international law. After seizing the British tanker, Iran released footage of armed soldiers rappelling down from a helicopter to board it, along with a video of an Iranian flag flying over the ship. Iran’s calculation may be that such hostilities can create more daylight between the U.S. and its allies, but its aggression may end up having the opposite effect

—U.K. Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, an advocate of the nuclear deal, has condemned Iran’s seizure of the tanker and said yesterday that he would create a joint European maritime mission to address continued Iranian threats in the Persian Gulf. If Iran continues on that path, vows from Democratic presidential candidates to reenter the nuclear deal if elected in 2020 may be ever more unlikely. “Iran is not making it easier for European states to invest political capital in trying to uphold the [nuclear deal] and legitimate trade with Tehran,” Schneider told me. Read: The three myths of the Iran deal The issue, as ever with the Trump administration’s maximum-pressure campaign, is where it will lead. Now that the U.S. looks again like the grown-up in the room vis-à-vis Iran, will it use its new political capital to strengthen its hand and bring about concessions? Or will the hard-liners in Trump’s orbit see the end game as something else—perhaps getting Iran to one day take the kind of escalation that could justify a U.S. military strike and pull America down the road into an open-ended conflict?

#### War with Iran is devastating – new military tech, oil volatility, and great power drawn in.

Haltiwanger 19 John Haltiwanger [BA in History from St. Mary's College of Maryland and an MSc in International Relations from the University of Glasgow], 9-19-2019, "Trump and Iran may be on the brink of a war that would likely be devastating to both sides," Business Insider, <https://www.businessinsider.com/trump-iran-near-brink-of-a-war-that-would-likely-devastate-both-sides-2019-5> SM

Trump and Iran may be on the brink of a war that would likely be devastating to both sides John Haltiwanger Sep 19, 2019, 6:53 AM rouhani donald trump iran us war conflict Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and US President Donald Trump. Sergei Chirikov/Pool via REUTERS; GOL/Capital Pictures/MediaPunch/AP Analysis banner The US could be near the brink of war with Iran again after months of rising tensions. An attack on two major oil fields in Saudi Arabia has top Trump administration officials and Republicans in Congress drumming up calls for a military response. As the US and Saudis consider retaliatory strikes, Iran's foreign minister warned that any attack could lead to "all-out war." A war with Iran would likely be geopolitically and economically disastrous while further destabilizing a region that has been consumed by conflict for years. Visit Insider's homepage for more stories. Tensions between the US and Iran have reached historic heights in recent months, prompting fears of a military confrontation that could escalate into all-out war. Here's a breakdown of what's going on, how we got here, and what the stakes are. What's going on with Iran? In May, the US deployed military assets to the Middle East to counter threats from Iran. This was around the same time US sanctions meant to choke out Iran's oil revenue went into full effect. Within weeks, oil tankers in the region were attacked, which the US blamed on Iran. The US said Iran used naval mines to sabotage the tankers. Iran also seized oil tankers, which further increased tensions. In late June, Iran shot down a US Navy drone, which nearly prompted a military response from President Donald Trump. Trump called off the retaliatory strike at the last minute, however, stating it would not have been proportionate to the downing of an unmanned aircraft. In the time since, the US has continued to issue economic sanctions as Trump has occasionally flirted with the idea of holding talks with Iran. Read more: Iran could be risking war over the Saudi oil fields because it deliberately wants to spike up the price of oil Meanwhile, Iran in recent months took several major steps away from the 2015 nuclear deal orchestrated by the Obama administration, raising concerns among European countries who were also signatories to the crumbling agreement. Iran has taken such actions in an effort to gain leverage and relief from US sanctions, but has not had much success. For a brief window, it seemed possible that Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani might meet to find a way to end the stalemate, but Iran has ruled out any talks unless the US lifts sanctions and returns to the 2015 nuclear deal. Trump pulled the US out of the deal in May 2018, and US-Iran relations have deteriorated ever since. The situation has escalated significantly in recent days following attacks on two major oil facilities in Saudi Arabia on September 14, which disrupted the global oil supply. Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen claimed responsibility, but both the US and Saudi Arabia have implicated Tehran. Top Republicans in Congress and key US officials, including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, have described the incident as an act of war by Iran against Saudi Arabia. Former US officials and foreign policy experts say the signs point to Iran as the culprit, but neither Washington nor Riyadh have presented definitive evidence that Tehran is responsible for the oil field attacks. Shortly after the incident, Trump tweeted that the US was "locked and loaded," indicating that a US military response could be on the horizon. He's since walked back on that somewhat, and said he's not interested in going to war. Trump on Wednesday also announced a new wave of sanctions against Iran. But Trump is surrounded by advisers and politicians who are hawkish and fiercely anti-Iran, which is raising anxieties in Washington and beyond about the potential for conflict. Meanwhile, Iran's foreign minister Javad Zarif on Thursday warned that a US or Saudi military strike against his country would lead to "all-out war." "I make a very serious statement about defending our country. I am making a very serious statement that we don't want to engage in a military confrontation," Zarif told CNN. "We won't blink to defend our territory." How did we get here? The US and Iran have a complicated history and have been adversaries for decades, encapsulated in the oft-repeated "Death to America" chants from Iranian leaders. In many ways, the modern US-Iran relationship began via a CIA-orchestrated coup in the 1950s that placed a pro-American monarch — Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi — in charge of the Middle Eastern country. The shah was overthrown in the 1979 Islamic Revolution, an uprising that shook the foundations of the Muslim world and led to the infamous hostage crisis at the US embassy in Tehran that continues to be a touchy subject in Washington. SPONSORED BY MERRILL Bulletin: Market-Savvy Merrill Need a Weekly Dose of Finance-Savvy? Check Out The Bulletin VISIT SITE Advertisement Read more: CIA predicted the Iran crisis that spiraled out of Trump pulling the US from the 2015 nuclear deal After years of animosity, former President Barack Obama sought to improve relations with Iran via diplomacy. Obama's administration orchestrated the landmark pact known as the Iran nuclear deal, which was finalized in July 2015 and hoped to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons in exchange for the easing of economic sanctions. Critics of the deal said it didn't go far enough to bar Iran from building nuclear weapons and that Tehran could not be trusted. Along these lines, Trump withdrew the US from the deal in May 2018 despite having no evidence Iran was violating its terms. This move put Washington at odds with key allies, and the already contentious US-Iran relationship took a turn for the worse. The situation was hardly improved after Trump in April designated Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard Corps as a foreign terror organization. This prompted Iranian leaders to warn that any action taken against the country would lead to "a reciprocal action." The Trump administration in April also announced it would move to block all countries from buying Iran's oil on top of the sanctions already crippling the Iranian economy. ADVERTISING inRead invented by Teads The US and Iran have also been working against one another in the ongoing war in Yemen, where the US-backed Saudi-led coalition is fighting against the Iran-backed Houthi rebels. And in the ongoing Syria conflict, Iran and its proxies have supported Syrian President Bashar Assad, whose forces Trump has launched military strikes against. What are the stakes? A war with Iran would potentially be more calamitous than the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, which led to hundreds of thousands of deaths, bogged the US down in a costly and lengthy war, and helped catalyze the rise of the Islamic State group. Iran has a population of about 82 million people, and its military is ranked as the 14th most powerful. According to recent estimates, Iran has 523,000 active military personnel in addition to 250,000 reserve personnel. Comparatively, Iraq had a population of about 25 million people, and the Iraqi military had fewer than 450,000 personnel when the US invaded over a decade ago. Iran is also much bigger than Iraq geographically. It has 591,000 square miles of land versus Iraq's 168,000 square miles, and its influence has grown as the power of its rival Iraq collapsed in the wake of the US war there. If the US launched an attack against Iran, it would also reverberate across the Middle East. Iran has proxies throughout the region and is allied with militant groups, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon. A revised Pentagon estimate released in April found Iranian proxy forces killed at least 608 US troops in Iraq between 2003 and 2011. Read more: How the Trump administration got into a showdown with Iran that could lead to war Moreover, Iran shares a border with a number of countries the US considers allies and has a military presence in — including Turkey, Iraq, and Afghanistan. None of these countries are especially stable at the moment, as they all continue to deal with ongoing conflicts and their consequences (including millions of displaced people). In terms of other geopolitical blowback, Iran is allied with Russia and China, and it's unclear how these major powers might react if conflict breaks out. Key US allies such as Israel and Saudi Arabia, which are adversaries of Iran and just a stone's throw away from it, would also likely get sucked into a US-Iran war. A war with Iran could also be extraordinarily disruptive economically, given it borders the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow route that roughly one-third of the world's oil-tanker traffic travels through. Experts have predicted that if the route were blocked, it would quickly lead to a 30% drop in daily global oil exports, and prices would rapidly go up, The Washington Post reported. Iran's forces would likely be defeated by the US but could exact a heavy toll with cruise missiles, naval mines, and fighter jets. Any troops that survive could blend into the population and lead a brutal insurgency against the US occupation force. That was the scenario that unfolded for the US in Iraq, a country one-third the size of Iran, and proved to be an insurmountable challenge. In short, though the US has a military that is consistently ranked the most powerful, evidence suggests a war with Iran would be devastating in myriad ways.

#### Concede transition causes prolif.

Keck 14 Zachary Keck is Managing Editor of The Diplomat, The Diplomat, January 24, 2014, “America’s Relative Decline: Should We Panic?”, http://thediplomat.com/2014/01/americas-relative-decline-should-we-panic/

Regardless of your opinion on U.S. global leadership over the last two decades, however, there is good reason to fear its relative decline compared with China and other emerging nations. To begin with, hegemonic transition periods have historically been the most destabilizing eras in history. This is not only because of the malign intentions of the rising and established power(s). Even if all the parties have benign, peaceful intentions, the rise of new global powers necessitates revisions to the “rules of the road.” This is nearly impossible to do in any organized fashion given the anarchic nature of the international system, where there is no central authority that can govern interactions between states. We are already starting to see the potential dangers of hegemonic transition periods in the Asia-Pacific (and arguably the Middle East). As China grows more economically and militarily powerful, it has unsurprisingly sought to expand its influence in East Asia. This necessarily has to come at the expense of other powers, which so far has primarily meant the U.S., Japan, Vietnam and the Philippines. Naturally, these powers have sought to resist Chinese encroachments on their territory and influence, and the situation grows more tense with each passing day. Should China eventually emerge as a global power, or should nations in other regions enjoy a similar rise as Kenny suggests, this situation will play itself out elsewhere in the years and decades ahead. All of this highlights some of the advantages of a unipolar system. Namely, although the U.S. has asserted military force quite frequently in the post-Cold War era, it has only fought weak powers and thus its wars have been fairly limited in terms of the number of casualties involved. At the same time, America’s preponderance of power has prevented a great power war, and even restrained major regional powers from coming to blows. For instance, the past 25 years haven’t seen any conflicts on par with the Israeli-Arab or Iran-Iraq wars of the Cold War. As the unipolar era comes to a close, the possibility of great power conflict and especially major regional wars rises dramatically. The world will also have to contend with conventionally inferior powers like Japan acquiring nuclear weapons to protect their interests against their newly empowered rivals. But even if the transitions caused by China’s and potentially other nations’ rises are managed successfully, there are still likely to be significant negative effects on international relations. In today’s “globalized” world, it is commonly asserted that many of the defining challenges of our era can only be solved through multilateral cooperation. Examples of this include climate change, health pandemics, organized crime and terrorism, global financial crises, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, among many others. A unipolar system, for all its limitations, is uniquely suited for organizing effective global action on these transnational issues. This is because there is a clear global leader who can take the initiative and, to some degree, compel others to fall in line. In addition, the unipole’s preponderance of power lessens the intensity of competition among the global players involved. Thus, while there are no shortages of complaints about the limitations of global governance today, there is no question that global governance has been many times more effective in the last 25 years than it was during the Cold War.

#### Prolif leads to less war – empirics and models

Shellenberger 18 (Michael, cofounder of Breakthrough Institute and founder of Environmental Progress + energy/environment contributor @ Forbes, "Who Are We To Deny Weak Nations The Nuclear Weapons They Need For Self-Defense?," https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelshellenberger/2018/08/06/who-are-we-to-deny-weak-nations-the-nuclear-weapons-they-need-for-self-defense/#2e81b15b522f)

The widespread assumption is that the more nations have nuclear weapons, the more dangerous the world will be. But is that really the case? I don’t ask this question lightly. I come from a long line of Christian pacifists and conscientious objectors and earned a degree in peace studies from a Quaker college. I have had nightmares about nuclear war since I was a boy and today live in California, which is more vulnerable to a North Korean missile than Washington, D.C. — at least for now. But it is impossible not to be struck by these facts: No nation with a nuclear weapon has ever been invaded by another nation. The number of deaths in battle worldwide has declined 95 percent in the 70 years since the invention and spread of nuclear weapons; The number of Indian and Pakistani civilian and security forces’ deaths in two disputed territories declined 95 percent after Pakistan’s first nuclear weapons test in 1998. In 1981, the late political scientist Kenneth Waltz published an essay titled, “The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better.” In it he argued that nuclear weapons are revolutionary in allowing weaker nations to protect themselves from more powerful ones. International relations is “a realm of anarchy as opposed to hierarchy… of self-help… you’re on your own,” Waltz explained. How do nuclear weapons work? Not “through the ability to defend but through the ability to punish...The message of a deterrent strategy is this,” explained Waltz. “‘Although we are defenceless, if you attack we will punish you to an extent that more than cancels your gains.’” Does anybody believe France should give up its nuclear weapons? Certainly not the French. After President Barack Obama in 2009 called for eliminating nuclear weapons, not a single other nuclear nation endorsed the idea. All of this raises the question: if nuclear weapons protect weak nations from foreign invasion, why shouldn’t North Korea and Iran get them? Why Nuclear Weapons Make Us Peaceful On January 29, 2002, President George W. Bush denounced Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an “axis of evil.” North Korea was “arming with missiles,” he said. Iran “aggressively pursues these weapons” and the “Iraqi regime has plotted to develop...nuclear weapons for over a decade.” One year later, the U.S. invaded and occupied Iraq. The ensuing conflict resulted in the deaths of over 450,000 people — about four times as many as were killed at Hiroshima — and a five-fold increase in terrorist killings in the Middle East and Africa. It all came at a cost of $2.4 trillion dollars. Now, 16 years later, U.S. officials insist that North Korea and Iran need not fear a U.S. invasion. But why would any nation — particularly North Korea and Iran — believe them? Not only did the U.S. overthrow Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein after he gave up his nuclear weapons program, it also helped overthrow Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 after he too had given up the pursuit of a nuclear weapon. North Korean President Kim Jong-un may, quite understandably, see his own life at stake: Hussein was hanged and Gaddafi was tortured and killed. Both hawks and doves say North Korea and Iran must not be allowed to have a weapon because both regimes are brutal, but nuclear weapons make nations more peaceful over time. There were three full-scale wars before India and Pakistan acquired the bomb and only far more limited conflicts since. And China became dramatically less bellicose after acquiring the bomb. Why? “History shows that when countries acquire the bomb, they feel increasingly vulnerable,” notes Waltz, “and become acutely aware that their nuclear weapons make them a potential target in the eyes of major powers. This awareness discourages nuclear states from bold and aggressive action.” Is it really so difficult to imagine that a nuclear-armed North Korea and Iran might follow the same path toward moderation as China, India, and Pakistan? Nuclear weapons are revolutionary in that they require the ruling class to have skin in the game. When facing off against nuclear-armed nations, elites can no longer sacrifice the poor and weak in their own country without risking their lives.

#### Decline has popularized restraint – a bipartisan coalition formed to avoid the failures of liberal hegemony

Ashford 21 Emma Ashford is a Senior Fellow at the New American Engagement Initiative at the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security, September/October 2021, "Strategies of Restraint," Foreign Affairs, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-08-24/strategies-restraint> mvp

For nearly three decades after the end of the Cold War, U.S. foreign policy was characterized by a bipartisan consensus: that as the world’s “indispensable nation” and with no competitor, the United States had little choice but to pursue a transformational agenda on the world stage. Over the last few years, however, that consensus has collapsed. A growing chorus of voices are advocating a strategy of restraint—a less activist approach that focuses on diplomatic and economic engagement over military intervention. And they have found a receptive audience.

In that, they have undoubtedly been helped by circumstance: the United States’ failed “war on terror,” the rise of China, and growing partisan polarization at home have all made it clear that U.S. foreign policy cannot simply remain on autopilot. Even those who continue to argue for an interventionist approach to the world typically acknowledge that their strategy must be shorn of its worst excesses. Where restraint was once excluded from the halls of power and confined largely to academic journals, now some of its positions have become official policy.

Although President Donald Trump’s record was defined by dysfunction more than any coherent strategy, he did wind down the war in Afghanistan, raise doubts about the value of U.S. alliances in Europe and Asia, and question the wisdom of military intervention and democracy promotion. President Joe Biden, for his part, has begun withdrawing U.S. troops from Afghanistan, has initiated a review of the United States’ global military posture, and has taken steps to stabilize the U.S.-Russian relationship. In 2019, Jake Sullivan, now Biden’s national security adviser, wrote, “The U.S. must get better at seeing both the possibilities and the limits of American power.” That this sentiment is now openly embraced at the highest levels of government is nothing short of a win for those who have long called for a more restrained U.S. foreign policy.

Yet victory also raises a question: Where do restrainers go from here? With Washington having dialed down the war on terrorism, the most politically popular of their demands has been achieved. Now, they are liable to face an uphill battle over the rest of U.S. foreign policy, such as how to treat allies or what to do about China—issues that have little public salience or on which the restrainers are divided. Although often bundled together by Washington’s foreign policy elites and derided as isolationists, the members of the restraint community include a diversity of voices, running the gamut from left-wing antiwar activists to hard-nosed conservative realists. It should not be surprising that they disagree on much.

If the restraint camp focuses on what divides them rather than what unites them, then it will find itself consumed with internecine battles and excluded from decision-making at the very moment its influence could be at its height. But there is a viable consensus, a path forward for restraint that can achieve the most important goals, alienate the fewest members of the coalition, and win new converts. This more pragmatic strategy, which would entail the gradual lessening of U.S. military commitments, would not achieve the most ambitious of the restrainers’ goals. But it has the best chance of moving U.S. foreign policy in a more secure and more popular direction.

A DEBATE REBORN

The idea that the United States is uniquely qualified to reshape the world has manifested itself in different ways in the 30 years since the collapse of the Soviet Union marked the end of a bipolar world. Humanitarian intervention, democracy promotion, and counterterrorism—all were attempts to mold the world according to American preferences. Yet the unipolar moment has largely failed to live up to expectations. Today, democracy is in decline, there are more state-level conflicts than at any time since 1990, the war on terrorism has largely failed, and China’s rise has given the lie to the notion that the United States can prevent the emergence of peer competitors. Washington’s foreign policy community now appears to accept the need for a course correction, although it remains divided on the specifics.

Today, opinion is increasingly coalescing around three distinct views. The first of these is a modified form of liberal internationalism, the school of thought that believes that U.S. leadership is a stabilizing force in the world, emphasizes militarized deterrence, and has faith in a liberal, rules-based international order. Proponents of this approach often frame threats from China and Russia as threats to this order rather than as threats to concrete U.S. security interests. Yet the strain of this view dominant today is also, at least in theory, a softer, reformed version of the post–Cold War consensus, one that takes into account critiques of recent U.S. foreign policy and rejects parts of the war on terrorism.

Because they are more aware of the limits of American power than their predecessors, advocates of this view are best described as liberal internationalists, rather than liberal interventionists. The scholars Mira Rapp-Hooper and Rebecca Lissner—both of whom now serve on the National Security Council—belong to this camp. As they wrote in these pages in 2019, “Rather than wasting its still considerable power on quixotic bids to restore the liberal order or remake the world in its own image, the United States should focus on what it can realistically achieve.”

Restrainers have not offered a coherent alternative to today’s foreign policy.

Another alternative has percolated out of the synthesis of the Republican foreign policy establishment and the Trump administration: a form of belligerent unilateralism that prioritizes maintaining U.S. military primacy. This “America first” approach to the world is also a clear successor to the old consensus, but one that privileges power over diplomacy and U.S. interests over a liberal order. Like their liberal internationalist counterparts, the America firsters—both Trump administration alumni and more mainstream Republican foreign policy hands—have absorbed the notion that U.S. foreign policy has become unpopular, particularly among the GOP base. They have therefore shifted from democracy promotion and nation building toward a militarized global presence more akin to classic imperial policing.

They also reject some of the core liberal components of the old consensus, spurning diplomacy and arms control, fetishizing sovereignty, and preferring American solutions to global problems over multilateral solutions. For them, the liberal order is a mirage. As Nadia Schadlow, a veteran of the Trump White House, wrote in these pages in 2020, “Washington must let go of old illusions, move past the myths of liberal internationalism, and reconsider its views about the nature of the world order.”

Both approaches to the world are still problematic. A rebooted liberal internationalism may succeed at rehabilitating the United States’ image, but it is unlikely to advance democracy or build a unified liberal order through nonmilitary means when military ones have failed. And as the global balance of power shifts, liberal internationalism simultaneously overestimates the contributions that U.S. allies can make to collective defense and underestimates the differences they have with Washington. The “America first” approach, for its part, may yield short-term dividends—Trump, after all, was able to force U.S. allies to abide by sanctions on Iran and renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement—but it has diminishing returns. The more the United States uses coercive tools against other countries, the more they will look for ways to blunt those tools. And both approaches lean heavily on a forward U.S. military presence in ways that could all too easily trigger an unplanned conflict, particularly in Asia.

The remaining alternative, restraint, comes from outside the Washington policymaking world and is largely focused on these flaws. It is far more ideologically diverse than the other two, but most restrainers agree on several core principles. They share a conviction that the United States is a remarkably secure nation, that unlike many great powers in history, it faces no real threat of invasion, thanks to geography and nuclear weapons. They argue that U.S. foreign policy has been characterized in recent years by overreach and hubris, with predictably abysmal results. And they think U.S. foreign policy is overmilitarized, with policymakers spending too much on defense and too quickly resorting to force. Most important, advocates of restraint strike directly at the notion of the United States as the indispensable nation, considering it instead as but one among many global powers.

RESTRAINT’S MOMENT

The most common slap at restrainers is that they focus too much on criticism without offering plausible policy alternatives. That is not an entirely accurate evaluation; individual proponents of restraint have offered detailed prescriptions for everything from the war in Afghanistan to U.S.-Russian relations. But it is true that restrainers have often focused on what draws them together—namely, their shared criticisms of the status quo—rather than what would pull them apart: the question of which specific policies to implement instead. As restraint enters the mainstream conversation, the distinctions within this group are coming to the surface.

Restraint contains several different overlapping ideas. The first (and best defined) of these is an academic theory of grand strategy formulated by the political scientist Barry Posen in his 2014 book, Restraint. His version of restraint envisages a much smaller military based primarily within the United States. Other restrainers—such as the international relations theorists John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt—advocate a grand strategy of offshore balancing, a distinct but related approach that also calls for downsizing the United States’ global military role. (The distinction between the two is one of degree: Posen backs an entirely offshore military presence, whereas Mearsheimer and Walt admit that the United States may occasionally need to intervene to keep a hostile state from dominating a key region.) As grand strategies, both leave many granular policy details unstated, but they present internally coherent and fully formulated approaches to the world.

There is also a looser definition of “restraint.” Increasingly, the term is Washington shorthand for any proposal for a less militarized and activist foreign policy. That includes those put forth not just by academic realists but also by progressive Democrats and conservative Republicans in Congress, as well as various antiwar groups (such as Code Pink and the Friends Committee on National Legislation) and newer entrants into the antiwar space (such as the veterans’ group Common Defense). Thus, the term “restraint” is now used as often to signify this broader political movement as it is to describe a grand strategy.

Any movement that includes Mearsheimer and Code Pink is by necessity a big tent, and indeed, there are many motivations for restraint. For some, it might be a moral consideration: many libertarians believe that war grows the state, and anti-imperialists want to rein in what they see as an overbearing military-industrial complex. For others, the motivation is financial: although conservative deficit hawks are far less vocal on defense than on other issues, they exist, and many progressives and even some mainstream Democrats view cuts to military spending as an easy way to free up resources for infrastructure or social programs. For others in the restraint community, it is personal: some of the recent activism around ending the war on terrorism has been driven by veterans who are concerned about what the conflict has done to their fellow soldiers and to American society writ large. Then there are the strategists, for whom the pursuit of restraint is largely about avoiding the failures and risks of the current approach. There are even those who might be called “restraint-curious,” people who are open to a more restrained foreign policy on specific issues but reject the broader notion.

The result is a coalition that—much like its opposition—is broad and bipartisan, a partnership of the left and the right in which the two sides don’t agree with each other on much else. Consider the congressional activism around ending U.S. support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen, a movement that was spearheaded by two liberals, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Senator Chris Murphy, a Democrat from Connecticut, and two Republicans, Senators Rand Paul of Kentucky and Mike Lee of Utah. Or consider the strange bedfellows made by the war in Afghanistan. In the House of Representatives, advocates of withdrawal included Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, the standard-bearer of the Democratic Party’s left wing, and Matt Gaetz of Florida, a Republican devotee of Trump. The transpartisan nature of the coalition pushing for restraint is one of its core strengths.

#### Restraint works – only offshore balancing locks in primacy, ensures domestic development, and checks terrorism and proliferation

Walt & Mearsheimer 16 JOHN J. MEARSHEIMER is R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago. STEPHEN M. WALT is Robert and Renee Belfer Professor of International Affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School, July/August 2016, "The Case for Offshore Balancing," Foreign Affairs, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2016-06-13/case-offshore-balancing> mvp

Americans’ distaste for the prevailing grand strategy should come as no surprise, given its abysmal record over the past quarter century. In Asia, India, Pakistan, and North Korea are expanding their nuclear arsenals, and China is challenging the status quo in regional waters. In Europe, Russia has annexed Crimea, and U.S. relations with Moscow have sunk to new lows since the Cold War. U.S. forces are still fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq, with no victory in sight. Despite losing most of its original leaders, al Qaeda has metastasized across the region. The Arab world has fallen into turmoil—in good part due to the United States’ decisions to effect regime change in Iraq and Libya and its modest efforts to do the same in Syria—and the Islamic State, or ISIS, has emerged out of the chaos. Repeated U.S. attempts to broker Israeli-Palestinian peace have failed, leaving a two-state solution further away than ever. Meanwhile, democracy has been in retreat worldwide, and the United States’ use of torture, targeted killings, and other morally dubious practices has tarnished its image as a defender of human rights and international law.

The United States does not bear sole responsibility for all these costly debacles, but it has had a hand in most of them. The setbacks are the natural consequence of the misguided grand strategy of liberal hegemony that Democrats and Republicans have pursued for years. This approach holds that the United States must use its power not only to solve global problems but also to promote a world order based on international institutions, representative governments, open markets, and respect for human rights. As “the indispensable nation,” the logic goes, the United States has the right, responsibility, and wisdom to manage local politics almost everywhere. At its core, liberal hegemony is a revisionist grand strategy: instead of calling on the United States to merely uphold the balance of power in key regions, it commits American might to promoting democracy everywhere and defending human rights whenever they are threatened.

By husbanding U.S. strength, an offshore-balancing strategy would preserve U.S. primacy far into the future.

There is a better way. By pursuing a strategy of “offshore balancing,” Washington would forgo ambitious efforts to remake other societies and concentrate on what really matters: pre­serving U.S. dominance in the Western Hemisphere and countering potential hegemons in Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf. Instead of policing the world, the United States would encourage other countries to take the lead in checking rising powers, intervening itself only when necessary. This does not mean abandoning the United States’ position as the world’s sole superpower or retreating to “Fortress America.” Rather, by husbanding U.S. strength, offshore balancing would preserve U.S. primacy far into the future and safeguard liberty at home.

SETTING THE RIGHT GOALS

The United States is the luckiest great power in modern history. Other leading states have had to live with threatening adversaries in their own backyards—even the United Kingdom faced the prospect of an invasion from across the English Channel on several occasions—but for more than two centuries, the United States has not. Nor do distant powers pose much of a threat, because two giant oceans are in the way. As Jean-Jules Jusserand, the French ambassador to the United States from 1902 to 1924, once put it, “On the north, she has a weak neighbor; on the south, another weak neighbor; on the east, fish, and the west, fish.” Furthermore, the United States boasts an abundance of land and natural resources and a large and energetic population, which have enabled it to develop the world’s biggest economy and most capable military. It also has thousands of nuclear weapons, which makes an attack on the American homeland even less likely.

These geopolitical blessings give the United States enormous latitude for error; indeed, only a country as secure as it would have the temerity to try to remake the world in its own image. But they also allow it to remain powerful and secure without pursuing a costly and expansive grand strategy. Offshore balancing would do just that. Its principal concern would be to keep the United States as powerful as possible—ideally, the dominant state on the planet. Above all, that means main­taining hegemony in the Western Hemisphere.

Unlike isolationists, however, offshore balancers believe that there are regions outside the Western Hemisphere that are worth expending American blood and treasure to defend. Today, three other areas matter to the United States: Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf. The first two are key centers of industrial power and home to the world’s other great powers, and the third produces roughly 30 percent of the world’s oil.

In Europe and Northeast Asia, the chief concern is the rise of a regional hegemon that would dominate its region, much as the United States dominates the Western Hemisphere. Such a state would have abundant economic clout, the ability to develop sophisticated weaponry, the potential to project power around the globe, and perhaps even the wherewithal to outspend the United States in an arms race. Such a state might even ally with countries in the Western Hemisphere and interfere close to U.S. soil. Thus, the United States’ principal aim in Europe and Northeast Asia should be to maintain the regional balance of power so that the most powerful state in each region—for now, Russia and China, respectively—remains too worried about its neighbors to roam into the Western Hemisphere. In the Gulf, meanwhile, the United States has an interest in blocking the rise of a hegemon that could interfere with the flow of oil from that region, thereby damaging the world economy and threatening U.S. prosperity.

Offshore balancing is a realist grand strategy, and its aims are limited. Promoting peace, although desirable, is not among them. This is not to say that Washington should welcome conflict anywhere in the world, or that it cannot use diplomatic or economic means to discourage war. But it should not commit U.S. military forces for that purpose alone. Nor is it a goal of offshore balancing to halt genocides, such as the one that befell Rwanda in 1994. Adopting this strategy would not preclude such operations, however, provided the need is clear, the mission is feasible, and U.S. leaders are confident that intervention will not make matters worse.

HOW WOULD IT WORK?

Under offshore balancing, the United States would calibrate its military posture according to the distribution of power in the three key regions. If there is no potential hegemon in sight in Europe, Northeast Asia, or the Gulf, then there is no reason to deploy

ground or air forces there and little need for a large military establishment at home. And because it takes many years for any country to acquire the capacity to dominate its region, Washington would see it coming and have time to respond.

In that event, the United States should turn to regional forces as the first line of defense, letting them uphold the balance of power in their own neighborhood. Although Washington could provide assistance to allies and pledge to support them if they were in danger of being conquered, it should refrain from deploying large numbers of U.S. forces abroad. It may occasionally make sense to keep certain assets overseas, such as small military contingents, intelligence-gathering facilities, or prepositioned equipment, but in general, Washington should pass the buck to regional powers, as they have a far greater interest in preventing any state from dominating them.

If those powers cannot contain a potential hegemon on their own, however, the United States must help get the job done, deploying enough firepower to the region to shift the balance in its favor. Sometimes, that may mean sending in forces before war breaks out. During the Cold War, for example, the United States kept large numbers of ground and air forces in Europe out of the belief that Western European countries could not contain the Soviet Union on their own. At other times, the United States might wait to intervene after a war starts, if one side seems likely to emerge as a regional hegemon. Such was the case during both world wars: the United States came in only after Germany seemed likely to dominate Europe.

In essence, the aim is to remain offshore as long as possible, while recognizing that it is sometimes necessary to come onshore. If that happens, however, the United States should make its allies do as much of the heavy lifting as possible and remove its own forces as soon as it can.

Offshore balancing has many virtues. By limiting the areas the U.S. military was committed to defending and forcing other states to pull their own weight, it would reduce the resources Washington must devote to defense, allow for greater investment and consumption at home, and put fewer American lives in harm’s way. Today, allies routinely free-ride on American protection, a problem that has only grown since the Cold War ended. Within NATO, for example, the United States accounts for 46 percent of the alliance’s aggregate GDP yet contributes about 75 percent of its military spending. As the political scientist Barry Posen has quipped, “This is welfare for the rich.”

The aim is to remain offshore as long as possible, while recognizing that it is sometimes necessary to come onshore.

Offshore balancing would also reduce the risk of terrorism. Liberal hegemony commits the United States to spreading democracy in unfamiliar places, which sometimes requires military occupation and always involves interfering with local political arrangements. Such efforts invariably foster nationalist resentment, and because the opponents are too weak to confront the United States directly, they sometimes turn to terrorism. (It is worth remembering that Osama bin Laden was motivated in good part by the presence of U.S. troops in his homeland of Saudi Arabia.) In addition to inspiring terrorists, liberal hegemony facilitates their operations: using regime change to spread American values undermines local institutions and creates ungoverned spaces where violent extremists can flourish.

Offshore balancing would alleviate this problem by eschewing social engineering and minimizing the United States’ military foot­print. U.S. troops would be stationed on foreign soil only when a country was in a vital region and threatened by a would-be hegemon. In that case, the potential victim would view the United States as a savior rather than an occupier. And once the threat had been dealt with, U.S. military forces could go back over the horizon and not stay behind to meddle in local politics. By respecting the sovereignty of other states, offshore balancing would be less likely to foster anti-American terrorism.

A REASSURING HISTORY

Offshore balancing may seem like a radical strategy today, but it provided the guiding logic of U.S. foreign policy for many decades and served the country well. During the nineteenth century, the United States was preoccupied with expanding across North America, building a powerful state, and establishing hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. After it completed these tasks at the end of the century, it soon became interested in preserving the balance of power in Europe and Northeast Asia. Nonetheless, it let the great powers in those regions check one another, intervening militarily only when the balance of power broke down, as during both world wars.

During the Cold War, the United States had no choice but to go onshore in Europe and Northeast Asia, as its allies in those regions could not contain the Soviet Union by themselves. So Washington forged alliances and stationed military forces in both regions, and it fought the Korean War to contain Soviet influence in Northeast Asia.

In the Persian Gulf, however, the United States stayed offshore, letting the United Kingdom take the lead in preventing any state from dominating that oil-rich region. After the British announced their withdrawal from the Gulf in 1968, the United States turned to the shah of Iran and the Saudi monarchy to do the job. When the shah fell in 1979, the Carter administration began building the Rapid Deployment Force, an offshore military capability designed to prevent Iran or the Soviet Union from dominating the region. The Reagan administration aided Iraq during that country’s 1980–88 war with Iran for similar reasons. The U.S. military stayed offshore until 1990, when Saddam Hussein’s seizure of Kuwait threatened to enhance Iraq’s power and place Saudi Arabia and other Gulf oil producers at risk. To restore the regional balance of power, the George H. W. Bush admin­istration sent an expeditionary force to liberate Kuwait and smash Saddam’s military machine.

For nearly a century, in short, offshore balancing prevented the emergence of dangerous regional hegemons and pre­served a global balance of power that enhanced American security. Tellingly, when U.S. policymakers deviated from that strategy—as they did in Vietnam, where the United States had no vital interests—the result was a costly failure.

Events since the end of the Cold War teach the same lesson. In Europe, once the Soviet Union collapsed, the region no longer had a dominant power. The United States should have steadily reduced its military presence, cultivated amicable relations with Russia, and turned European security over to the Europeans. Instead, it expanded NATO and ignored Russian interests, helping spark the conflict over Ukraine and driving Moscow closer to China.

In the Middle East, likewise, the United States should have moved back offshore after the Gulf War and let Iran and Iraq balance each other. Instead, the Clinton administration adopted the policy of “dual containment,” which required keeping ground and air forces in Saudi Arabia to check Iran and Iraq simultaneously. The George W. Bush administration then adopted an even more ambitious strategy, dubbed “regional transformation,” which produced costly failures in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Obama administration repeated the error when it helped topple Muammar al-Qaddafi in Libya and when it exacerbated the chaos in Syria by insisting that Bashar al-Assad “must go” and backing some of his opponents. Abandoning offshore balancing after the Cold War has been a recipe for failure.

HEGEMONY’S HOLLOW HOPES

Defenders of liberal hegemony marshal a number of unpersuasive arguments to make their case. One familiar claim is that only vigorous U.S. leadership can keep order around the globe. But global leadership is not an end in itself; it is desirable only insofar as it benefits the United States directly.

One might further argue that U.S. leadership is necessary to overcome the collective-action problem of local actors failing to balance against a potential hegemon. Offshore balancing recognizes this danger, however, and calls for Washington to step in if needed. Nor does it prohibit Washington from giving friendly states in the key regions advice or material aid.

Other defenders of liberal hegemony argue that U.S. leadership is necessary to deal with new, transnational threats that arise from failed states, terrorism, criminal networks, refugee flows, and the like. Not only do the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans offer inadequate protection against these dangers, they claim, but modern military technology also makes it easier for the United States to project power around the world and address them. Today’s “global village,” in short, is more dan­gerous yet easier to manage.

This view exaggerates these threats and overstates Washington’s ability to eliminate them. Crime, terrorism, and similar problems can be a nuisance, but they are hardly existential threats and rarely lend themselves to military solutions. Indeed, constant interference in the affairs of other states—and especially repeated military interventions—generates local resentment and fosters corruption, thereby making these transnational dangers worse. The long-term solution to the problems can only be competent local governance, not heavy-handed U.S. efforts to police the world.

Nor is policing the world as cheap as defenders of liberal hegemony contend, either in dollars spent or in lives lost. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq cost between $4 trillion and $6 trillion and killed nearly 7,000 U.S. soldiers and wounded more than 50,000. Veterans of these conflicts exhibit high rates of depression and suicide, yet the United States has little to show for their sacrifices.

Defenders of the status quo also fear that offshore balancing would allow other states to replace the United States at the pinnacle of global power. On the contrary, the strategy would prolong the country’s domi­nance by refocusing its efforts on core goals. Unlike liberal hegemony, offshore balancing avoids squandering resources on costly and counterproductive crusades, which would allow the government to invest more in the long-term ingredients of power and prosperity: education, infrastructure, and research and development. Remember, the United States became a great power by staying out of foreign wars and building a world-class economy, which is the same strategy China has pursued over the past three decades. Meanwhile, the United States has wasted trillions of dollars and put its long-term primacy at risk.

Another argument holds that the U.S. military must garrison the world to keep the peace and preserve an open world economy. Retrenchment, the logic goes, would renew great-power competition, invite ruinous economic rivalries, and eventually spark a major war from which the United States could not remain aloof. Better to keep playing global policeman than risk a repeat of the 1930s.

Such fears are unconvincing. For starters, this argument assumes that deeper U.S. engagement in Europe would have prevented World War II, a claim hard to square with Adolf Hitler’s unshakable desire for war. Regional conflicts will sometimes occur no matter what Washington does, but it need not get involved unless vital U.S. interests are at stake. Indeed, the United States has sometimes stayed out of regional conflicts—such as the Russo-Japanese War, the Iran-Iraq War, and the current war in Ukraine—belying the claim that it inevitably gets dragged in. And if the country is forced to fight another great power, better to arrive late and let other countries bear the brunt of the costs. As the last major power to enter both world wars, the United States emerged stronger from each for having waited.

Furthermore, recent history casts doubt on the claim that U.S. leadership preserves peace. Over the past 25 years, Washington has caused or supported several wars in the Middle East and fueled minor conflicts elsewhere. If liberal hegemony is supposed to enhance global stability, it has done a poor job.

Nor has the strategy produced much in the way of economic benefits. Given its protected position in the Western Hemisphere, the United States is free to trade and invest wherever profitable opportu­nities exist. Because all countries have a shared interest in such activity, Washington does not need to play global policeman in order to remain economically engaged with others. In fact, the U.S. economy would be in better shape today if the government were not spending so much money trying to run the world.

Offshore balancing may seem like a radical strategy today, but it provided the guiding logic of U.S. foreign policy for many decades.

Proponents of liberal hegemony also claim that the United States must remain committed all over the world to prevent nuclear proliferation. If it reduces its role in key regions or withdraws entirely, the argument runs, countries accustomed to U.S. protection will have no choice but to protect themselves by obtaining nuclear weapons.

No grand strategy is likely to prove wholly successful at preventing proliferation, but offshore balancing would do a better job than liberal hegemony. After all, that strategy failed to stop India and Pakistan from ramping up their nuclear capabilities, North Korea from becoming the newest member of the nuclear club, and Iran from making major progress with its nuclear program. Countries usually seek the bomb because they fear being attacked, and U.S. efforts at regime change only heighten such concerns. By eschewing regime change and reducing the United States’ military footprint, offshore balancing would give potential proliferators less reason to go nuclear.

Moreover, military action cannot prevent a determined country from eventually obtaining nuclear weapons; it can only buy time. The recent deal with Iran serves as a reminder that coordinated multi­lateral pressure and tough economic sanctions are a better way to discourage proliferation than preventive war or regime change.

To be sure, if the United States did scale back its security guarantees, a few vulnerable states might seek their own nuclear deterrents. That outcome is not desirable, but all-out efforts to prevent it would almost certainly be costly and probably be unsuccessful. Besides, the down­sides may not be as grave as pessimists fear. Getting the bomb does not transform weak countries into great powers or enable them to blackmail rival states. Ten states have crossed the nuclear threshold since 1945, and the world has not turned upside down. Nuclear proliferation will remain a concern no matter what the United States does, but offshore balancing provides the best strategy for dealing with it.

THE DEMOCRACY DELUSION

Other critics reject offshore balancing because they believe the United States has a moral and strategic imperative to promote freedom and protect human rights. As they see it, spreading democracy will largely rid the world of war and atrocities, keeping the United States secure and alleviating suffering.

No one knows if a world composed solely of liberal democracies would in fact prove peaceful, but spreading democracy at the point of a gun rarely works, and fledgling democracies are especially prone to conflict. Instead of promoting peace, the United States just ends up fighting endless wars. Even worse, force-feeding liberal values abroad can compromise them at home. The global war on terrorism and the related effort to implant democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq have led to tortured prisoners, targeted killings, and vast electronic surveillance of U.S. citizens.

Some defenders of liberal hegemony hold that a subtler version of the strategy could avoid the sorts of disasters that occurred in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. They are deluding themselves. Democracy promotion requires large-scale social engineering in foreign societies that Americans understand poorly, which helps explain why Washing­ton’s efforts usually fail. Dismantling and replacing existing political institutions inevitably creates winners and losers, and the latter often take up arms in opposition. When that happens, U.S. officials, believing their country’s credibility is now at stake, are tempted to use the United States’ awesome military might to fix the problem, thus drawing the country into more conflicts.

If the American people want to encourage the spread of liberal democracy, the best way to do so is to set a good example. Other countries will more likely emulate the United States if they see it as a just, prosperous, and open society. And that means doing more to improve conditions at home and less to manipulate politics abroad.

THE PROBLEMATIC PACIFIER

Then there are those who believe that Washington should reject liberal hegemony but keep sizable U.S. forces in Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf solely to prevent trouble from breaking out. This low-cost insurance policy, they argue, would save lives and money in the long run, because the United States wouldn’t have to ride to the rescue after a conflict broke out. This approach—sometimes called “selective engagement”—sounds appealing but would not work either.

For starters, it would likely revert back to liberal hegemony. Once committed to preserving peace in key regions, U.S. leaders would be sorely tempted to spread democracy, too, based on the widespread belief that democracies don’t fight one another. This was the main rationale for expanding NATO after the Cold War, with the stated goal of “a Europe whole and free.” In the real world, the line separating selective engagement from liberal hegemony is easily erased.

There is no good reason to keep U.S. forces in Europe, as no country there has the capability to dominate that region.

Advocates of selective engagement also assume that the mere presence of U.S. forces in various regions will guarantee peace, and so Americans need not worry about being dragged into distant conflicts. In other words, extending security commitments far and wide poses few risks, because they will never have to be honored.

But this assumption is overly optimistic: allies may act recklessly, and the United States may provoke conflicts itself. Indeed, in Europe, the American pacifier failed to prevent the Balkan wars of the 1990s, the Russo-Georgian war in 2008, and the current conflict in Ukraine. In the Middle East, Washington is largely responsible for several recent wars. And in the South China Sea, conflict is now a real possibility despite the U.S. Navy’s substantial regional role. Stationing U.S. forces around the world does not automatically ensure peace.

Nor does selective engagement address the problem of buck-passing. Consider that the United Kingdom is now withdrawing its army from continental Europe, at a time when NATO faces what it considers a growing threat from Russia. Once again, Washington is expected to deal with the problem, even though peace in Europe should matter far more to the region’s own powers.

THE STRATEGY IN ACTION

What would offshore balancing look like in today’s world? The good news is that it is hard to foresee a serious challenge to American hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, and for now, no potential hegemon lurks in Europe or the Persian Gulf. Now for the bad news: if China continues its impressive rise, it is likely to seek hegemony in Asia. The United States should undertake a major effort to prevent it from succeeding.

Ideally, Washington would rely on local powers to contain China, but that strategy might not work. Not only is China likely to be much more powerful than its neighbors, but these states are also located far from one another, making it harder to form an effective balancing coalition. The United States will have to coordinate their efforts and may have to throw its considerable weight behind them. In Asia, the United States may indeed be the indispensable nation.

#### Empirics go neg – most qualified studies disprove hegemonic stability theories.

Fettweis 17 –Christopher J. Fettweis is an American political scientist and the Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University. “Unipolarity, Hegemony, and the New Peace, Security Studies” 26:3, 423-451; EG)

Even the most ardent supporters of the hegemonic-stability explanation do not contend that US influence extends equally to all corners of the globe. The United States has concentrated its policing in what George Kennan used to call “strong points,” or the most important parts of the world: Western Europe, the Pacific Rim, and Persian Gulf.64 By doing so, Washington may well have contributed more to great power peace than the overall global decline in warfare. If the former phenomenon contributed to the latter, by essentially providing a behavioral model for weaker states to emulate, then perhaps this lends some support to the hegemonic-stability case.65 During the Cold War, the United States played referee to a few intra-West squabbles, especially between Greece and Turkey, and provided Hobbesian reassurance to Germany’s nervous neighbors. Other, equally plausible explanations exist for stability in the first world, including the presence of a common enemy, democracy, economic interdependence, general war aversion, etc. The looming presence of the leviathan is certainly among these plausible explanations, but only inside the US sphere of influence. Bipolarity was bad for the nonaligned world, where Soviet and Western intervention routinely exacerbated local conflicts. Unipolarity has generally been much better, **but whether or not this was due to US action is again unclear.** Overall US interest in the affairs of the Global South has dropped markedly since the end of the Cold War, as has the level of violence in almost all regions. There is less US intervention in the political and military affairs of Latin America compared to any time in the twentieth century, for instance, and also less conflict. Warfare in Africa is at an all-time low, as is relative US interest outside of counterterrorism and security assistance.66 **Regional peace and stability exist where there is US active intervention, as well as where there is not**. No direct relationship seems to exist across regions. If intervention can be considered a function of direct and indirect activity, of both political and military action, a regional picture might look like what is outlined in Table 1. These assessments of conflict are by necessity relative, because there has not been a “high” level of conflict in any region outside the Middle East during the period of the New Peace. Putting aside for the moment that important caveat, some points become clear. The great powers of the world are clustered in the upper right quadrant, where US intervention has been high, but conflict levels low. **US intervention is imperfectly correlated with stability, however. Indeed, it is conceivable that the relatively high level of US interest and activity has made the security situation in the Persian Gulf and broader Middle East worse.** In recent years, substantial hard power investments (Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq), moderate intervention (Libya), and reliance on diplomacy (Syria) have been equally ineffective in stabilizing states torn by conflict. While it is possible that the region is essentially unpacifiable and no amount of police work would bring peace to its people, it remains hard to make the case that the US presence has improved matters. **In this “strong point,” at least, US hegemony has failed to bring peace.** In much of the rest of the world, the United States has not been especially eager to enforce any particular rules. Even rather incontrovertible evidence of genocide has not been enough to inspire action. Washington’s intervention choices have at best been erratic; Libya and Kosovo brought about action, but much more blood flowed uninterrupted in Rwanda, Darfur, Congo, Sri Lanka, and Syria. The US record of peacemaking is not exactly a long uninterrupted string of successes. During the turn-of-the-century conventional war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a highlevel US delegation containing former and future National Security Advisors (Anthony Lake and Susan Rice) made a half-dozen trips to the region, but was unable to prevent either the outbreak or recurrence of the conflict. Lake and his team shuttled back and forth between the capitals with some frequency, and President Clinton made repeated phone calls to the leaders of the respective countries, offering to hold peace talks in the United States, all to no avail.67 The war ended Table 1. Post-Cold War US intervention and violence by region. High Violence Low Violence High US Intervention Middle East Europe South and Central Asia Pacific Rim North America Low US Intervention Africa South America Former Soviet Union in late 2000 when Ethiopia essentially won, and it controls the disputed territory to this day. The Horn of Africa is hardly the only region where states are free to fight one another today without fear of serious US involvement. Since they are choosing not to do so with increasing frequency, something else is probably affecting their calculations. Stability exists even in those places where the potential for intervention by the sheriff is minimal. Hegemonic stability can only take credit for influencing those decisions that would have ended in war without the presence, whether physical or psychological, of the United States. It seems hard to make the case that the relative peace that has descended on so many regions is primarily due to the kind of heavy hand of the neoconservative leviathan, or its lighter, more liberal cousin. Something else appears to be at work.

#### No empirical support for transition wars --- they misunderstand incentive structures, accommodation theory is true, and conflict is contained --- this card smokes them

Wohlforth 17 William C. Wohlforth, William Curti Wohlforth is the Daniel Webster Professor of Government in the Dartmouth College Department of Government. “Chapter 3: Not Quite the Same as it Ever Was”, in “Will China’s Rise be Peaceful? The Rise of a Great Power in Theory, History, Politics, and the Future.” Oxford University Press. December 27, 2017.

A narrative has taken hold around the world that is directly relevant to this volume: that the material capabilities standing behind the dominant order are in relative decline, and, as a result, contestation – sometimes violent – over basic rules and institutions is on the rise. Legitimacy ultimately rests on power, the argument goes, and so rising powers will seek to undermine the legitimacy of the current order and establish new rules. If the status quo states resist, the result will be instability and hence insecurity. The narrative dominates punditry but also reflects the official policy and concrete, costly behavior of major powers. Putin’s Russia has forcefully toppled one of the foundational pillars of the 1991 settlement: respect for the territorial status quo in Eurasia. China’s neighbors accuse it of raising the specter of a forceful resolution of maritime boundary disputes in contravention of widely agreed regional norms and principles of international law. Both countries continue to increase military expenditures, in Russia’s case shouldering a greater relative burden than the United States (4.2 vs. 3.8 percent of GDP). The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) grouping and its fellow travelers push back against Western-sponsored expansions of norms regarding human rights and legal armed intervention in sovereign states under the “responsibility to protect” (R2P) rubric. On global economic governance, rising powers seek greater roles in existing institutions or periodically work to create nascent regional alternatives. Not surprisingly, attempts to measure the effectiveness of institutionalized cooperation on a large range of key global issues find a depressing downward trend. Where is this headed? Many analysts portray current contestation as the leading edge of a full-blown conflict over the US-led global order. Ably represented in this collection by Christopher Layne’s chapter, their arguments often feature the use of terminology that suggests system-altering changes are afoot, for example, the claim that the unipolar era is over or a new multi- or bipolar world I nigh. Another indicator of this view is the popularity of the 1914 analogy: that China’s rise and its dissatisfaction with the status quo are like Wilhelmine Germany’s, raising similar risks of escalation and major military conflict. Against this view is the position championed in this volume most notably by John Ikenberry and Rosemary Foot, arguing that the current order is far more robust and resilient than the pessimists content. In this view, while contestation grabs the headlines, the main underlying trend is adaptation and accommodation. In this chapter, I address this question using the classical Gilpinian framework as well as more recent rise-and-decline scholarship. I argue that the balance of theory and evidence points to a more nuanced position: we are in for increased competitiveness and contestation; a harder-to-manage world has indeed arrived, but the essential structural imperatives that have operated for the last two decades are likely to remain in place. The pessimists overstate the scale and significance of change; the optimists understate the levels of dissatisfaction and the challenges of accommodation. I consider the implications of three key ways in which the current power shift differs from the canonical historical cases that inform much scholarship and commentary. In each case, there is a big implication and a qualifier. The big implication is that each change favors the status quo states and makes revisionism harder. The qualifier is that each also allows lower-level competition by creating incentives for challengers to challenge and status quo states to stick to current commitments. The three changes, considered in the sections that follow. are these: 1. The near certainty that all-out systemic war is off the table as a mechanism for hegemonic transition 2. The fact that the rising challenger to the system’s dominant state is credibly approaching peer status on only one dimension of state capability, gross economic output; and 3. The historically unprecedented degree of institutionalization in world politics coupled with the uniquely central role institutions play in the dominant power’s grand strategy. A “hegemonic war is characterized by the unlimited means employed and by the general scope of the warfare,” Robert Gilpin wrote over thirty years ago. “Because all parties are drawn into the war and the stakes involved are high, few limitations, if any, are observed with respect to the means employed.” Such a war is exceedingly unlikely to emerge among states armed with secure second-strike nuclear forces, whose core security, future power, and economic prosperity do not hinge on the physical control of others’ territory. We need to know what function these wars served in the past to assess the full implications of their expected absence in the future. Needless to say, there is no scholarly consensus on this question. Here I shall focus specifically on the main theories that assign this type of war an important role in explaining international politics, setting aside for now the many approaches that deny any special functional implications to especially large or costly wars. Two functional arguments are most prominent in the literature. For Gilpin, as for many theorists in the power-cycle tradition, the core function of hegemonic war is to resolve the contradiction between the underlying distribution of capabilities in the system and the hierarchy of prestige. His theory relies on a major lag between the diffusion of system capabilities away from the hegemon, on the one hand, and states’ ability to revise the international order accordingly, on the other hand. As capabilities shift to rising states, their dissatisfaction increases, as does their putative bargaining power, but the dominant states face incentives to hold fast defending the existing order. The gap between the system’s material “base” and its governance superstructure is resolved by a major war, which clarifies the distribution of capabilities and prestige, setting the stage for efficient bargaining over a new order. John Ikenberry stresses a second function: “Major or great-power war is a uniquely powerful agent of change in world politics because it tends to destroy and discredit old institutions and force the emergence of a new leading or hegemonic state.” The first part of Ikenberry’s argument seems intuitive, but it does not clear exactly how war “forces the emergene” of a new hegemon. Randall Schweller has most recently and fulsomely developed the core arguments for why hegemonic war alone can perform these functions. Other destructive events one can imagine, such as a global economic crash, pandemic, or environmental catastrophe, may wreak widespread destruction, but they are not driven by political logics and so cannot perform certain political functions. As Schweller argues, “It is precisely the political ends of hegemonic wars that distinguish them and the crucial international-political functions they perform – most important, crowning a new hegemonic king and wiping the global institutional slate clean – from mere cataclysmic global events.” On his view, only hegemonic war can force the emergence of a new hegemon, clarify power relations, and wipe the interstate institutional structure clean, leaving a tabula rasa for the newly anointed hegemon to write new rules. “The distasteful truth of history,” Schweller writes, “is that violent conflict not only cures the ill effects of political inertia and economic stagnation but is often the key that unlocks all the doors to radical and progressive historical change.” But this distasteful truth rests on an assumption: that war is indeed governed by political logic, while other kinds of global events (or states’ reactions to them) are not. And Clausewitz’s famous thesis that war is a continuation of politics has always been in tension with the antithesis also highlighted by the Prussian theorist: war’s inherent tendency to escape control. The argument that hegemonic wars are at root powerful political processes has yet to be subjected to focused empirical studies. For his part, Gilpin ignored the actual processes wrought by war, focusing almost exclusively on causes. Ikenberry’s narrative studies of postwar order building implicitly refer back to his arguments about war’s effects, but they are not structured around an investigation of these processes. And Schweller’s claim that hegemonic wars are necessary to prevent the degenerative “entrophy” of international politics rests entirely on contemporary evidence of disorder, ungovernability, dissolution, and dissipation rather than concrete evidence that hegemonic wars prevented these processes from occurring in the past.

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

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

AMERICA THROUGH XI'S EYES Underneath all these strategic choices lies Xi’s belief, reflected in official Chinese pronouncements and CCP literature, that the United States is experiencing a steady, irreversible structural decline. This belief is now grounded in a considerable body of evidence. A divided U.S. government failed to craft a national strategy for long-term investment in infrastructure, education, and basic scientific and technological research. The Trump administration damaged U.S. alliances, abandoned trade liberalization, withdrew the United States from its leadership of the postwar international order, and crippled U.S. diplomatic capacity. The Republican Party has been hijacked by the far right, and the American political class and electorate are so deeply polarized that it will prove difficult for any president to win support for a long-term bipartisan strategy on China. Washington, Xi believes, is highly unlikely to recover its credibility and confidence as a regional and global leader. And he is betting that as the next decade progresses, other world leaders will come to share this view and begin to adjust their strategic postures accordingly, gradually shifting from balancing with Washington against Beijing, to hedging between the two powers, to bandwagoning with China. But China worries about the possibility of Washington lashing out at Beijing in the years before U.S. power finally dissipates. Xi’s concern is not just a potential military conflict but also any rapid and radical economic decoupling. Moreover, the CCP’s diplomatic establishment fears that the Biden administration, realizing that the United States will soon be unable to match Chinese power on its own, might form an effective coalition of countries across the democratic capitalist world with the express aim of counterbalancing China collectively.

In particular, CCP leaders fear that President Joe Biden’s proposal to hold a summit of the world’s major democracies represents a first step on that path, which is why China acted rapidly to secure new trade and investment agreements in Asia and Europe before the new administration came into office. Washington, Xi believes, is unlikely to recover its credibility and confidence as a global leader. Mindful of this combination of near-term risks and China’s long-term strengths, Xi’s general diplomatic strategy toward the Biden administration will be to de-escalate immediate tensions, stabilize the bilateral relationship as early as possible, and do everything possible to prevent security crises. To this end, Beijing will look to fully reopen the lines of high-level military communication with Washington that were largely cut off during the Trump administration. Xi might seek to convene a regular, high-level political dialogue, as well, although Washington will not be interested in reestablishing the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, which served as the main channel between the two countries until its collapse amid the trade war of 2018–19. Finally, Beijing may moderate its military activity in the immediate period ahead in areas where the People’s Liberation Army rubs up directly against U.S. forces, particularly in the South China Sea and around Taiwan—assuming that the Biden administration discontinues the high-level political visits to Taipei that became a defining feature of the final year of the Trump administration. For Beijing, however, these are changes in tactics, not in strategy. As Xi tries to ratchet down tensions in the near term, he will have to decide whether to continue pursuing his hard-line strategy against Australia, Canada, and India, which are friends or allies of the United States. This has involved a combination of a deep diplomatic freeze and economic coercion—and, in the case of India, direct military confrontation. Xi will wait for any clear signal from Washington that part of the price for stabilizing the U.S.-Chinese relationship would be an end to such coercive measures against U.S. partners. If no such signal is forthcoming—there was none under President Donald Trump—then Beijing will resume business as usual. Meanwhile, Xi will seek to work with Biden on climate change. Xi understands this is in China’s interests because of the country’s increasing vulnerability to extreme weather events. He also realizes that Biden has an opportunity to gain international prestige if Beijing cooperates with Washington on climate change, given the weight of Biden’s own climate commitments, and he knows that Biden will want to be able to demonstrate that his engagement with Beijing led to reductions in Chinese carbon emissions. As China sees it, these factors will deliver Xi some leverage in his overall dealings with Biden. And Xi hopes that greater collaboration on climate will help stabilize the U.S.-Chinese relationship more generally.