# HEGEMONY IMPACT CORE

# GOOD

## Uniqueness

### -pursuit inevitable

#### The pursuit of hegemony is inevitable – Any alternative to US primacy results in Nuclear Prolif and Global Instability

Tooley, 3-19 – [Mark Tooley, Graduate from Georgetown University, Work at the CIA, 3-19-2015, Christianity and Nukes American nuclear disarmament will not leave the world safer or holier, The American Spectator, <http://spectator.org/articles/62090/christianity-and-nukes>] Jeong

Much of the security of the world relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, which continues to deter, protect, and intimidate. Doubtless China would vastly expand its own relatively minimal nuclear arsenal and seek parity at least with Russia absent overwhelming U.S. power. Russia’s nuclear arsenal is engorged far beyond its strategic needs, and that arsenal has in fact been blessed by the Russian Orthodox Church, which evidently also falls outside the “ecumenical consensus.” Some religious idealists imagine that disarming the West, mainly the U.S., will inspire and motivate the world to follow suit. Such expectation is based on a fundamentally and dangerously false view of global statecraft and human nature. The power vacuum that American disarmament would create would inexorably lead to a far more dangerous and unstable world where nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction would exponentially proliferate. American military and nuclear hegemony for the last 70 years has sustained an historically unprecedented approximate global peace and facilitated an even more unprecedented global prosperity. There is indeed a moral and strategic imperative for America today, which is to deploy its power against further nuclear proliferation and to deter aggression by current nuclear actors, while also developing technologies and defensive weapons that neutralize nuclear armaments. If Iran’s genocidally ambitious regime is in the end prevented from nuclearizing, it will only be thanks to American power. And if it does nuclearize, only American and Israeli nukes, perhaps joined by Saudi nukes, will deter its murderous designs. Christian teaching and humanity should demand no less.

### -sustainable

#### Hegemony is sustainable and resilient – Multiple warrants

Babones, 6-11- [Salvatore Babones, Associate Professor at the University of Sydney, PhD in Sociology and Social Policy, Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, 6-11-2015, American Hegemony Is Here to Stay: U.S. hegemony is now as firm as or firmer than it has ever been, and will remain so for a long time to come, The National Interest, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/american-hegemony-here-stay-13089?page=2>] Jeong

IS RETREAT from global hegemony in America’s national interest? No idea has percolated more widely over the past decade—and none is more bogus. The United States is not headed for the skids and there is no reason it should be. The truth is that America can and should seek to remain the world’s top dog. The idea of American hegemony is as old as Benjamin Franklin, but has its practical roots in World War II. The United States emerged from that war as the dominant economic, political and technological power. The only major combatant to avoid serious damage to its infrastructure, its housing stock or its demographic profile, the United States ended the war with the greatest naval order of battle ever seen in the history of the world. It became the postwar home of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. And, of course, the United States had the bomb. America was, in every sense of the word, a hegemon. “Hegemony” is a word used by social scientists to describe leadership within a system of competing states. The Greek historian Thucydides used the term to characterize the position of Athens in the Greek world in the middle of the fifth century BC. Athens had the greatest fleet in the Mediterranean; it was the home of Socrates and Plato, Sophocles and Aeschylus; it crowned its central Acropolis with the solid-marble temple to Athena known to history as the Parthenon. Athens had a powerful rival in Sparta, but no one doubted that Athens was the hegemon of the time until Sparta defeated it in a bitter twenty-seven-year war. America’s only global rival in the twentieth century was the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union never produced more than about half of America’s total national output. Its nominal allies in Eastern Europe were in fact restive occupied countries, as were many of its constituent republics. Its client states overseas were at best partners of convenience, and at worst expensive drains on its limited resources. The Soviet Union had the power to resist American hegemony, but not to displace it. It had the bomb and an impressive space program, but little else. When the Soviet Union finally disintegrated in 1991, American hegemony was complete. The United States sat at the top of the international system, facing no serious rivals for global leadership. This “unipolar moment” lasted a mere decade. September 11, 2001, signaled the emergence of a new kind of threat to global stability, and the ensuing rise of China and reemergence of Russia put paid to the era of unchallenged American leadership. Now, America’s internal politics have deadlocked and the U.S. government shrinks from playing the role of global policeman. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, American hegemony is widely perceived to be in terminal decline. Or so the story goes. In fact, reports of the passing of U.S. hegemony are greatly exaggerated. America’s costly wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were relatively minor affairs considered in long-term perspective. The strategic challenge posed by China has also been exaggerated. Together with its inner circle of unshakable English-speaking allies, the United States possesses near-total control of the world’s seas, skies, airwaves and cyberspace, while American universities, think tanks and journals dominate the world of ideas. Put aside all the alarmist punditry. American hegemony is now as firm as or firmer than it has ever been, and will remain so for a long time to come. THE MASSIVE federal deficit, negative credit-agency reports, repeated debt-ceiling crises and the 2013 government shutdown all created the impression that the U.S. government is bankrupt, or close to it. The U.S. economy imports half a trillion dollars a year more than it exports. Among the American population, poverty rates are high and ordinary workers’ wages have been stagnant (in real terms) for decades. Washington seems to be paralyzed by perpetual gridlock. On top of all this, strategic exhaustion after two costly wars in Afghanistan and Iraq has substantially degraded U.S. military capabilities. Then, at the very moment the military needed to regroup, rebuild and rearm, its budget was hit by sequestration. If economic power forms the long-term foundation for political and military power, it would seem that America is in terminal decline. But policy analysts tend to have short memories. Cycles of hegemony run in centuries, not decades (or seasons). When the United Kingdom finally defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815, its national resources were completely exhausted. Britain’s public-debt-to-GDP ratio was over 250 percent, and early nineteenth-century governments lacked access to the full range of fiscal and financial tools that are available today. Yet the British Century was only just beginning. The Pax Britannica and the elevation of Queen Victoria to become empress of India were just around the corner. This is not to argue that the U.S. government should ramp up taxes and spending, but it does illustrate the fact that it has enormous potential fiscal resources available to it, should it choose to use them. Deficits come and go. America’s fiscal capacity in 2015 is stupendously greater than Great Britain’s was in 1815. Financially, there is every reason to think that America’s century lies in the future, not in the past. The same is true of the supposed exhaustion of the U.S. military. On the one hand, thirteen years of continuous warfare have reduced the readiness of many U.S. combat units, particularly in the army. On the other hand, U.S. troops are now far more experienced in actual combat than the forces of any other major military in the world. In any future conflict, the advantage given by this experience would likely outweigh any decline in effectiveness due to deferred maintenance and training. Constant deployment may place an unpleasant and unfair burden on U.S. service personnel and their families, but it does not necessarily diminish the capability of the U.S. military. On the contrary, it may enhance it. America’s limited wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were hardly the final throes of a passing hegemon. They are more akin to Britain’s bloody but relatively inconsequential conflicts in Afghanistan and Crimea in the middle of the nineteenth century. Brutal wars like these repeatedly punctured, but never burst, British hegemony. In fact, Britain engaged in costly and sometimes disastrous conflicts throughout the century-long Pax Britannica. British hegemony did not come to an end until the country faced Germany head-on in World War I. Even then, Britain ultimately prevailed (with American help). Its empire reached its maximum extent not before World War I but immediately after, in 1922.

#### No risk of power transitions – Multiple reasons for why hegemony is sustainable

Bremmer, 5-28 – [Ian Bremmer, American political scientist specializing in U.S. foreign policy, states in transition, and global political risk. PhD and M.A. from Stanford University in Political Science, 5-28-2015, These Are the 5 Reasons Why the U.S. Remains the World’s Only Superpower, Time, <http://time.com/3899972/us-superpower-status-military/>] Jeong

A ‘superpower’ is a country that wields enough military, political and economic might to convince nations in all parts of the world to do things they otherwise wouldn’t. Pundits have rushed to label China the next superpower—and [so have](http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/07/14/chapter-3-balance-of-power-u-s-vs-china/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank%22%20%5Co%20%22Power) many ordinary Americans—but the rumors of America’s decline have been greatly exaggerated. In the key categories of power, the U.S. will remain dominant for the foreseeable future. These facts show why America is still the world’s only superpower, and why that won’t change anytime soon. 1. Economics China’s economy is growing at an impressive rate. But it’s not just the size of an economy that matters—it’s also the quality. According to the World Bank, GDP per capita in the US was $53,042 in 2013; in China it was just $6,807. In other words, little of China’s dramatic economic growth is finding its way into the pockets of Chinese consumers—the byproduct of an economy driven by massive state-owned enterprises rather than private industry. China’s headline growth may be higher, but it’s the U.S. economy that’s allowing its citizens to grow along with it. And crucially, the American economy remains the bedrock of the global financial system. Over 80% of all financial transactions worldwide are conducted in dollars, as are 87% of foreign currency market transactions. As long as the world continues to place such faith in America’s currency and overall economic stability, the U.S. economy remains the one to beat. America’s military superiority remains unrivaled—full stop. The US accounts for 37% of global military spending, and spends more than four times what China, the world’s No. 2 spender, does on its military. The U.S. dominates across land, sea, air and space. America’s Middle East misadventures gave the U.S. military a black eye, but the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan speak more to the changing nature of warfare than declining U.S. military superiority. Terrorists and guerilla fighters give conventional military powers fits by design. The U.S. must ultimately learn to scale down to better meet those challenges. Nevertheless, while conventional military strength might not deter terrorists, it still does a terrific job of deterring hostile nations. Political power comes in many dimensions. For the U.S., foreign aid is an effective way to cement its political clout globally. In 2013, the U.S. doled out $32.7 billion in financial assistance; second was the UK at $19 billion. Turns out that money buys strong political cooperation from countries in need. But in order to have political power abroad, you must first have stability at home. The U.S. has the oldest working national constitution in the world, as well as strong institutions and rule of law to accompany it. While far from perfect, the governing document created by America’s founding fathers has evolved along with its people. The numbers show the enduring attraction of this system: 45 million people living in the U.S. today were born in a foreign country. That is more than four times higher than the next highest country. For many people around the world, America remains the ideal place to start a new life. Of the 9 largest tech companies in the world, 8 are based in the U.S. Give the growing importance of the technology sector, that’s a big deal. For decades America worried about energy dependency, yet today America is the world’s No. 1 producer of oil and natural gas, in large part due to the development of hydraulic fracturing, a product of public research and private energy. America’s research universities and scientific institutions are best in class, allowing the nation to focus its ingenuity where it’s needed most. And America is spending the money to keep its comparative advantage intact: 30% of all research and development dollars are spent in the U.S.

## Specific Scenarios

### -econ

#### Hegemony solidifies economic stability and trade

Kim, 14 – [Aejung Kim, Correspondent with the Department of Political Science, Kent State University, Ohio, February 28, 2014, The Effects of the U.S. Hegemony on Economic Growth in East Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa, <http://www.isca.in/IJSS/Archive/v3/i4/1.ISCA-IRJSS-2013-210.pdf>, pg. 2] Jeong

Although there is a difficulty in defining hegemony, hegemony is categorized as four groups: structural, behavioural, issue-specific, and multiissue hegemony8 . Among four hegemonies, the term of structural hegemony was frequently used to depict the U.S. hegemony9-10. Based on this structural hegemony, the asymmetrical distribution of resources in the interstate system produces structural power contributing to the development of hegemony. Great Britain and the United States were historically described as the hegemonic leaderships playing a pivotal role in global economic interdependence. While Great Britain was a hegemon from the Napoleonic Wars to World War I, the United States has been a hegemon since World War II10-11. After the Cold War, there have been some debates about how sustainable the U.S. hegemonic power is. Realists have argued that the global system is viewed as anarchic based on self-help strategies, and major powers will balance the US power12 . Unlike realists’ argument, the United States still today plays a hegemonic role in different ways13 . Hegemonic stability theory argues that it is imperative for one state to be predominant enough to create and maintain stable international regimes. The stability of hegemonic system elaborates the openness of international regimes based on the logic of collective goods. According to the theory, tremendously unbalanced distribution of resources in the postwar period provides one state with sufficient power that helps the state to be capable of supplying the international economic stability with its own motivation10. However, what if a hegemon does not have sufficient motivations? What is the consequence of a hegemonic role when there is no motivation or different motivation? Can economic instability be a possible answer as an opposite result? If it is this case, what makes a hegemon possess a different motivation? The literature on hegemonic stability theory fails to explain the variety of power dimensions by mainly focusing on the power with material resources, and the implications of the loss of the U.S. hegemonic power14. Given the weakness of hegemonic stability theory, this paper attempts to look at a different dimension of the hegemonic power system beyond the typical hegemonic stability arguments. Different geostrategic circumstances of the U.S. hegemony in different regions generate a condition for a hegemon to have a diverse motivation critical to economic performance. The paper is designed to explain how the U.S. hegemon has an impact on economic performances in different regions (i.e. East Asia and the MENA). East Asia: It was the end of the Pacific War, 1945, when the US model of laissez-faire was intruded on Northeast Asian countries giving strong pressures to change their industrial organization model into a liberal model of nonintervention15 . The economy of East Asia was significantly influenced by the US aid and the presence of the US troops. By the mid-1980s, they became the major trading partners with the United States and their multinational corporations played a conspicuous role in international system16. In an effort of the United States to contain the Soviet Union and Chinese communism, East Asia has been used as a battlefield since the Cold War supplying a vital geo-strategic circumstance for sudden economic development17. The East Asian region was susceptible for Communist penetration without a strong and rapid recovery from its devastated economy8 . Cumings’ works illustrate how a hegemonic system is crucial for the regional political economy in East Asian countries. Japan’s monetary and trade policies were adjusted to restore trade after American occupation in Japan. In the postwar, the United States did not only provide Taiwan and South Korea with military and economic aid, but also had a profound effect on economic policies in two countries even by sometimes tolerating import substitution in Taiwan and South Korea18 . The predominance of the U.S. hegemonic power, driven by geostrategic situation such as communist containment, formed the appropriate environment where trade has been intensified in the region15. By linking to the multilateral international organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and alliances such as The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the U.S. hegemony has attempted to change other countries’ own interests. The hegemonic system strongly maintains when the policies of a hegemon create benefit recipients in the region. The groups motivated by those benefits pressure their government to seek for policies fortifying the hegemonic strategies9 . In the East Asian region, the U.S. hegemony was willing to foster economic growth in the region rather than deter it since the region has been a politically strategic place since the Cold War. In this case, the logic is that the stronger the country’s economy is, the more benefits the hegemon earns. Sustained economic growth in East Asian countries could keep American power against the Communist sides and make strong allies among the countries in this region. South Korea was weak enough to change their ideology to communism right after 1953, the end of the Korean War. When its economy becomes stronger with the help of the U.S., it does not find any reason to move toward the Communist country. In the post-1945 years, the U.S. commitment to supporting free trade shaped the trading system with multilateral agreements by letting Japan and its neighbors get involved in the U.S. market. This system also increased the regional trade relations15 . In conclusion, the U.S. has had strong economic ties with East Asian countries with the geostrategic motivation of containing the communism.

### -great power war

#### US Leadership solidifies international peace – Current policies prove retrenchment incentivizes great power wars

Bresler, 6-24 –[ Robert J. Bresler, Penn State Harrisburg professor emeritus of public policy, 6-24-2015, Obama-led US withdrawal has destabilized the world, Lancaster Online, <http://lancasteronline.com/opinion/columnists/obama-led-us-withdrawal-has-destabilized-the-world/article_1c73c828-19d4-11e5-ab00-d32898937e9a.html>] Jeong

American leadership need not mean involvement in endless wars. Past history gives us examples. The Marshall Plan allowed worn-torn allied governments to provide their people with political stability and economic development. NATO was an effort to build Western European unity, end the quarrels that had produced two world wars, and deter Soviet aggression. The United Nations, disappointing in many ways, was a vehicle for broad international efforts against disease, illiteracy and regional wars. The International Monetary Fund, World Bank and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs were designed to facilitate international trade, prevent currency wars and assist in economic development. These initiatives prevented another great power war, achieved a large degree of European reconciliation, and eased the transition for post-colonial countries in Africa and Asia. None would have happened without strong and persistent American leadership. The U.S. negotiated a series of defense treaties with more than 35 nations, designed to deter aggression, that also eased their burden of self-defense and allowed them to place more resources into the reconstruction of their economies. In the Middle East, the Arab States and Israel saw the U.S. as an honest broker, assisting in the negotiation of peace treaties between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Jordan. During the Obama administration there has been a steady American retreat from world leadership. NATO is far less effective. Allies such as Israel, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt, the Baltic States and Iraq are no longer confident of American support. Hence, China, Russia and Iran are asserting hegemonic claims. The world is now torn by devolution and fractionalization. The forces of global and regional cooperation are in disrepair. The United Nations stands helpless against Russian aggression, civil war in Syria and Libya and atrocities by the Islamic State across the Middle East and North Africa; the European Union is facing possible revolts and threats of secession by the United Kingdom and Greece and waning allegiance in much of Europe; and NATO offers Ukraine no more than its good wishes as Russian President Vladimir Putin’s military swallows the country bit by bit. Our allies are far from steadfast. Their governments are weaker, and vivid world leaders are hard to find among them. Putin, the insane leaders of the Islamic State and the Iranian mullahs have put fear in the hearts of our allies. Why are these second- and third-rate powers able to intimidate their neighbors far more effectively than did the far more powerful Soviet Union? Our democratic allies in Europe, lacking a clear sense of direction, are ruled by unstable coalitions. Even Germany, perhaps the strongest of our European allies, refuses to confront Putin in his efforts to destabilize Ukraine. When the Obama administration made concession after concession to the Iranians over its nuclear program, our negotiating partners in Europe lost any interest in taking serious steps to keep Iran out of the nuclear club. In the Middle East tribalism and religious fanaticism have left Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen virtually ungovernable. Iraq, left to its won devices by Obama’s withdrawal after American troops sacrificed so much to establish a nascent democracy, is now falling apart. In Egypt, a military regime is trying to forcibly contain the boiling pot that is the Muslim Brotherhood. Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf States, feeling abandoned by Obama’s rush to a nuclear agreement with Iran, are sensing the quicksand beneath their feet. Warlordism and radical Islam plague the economically depressed countries of sub-Saharan Africa. A combination of devolution and chaos becomes normal state of affairs absent a strong centripetal leadership. In the last half of the 20th century, America provided that force with persuasion, assistance, assurance and trust. As the Obama administration allows the U.S. to slip into the shadows world politics, the danger of war increases.

#### US Primacy prevents Great Power Wars – Anything else escalates and goes nuclear

Ikenberry, 14 – [Gilford John Ikenberry is a theorist of international relations and United States foreign policy, and a professor of Politics and International Affairs in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, May/June 2014, The Illusion of Geopolitics The Enduring Power of the Liberal Order, Foreign Affairs, <https://www.foreignaffairs.org/articles/china/2014-04-17/illusion-geopolitics>] Jeong

Mead also mischaracterizes the thrust of U.S. foreign policy. Since the end of the Cold War, he argues, the United States has ignored geopolitical issues involving territory and spheres of influence and instead adopted a Pollyannaish emphasis on building the global order. But this is a false dichotomy. The United States does not focus on issues of global order, such as arms control and trade, because it assumes that geopolitical conflict is gone forever; it undertakes such efforts precisely because it wants to manage great-power competition. Order building is not premised on the end of geopolitics; it is about how to answer the big questions of geopolitics. Indeed, the construction of a U.S.-led global order did not begin with the end of the Cold War; it won the Cold War. In the nearly 70 years since World War II, Washington has undertaken sustained efforts to build a far-flung system of multilateral institutions, alliances, trade agreements, and political partnerships. This project has helped draw countries into the United States’ orbit. It has helped strengthen global norms and rules that undercut the legitimacy of nineteenth-century-style spheres of influence, bids for regional domination, and territorial grabs. And it has given the United States the capacities, partnerships, and principles to confront today’s great-power spoilers and revisionists, such as they are. Alliances, partnerships, multilateralism, democracy -- these are the tools of U.S. leadership, and they are winning, not losing, the twenty-first-century struggles over geopolitics and the world order. THE GENTLE GIANT In 1904, the English geographer Halford Mackinder wrote that the great power that controlled the heartland of Eurasia would command “the World-Island” and thus the world itself. For Mead, Eurasia has returned as the great prize of geopolitics. Across the far reaches of this supercontinent, he argues, China, Iran, and Russia are seeking to establish their spheres of influence and challenge U.S. interests, slowly but relentlessly attempting to dominate Eurasia and thereby threaten the United States and the rest of the world. This vision misses a deeper reality. In matters of geopolitics (not to mention demographics, politics, and ideas), the United States has a decisive advantage over China, Iran, and Russia. Although the United States will no doubt come down from the peak of hegemony that it occupied during the unipolar era, its power is still unrivaled. Its wealth and technological advantages remain far out of the reach of China and Russia, to say nothing of Iran. Its recovering economy, now bolstered by massive new natural gas resources, allows it to maintain a global military presence and credible security commitments. Indeed, Washington enjoys a unique ability to win friends and influence states. According to a study led by the political scientist Brett Ashley Leeds, the United States boasts military partnerships with more than 60 countries, whereas Russia counts eight formal allies and China has just one (North Korea). As one British diplomat told me several years ago, “China doesn’t seem to do alliances.” But the United States does, and they pay a double dividend: not only do alliances provide a global platform for the projection of U.S. power, but they also distribute the burden of providing security. The military capabilities aggregated in this U.S.-led alliance system outweigh anything China or Russia might generate for decades to come. Then there are the nuclear weapons. These arms, which the United States, China, and Russia all possess (and Iran is seeking), help the United States in two ways. First, thanks to the logic of mutual assured destruction, they radically reduce the likelihood of great-power war. Such upheavals have provided opportunities for past great powers, including the United States in World War II, to entrench their own international orders. The atomic age has robbed China and Russia of this opportunity. Second, nuclear weapons also make China and Russia more secure, giving them assurance that the United States will never invade. That’s a good thing, because it reduces the likelihood that they will resort to desperate moves, born of insecurity, that risk war and undermine the liberal order. Geography reinforces the United States’ other advantages. As the only great power not surrounded by other great powers, the country has appeared less threatening to other states and was able to rise dramatically over the course of the last century without triggering a war. After the Cold War, when the United States was the world’s sole superpower, other global powers, oceans away, did not even attempt to balance against it. In fact, the United States’ geographic position has led other countries to worry more about abandonment than domination. Allies in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East have sought to draw the United States into playing a greater role in their regions. The result is what the historian Geir Lundestad has called an “empire by invitation.” The United States’ geographic advantage is on full display in Asia. Most countries there see China as a greater potential danger -- due to its proximity, if nothing else -- than the United States. Except for the United States, every major power in the world lives in a crowded geopolitical neighborhood where shifts in power routinely provoke counterbalancing -- including by one another. China is discovering this dynamic today as surrounding states react to its rise by modernizing their militaries and reinforcing their alliances. Russia has known it for decades, and has faced it most recently in Ukraine, which in recent years has increased its military spending and sought closer ties to the EU. Geographic isolation has also given the United States reason to champion universal principles that allow it to access various regions of the world. The country has long promoted the open-door policy and the principle of self-determination and opposed colonialism -- less out of a sense of idealism than due to the practical realities of keeping Europe, Asia, and the Middle East open for trade and diplomacy. In the late 1930s, the main question facing the United States was how large a geopolitical space, or “grand area,” it would need to exist as a great power in a world of empires, regional blocs, and spheres of influence. World War II made the answer clear: the country’s prosperity and security depended on access to every region. And in the ensuing decades, with some important and damaging exceptions, such as Vietnam, the United States has embraced postimperial principles. It was during these postwar years that geopolitics and order building converged. A liberal international framework was the answer that statesmen such as Dean Acheson, George Kennan, and George Marshall offered to the challenge of Soviet expansionism. The system they built strengthened and enriched the United States and its allies, to the detriment of its illiberal opponents. It also stabilized the world economy and established mechanisms for tackling global problems. The end of the Cold War has not changed the logic behind this project. Fortunately, the liberal principles that Washington has pushed enjoy near-universal appeal, because they have tended to be a good fit with the modernizing forces of economic growth and social advancement. As the historian Charles Maier has put it, the United States surfed the wave of twentieth-century modernization. But some have argued that this congruence between the American project and the forces of modernity has weakened in recent years. The 2008 financial crisis, the thinking goes, marked a world-historical turning point, at which the United States lost its vanguard role in facilitating economic advancement. Yet even if that were true, it hardly follows that China and Russia have replaced the United States as the standard-bearers of the global economy. Even Mead does not argue that China, Iran, or Russia offers the world a new model of modernity. If these illiberal powers really do threaten Washington and the rest of the liberal capitalist world, then they will need to find and ride the next great wave of modernization. They are unlikely to do that.

### -laundry list

#### Hegemony is the only solution – Solves terrorism, global conflicts, and economic stability

Babones, 6-11- [Salvatore Babones, Associate Professor at the University of Sydney, PhD in Sociology and Social Policy, Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, 6-11-2015, American Hegemony Is Here to Stay: U.S. hegemony is now as firm as or firmer than it has ever been, and will remain so for a long time to come, The National Interest, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/american-hegemony-here-stay-13089?page=3> and 4] Jeong

In the twenty-first century, the United States effectively claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of force worldwide. Whether or not it makes this claim in so many words, it makes it through its policies and actions, and America’s monopoly on the legitimate use of force is generally accepted by most of the governments (if not the peoples) of the world. That is not to say that all American uses of force are accepted as legitimate, but that all uses of force that are accepted as legitimate are either American or actively supported by the United States. The world condemns Russian intervention in Ukraine but accepts Saudi intervention in Yemen, and of course it looks to the United States to solve conflicts in places like Libya, Syria and Iraq. The United States has not conquered the world, but most of the world’s governments (with the exceptions of countries such as Russia, Iran and China) and major intergovernmental organizations accept America’s lead. Very often they ask for it. This American domination of global affairs extends well beyond hegemony. In the nineteenth century, the United Kingdom was a global hegemon. Britannia ruled the waves, and from its domination of the oceans it derived extraordinary influence over global affairs. But China, France, Germany, Russia and later Japan continually challenged the legitimacy of British domination and tested it at every turn. Major powers certainly believed that they could engage independently in global statecraft and acted on that belief. France did not seek British permission to conquer its colonies; Germany did not seek British permission to conquer France. Twenty-first-century America dominates the world to an extent completely unmatched by nineteenth-century Britain. There is no conflict anywhere in the world in which the United States is not in some way involved. More to the point, participants in conflicts everywhere in the world, no matter how remote, expect the United States to be involved. Revisionists ranging from pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine to Bolivian peasant farmers who want to chew coca leaves see the United States as the power against which they are rebelling. The United States is much more than the world’s policeman. It is the world’s lawgiver. The world state of so many fictional utopias and dystopias is here, and it is not a nameless postmodern entity called global governance. It is America. Another word for a world state that dominates all others is an “empire,” a word that Americans of all political persuasions abhor. For FDR liberals it challenges cherished principles of internationalism and fair play. For Jeffersonian conservatives it reeks of foreign adventurism. For today’s neoliberals it undermines faith in the primacy of market competition over political manipulation. And for neoconservatives it implies an unwelcome responsibility for the welfare of the world beyond America’s shores. In fact, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the United States has become an imperial world state—a world-empire—that sets the ground rules for smooth running of the global economy, imposes its will largely without constraint and without consideration of the reasonable desires of other countries, and severely punishes those few states and nonstate actors that resist its dictates. No one ever likes an empire, but despite Ronald Reagan’s memorable phrase, the word “empire” is not inseparably linked to the word “evil.” When it comes to understanding empire, history is probably a better guide than science fiction. Consider the Roman Empire. For several centuries after the ascension of Augustus, life under Rome was generally freer, safer and more prosperous than it had been under the previously independent states. Perhaps it was not better for the enslaved or for the Druids, and certainly not for the Jews, but for most people of the ancient Mediterranean, imperial Rome brought vast improvements most of the time. ANCIENT ANALOGIES notwithstanding, no one would seriously suggest that the United States should attempt to directly rule the rest of the world, and there is no indication that the rest of the world would let it. But the United States could manage its empire more effectively, which is something that the rest of the world would welcome. A winning strategy for low-cost, effective management of empire would be for America to work with and through the system of global governance that America itself has set up, rather than systematically seeking to blunt its own instruments of power. For example, the United States was instrumental in setting up the International Criminal Court, yet Washington will not place itself under the jurisdiction of the ICC and will not allow its citizens to be subject to the jurisdiction of the ICC. Similarly, though the United States is willing to use UN Security Council resolutions to censure its enemies, it is not willing to accept negotiated limits on its own freedom of action. From a purely military-political standpoint, the United States is sufficiently powerful to go it alone. But from a broader realist standpoint that takes account of the full costs and unintended consequences of military action, that is a suboptimal strategy. Had the United States listened to dissenting opinions on the Security Council before the invasion of Iraq, it would have saved hundreds of billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of lives. The United States might similarly have done well to have heeded Russian reservations over Libya, as it ultimately did in responding to the use of chemical weapons in Syria. A more responsible (and consequently more effective) United States would subject itself to the international laws and agreements that it expects others to follow. It would genuinely seek to reduce its nuclear arsenal in line with its commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It would use slow but sure police procedures to catch terrorists, instead of quick but messy drone strikes. It would disavow all forms of torture. All of these policies would save American treasure while increasing American power. They would also increase America’s ability to say “no” to its allies when they demand expensive U.S. commitments to protect their interests abroad. Such measures would not ensure global peace, nor would they necessarily endear the United States to everyone across the world. But they would reduce global tensions and make it easier for America to act in its national interests where those interests are truly at stake. Both the United States and the world as a whole would be better off if Washington did not waste time, money and diplomatic capital on asserting every petty sovereign right it is capable of enforcing. A more strategic United States would preside over a more peaceful and prosperous world.

### -Middle East Conflict

#### No risk of overstretch – Military expansion solves Middle Eastern Escalation

Continetti, 14 – [Matthew Continetti, Editor-in-chief of The Washington Free Beacon, Graduate from Columbia University, 10-11-14, Accept No Substitutes, National Review, <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/390095/accept-no-substitutes-matthew-continetti>] Jeong

Two months ago, President Obama authorized bombing Islamic State forces in Iraq. One month ago, President Obama authorized bombing Islamic State forces in Syria. His plan: couple American air power with indigenous ground forces. “This strategy of taking out terrorists who threaten us, while supporting partners on the front lines,” Obama said last month, “is one that we have successfully pursued in Yemen and Somalia for years.” I disagree with his use of the adverb “successfully.” But Yemen and Somalia are exactly what we’re getting. Disordered and violent spaces, desultory and pinprick strikes, incompetent and wary allies, determined and implacable enemies — this is the Greater Middle East of Yemen and Somalia, this is the Greater Middle East of Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. The Islamic State continues to hold territory and make gains. The Pentagon, Rowan Scarborough reports, fears that the terrorist army is planning to capture Baghdad International Airport, using it as a base for urban warfare in the Iraqi capital. In the east, Islamic State forces have laid siege to the Kurdish town of Kobani, held at bay only by a slapdash increase in U.S. airstrikes. “I am fearful that Kobani will fall,” General Martin Dempsey said this week. You’re not alone, General. Why don’t you do something about it? I must know better than to ask such questions. Dempsey’s boss, President Obama, is more interested in avoiding the use of large numbers of ground forces than he is in actually seeing the Islamic State defeated. So he leaves the heavy fighting to our “partners.” But the partners are confused, inept. They are silent. And the enemy is gaining. Without large numbers of American troops on the ground in Iraq, we lack the ability to choose targets, to rebuild the capacity of the Iraqi army quickly and successfully, to constrain the Shiite government from pursuing a sectarian agenda. Without large numbers of troops in Syria, we are unable to distinguish between friend and foe, to train and direct non-al-Qaeda opposition forces, to address the humanitarian crisis, and to prepare for — and hasten — a world without Bashar Assad. Without the demonstration of American power and commitment that ground troops represent, allies such as Iraq and Turkey and Jordan and Saudi Arabia will not take the mission seriously. Instead they will interpret the president’s actions as addressing a political problem — the appearance of weakness at home — instead of a geopolitical one — a growing al-Qaeda state that serves as the launching pad for jihad near and far. “People are not convinced that the American strategy is comprehensive and long-term and decisive,” said analyst Fawaz Gerges — no neocon he — on MSNBC on Thursday. There is no reason to believe the people are wrong. The president understands that America is the only country with the reach and power to end global crises. He says as much every day on the fundraising circuit. “On every single issue of importance,” he told George Soros and others in New York City on Tuesday, “when there are challenges and there are opportunities around the world, it’s not Moscow they call; it’s not Beijing. They call us.” True. But they seem to be calling less and less. What Obama fails to grasp: It’s not enough to simply take the call. It’s not enough to deploy the minimum amount of force — increased air strikes, detachments to secure government facilities or treat Ebola patients or find Kony — in order to prevent imminent massacres, and to salve guilty consciences. You have to be ready to assume the responsibilities of hegemony, commit to the unpopular necessities in a 30-year-war against jihadism. Necessities such as long-term bases, overseas deployments, prisons at Guantanamo Bay — necessities such as saying what you mean, so that when you pledge that the United States “will do our part to help” Libya recover from Qaddafi, the help arrives; when you say Assad must go, he goes; when you admit a red line has been crossed, the interlopers pay; when you address the nation twice in two months to announce a campaign against an enemy determined to strike the United States, you treat that campaign with all the seriousness and tenacity and sense of mission it requires. If only. A future president — and with the way Obama is handling the Middle East, we will be dealing with the Islamic State and other hazards for many years indeed — needs to take a look at the strategic plan devised by Frederick Kagan of the American Enterprise Institute and Kimberly Kagan and Jessica Lewis of the Institute for the Study of War. “U.S. forces need to play the role of honest broker once again, as they did in 2007 and 2008,” the Kagans wrote recently in the Los Angeles Times. “But they can only play that role if they are present.” The Kagans say 25,000 troops are necessary to reverse enemy gains. Unpopular? For sure. Risky? You bet. The job of a president, however, is not to do the popular or safe thing. It’s to do the right thing. And if defeating the Islamic State before it has a chance to strike America is the right thing — and it surely is — then the president must choose the appropriate means to that end. In September 2003, The Weekly Standard published a cover story calling for more troops in Iraq. The headline was “Accept No Substitutes.” More than a decade later, the same rule applies. Until Americans are on the ground in large numbers in Iraq and Syria, until the U.S. government faces the fact that there is no way to defeat the Islamic State without also defeating Assad, our enemies will have the upper hand. And all of us — Christians, Jews, and Muslims, in the Middle East, in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in America — will be at risk.

#### Instability causes Nuclear War – Multiple Reasons

Krepinevich, 13 – [Andrew F. Krepinevich, West Point graduate, he holds an M.P.A. and a Ph.D. from Harvard University, President of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, which he joined following a 21- year career in the U.S. Army. He has served in the Department of Defense’s Office of Net Assessment, on the personal staff of three secretaries of defense, the National Defense Panel, the Defense Science Board Task Force on Joint Experimentation, and the Defense Policy Board, 2013, Critical MASS Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East, file:///Users/user/Downloads/Nuclear-Proliferation-in-the-Middle-East.pdf , Conclusion] Jeong

Contrary to the prevailing wisdom in some quarters that Cold War models of deterrence will apply, a Middle East in which two hostile competitor powers—in this case, Iran and Israel—have nuclear weapons promises to be highly unstable. In part, this may stem from each side’s lack of insight into how its competitor calculates cost, benefit, and risk, leaving the door open for miscalculation. Regardless, there exists a structural instability in the competition owing to the exceedingly short missile flight times between states in the region and the costs (both financial and technical) of fielding, maintaining, and operating effective early warning and command and control systems. Instability is heightened further due to the prospect that a third party might seek to trigger a catalytic war between two other states. For example, firing ballistic or cruise missiles at one nuclear-armed state would be interpreted as an attack by its nuclear rival. Using cyber weapons to introduce false information into an early warning system may also be a means of triggering a catalytic war. Should Iran acquire a nuclear capability, intense pressure among some other states in the region to pursue nuclear weapons will likely emerge. If the region is host to a Shi’a/Persian bomb and a Jewish/Israeli bomb, then pride and honor, to say nothing of security, may “require” a Turkish bomb and a Sunni Arab bomb. The result would almost certainly be a ratcheting up of regional instability. Powers external to the region will likely seek to influence the competition and improve their standing with key regional powers by offering key technologies and capabilities that could greatly compromise regional stability in an already turbulent environment. Preventing a proliferated Middle East may be beyond the capabilities of the United States or the international community. Given the consequences of such an environment, however, all options for preventing this possibility should be thoroughly explored. At the same time, a hedging strategy must be developed that positions the United States and the international community to maximize the prospects of preserving both regional stability and the sixty-eight-year-old tradition of non-use of nuclear weapons. Toward this end, a rich menu of plausible scenarios should be examined to identify ways in which deterrence might fail and, correspondingly, possible options to strengthen the barriers to nuclear use.

### -prolif

#### US Primacy guarantees successful deterrence measures – Checks global escalations

Mitchell, 14 – [ George J. Mitchell, B.L from Georgetown University, officer in the US Army Counter-Intelligence Corps, Trial Lawyer in the US Justice Department, former US special envoy to the Middle East and US Senate majority leader, chairman emeritus of the international law firm, 9-9-2014, US the only power that can push for peace America’s prosperity and world dominance will extend into the future, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2014/09/08/america-only-power-that-can-push-for-peace-between-israel-palestinians/H4v87uWSKdWMdkvJuR0fYM/story.html>] Jeong

As the world’s dominant power, the United States enjoys many benefits. But it also incurs many burdens, not the least of which is the widespread impression of American omnipotence. When I speak in Asia, I like to tell a story: A businessman in Pakistan wakes up one morning and goes into the bathroom to take a shower. But, when he turns on the faucet, there’s no hot water. “Ah,” he says, “Obama and the CIA, again.” For some, every problem in the world is an American problem. The reality, of course, is that the United States’ ability to control events in the world is limited. Many pundits and analysts, citing that reality, see the country in decline. I disagree. Though it may not be able to control events, the United States does have unequalled power to influence them. And, in the coming decades, that power will grow, not wane. Still, as the world’s population increases, as the size and influence of China and India grow, as political turmoil rises, the United States will face many new challenges in deciding how to deploy its political, economic, and military power. But even in the face of these misperceptions and challenges, the United States can and must remain engaged in seeking peace in the Middle East. It took 1,800 years after the birth of Christ for the earth’s population to reach 1 billion. The most recent billion — the 7th — was added in 13 years. The United Nations projects that by 2050, the world population will reach about 9.5 billion people. It will later peak around 10 billion, then level off and begin to decline. Most of the growth will be in Asia and Africa. Of the current population, one in five is Muslim, about 1.2 billion. Fifty years from now, one in three will be Muslim, or about 3.5 billion. To put that figure into perspective, that was the total population of the world as recently as 1970. Although we should be skeptical of all human predictions (including population projections), the overwhelming military dominance achieved by the United States makes it unlikely that there will be a major war among large nation-states in the foreseeable future. In that sense, the world is a safer place today than it was in the 20th century when more than 75 million people died in two world wars in countries where the population was much smaller than it is today.

#### Hegemony acts as a global deterrent – Maintains stability vis a vis primacy and globalization

Jacobs, 14 – [Ryan Timothy Jacobs, Graduate from University of North Carolina in International Studies, 6-27-2014, Why U.S. Hegemonic Power is Essential for Future Global Stabilization, <https://www.academia.edu/7784026/Why_the_U.S._Hegemonic_Power_is_Essential_for_Future_Global_Stabilization>] Jeong

In contrast, the political structure of a hegemony primarily differs from an empire on the notion of the political power having final authority. Also, a hegemony is not a political unit that rules over another unit that is "separate and alien to it." The Online Etymology Dictionary defines the term "hegemony", "(1560s)from Greek hegemonia "leadership, a leading the way, a going first;" also "the authority or sovereignty of one city-state over a number of others," as Athens in Attica, Thebes in Boeotia; from hegemon "leader," from hegeisthai "to lead," perhaps originally "to track down," from PIE \*sag-eyo-, from root \*sag- "to seek out, track down, trace". Originally of predominance of one city state or another in Greek history; in reference to modern situations from 1860, at first of Prussia in relation to other German states. 4 This leadership, and authority is commonly utilized to influence others to develop similarly in order to create a stable, international relationship. Presently, as the hegemonic power, the United States seeks to produce democracy and capitalism; which focus on human rights and free trade. Another interesting explanation of a hegemonic power is illustrated by Italian Marxist Gramsci in 1971, as "the supremacy of a social group manifest(ing) itself in two ways, as' domination' and as 'intellectual and moral leadership'" and "the 'normal' exercise of hegemony on the now classical terrain of the parliamentary regime is characterized by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally, without force predominating excessively over consent." 5 In addition, addressing the Theory of Hegemonic Stability (HST) is imperative for this research. HST is based on the idea that the international system can only remain stable if there is a single dominant state that regulates the interactions of other states in the system. The hegemonic power must have the power, will and commitment to enforce the rules. It must also be perceived as mutually beneficial to the major states. The capability rests upon three attributes: a large, growing economy; dominance in a leading technological or economic sector; and political power backed up by projective military. 6 The Ruth C. Lawson Professor of International Politics from Mount Holyoke College, Vincent Ferraro cites four nation-states that have been hegemonic powers: Portugal, Holland, Britain (at two points in history); and of course, the United States (to present day). After World War II, when the United States was recognized as the hegemonic power by its Western allies, international stability has relied upon U.S. dominance. Therefore states that threaten the stability of the western hegemonic power also fulminate global stability. It is essential that the United States continues to play the predominant international role that it does today for many years to come. As technology is rapidly expanding, one of the most important areas that U.S. involvement is necessary is communications. "The United States technological assets-including its leadership in piloting social networking and rapid communications-give it an advantage, but the Internet also will continue to boost the power of nonstate actors. In most cases, US power will need to be enhanced through relevant outside networks, friends, and affiliates that cancoalesce on any particular issue. Leadership will be a function of position, enmeshment, diplomatic skill, and constructive demeanor." 7 Furthermore, future global stabilization requires the U.S. to advance developments in other facets of technology (weaponry, transportation, etc.), as it will be crucial for defense and peacekeeping operations, as well. With the strengthening of international law, and success of the United Nations (U.N.), the U.S. would have the capability of assuring such stability. This would constitute the U.S., enshrined in democracy; as not only one of the beneficiaries of global stability, but also a body politic that exemplifies durability over time.

### -at: China Rise

#### No risk of China rise – Too many regional obstacles

Babones, 6-11- [Salvatore Babones, Associate Professor at the University of Sydney, PhD in Sociology and Social Policy, Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, 6-11-2015, American Hegemony Is Here to Stay: U.S. hegemony is now as firm as or firmer than it has ever been, and will remain so for a long time to come, The National Interest, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/american-hegemony-here-stay-13089?page=2>] Jeong

WHEN PUNDITS scope out the imminent threats to U.S. hegemony, the one country on their radar screens is China. While the former Soviet Union never reached above 45 percent of U.S. total national income, the Chinese economy may already have overtaken the American economy, and if not it certainly will soon. If sheer economic size is the foundation of political and military power, China is positioned for future global hegemony. Will it build on this foundation? Can it? Much depends on the future of China’s relationships with its neighbors. China lives in a tough neighborhood. It faces major middle-tier powers on three sides: Russia to the north, South Korea and Japan to the east, and Vietnam and India to the south. To the west it faces a series of weak and failing states, but that may be more of a burden than a blessing: China’s own western regions are also sites of persistent instability. It is perhaps realistic to imagine China seeking to expand to the north at the expense of Russia and Mongolia. Ethnic Russians are abandoning Siberia and the Pacific coast in droves, and strategic areas along Russia’s border with China have been demographically and economically overwhelmed by Chinese immigration. Twenty-second-century Russia may find it difficult to hold the Far East against China. But that is not a serious threat to U.S. hegemony. If anything, increasing Sino-Russian tensions may reinforce U.S. global hegemony, much as Sino-Soviet tensions did in the 1970s. To the southeast, China clearly seeks to dominate the South China Sea and beyond. The main barrier to its doing so is the autonomy of Taiwan. Were Taiwan ever to be reintegrated with China, it would be difficult for other regional powers to successfully challenge a united China for control of the basin. In the future, it is entirely possible that China will come to dominate these, its own coastal waters. This would be a minor setback to an America accustomed to dominating all of the world’s seas, but it would not constitute a serious strategic threat to the United States. Across the East China Sea, China faces Japan and South Korea—two of the most prosperous, technologically advanced and militarily best-equipped countries in the world. Historical enmities ensure that China will never expand in that direction. Worse for China, it is quite likely that any increase in China’s ability to project power beyond its borders will be matched with similar steps by a wary, remilitarizing Japan. The countries on China’s southern border are so large, populous and poor that it is difficult to imagine China taking much interest in the region beyond simple resource exploitation. Chinese companies may seek profit opportunities in Cambodia, Myanmar and Pakistan, but there is little for China to gain from strategic domination of the region. There will be no Chinese-sponsored Asian equivalent of NATO or the Warsaw Pact. Farther abroad, much has been made of China’s strategic engagement in Africa and Latin America. Investment-starved countries in these regions have been eager to access Chinese capital and in many cases have welcomed Chinese investment, expertise and even immigration. But it is hard to imagine them welcoming Chinese military bases, and equally hard to imagine China asking them for bases. The American presence in Africa is in large part the legacy of centuries of European colonialism. China has no such legacy to build on.

### -at: multipolarity

#### No rising competitors – China and Russia know they would get decimated

Ikenberry 14 -- PhD, Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University in the Department of Politics and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs (G. John, “The Illusion of Geopolitics: The Enduring Power of the Liberal Order,” Foreign Affairs Magazine, May/June 2014, <https://www.foreignaffairs.org/articles/china/2014-04-17/illusion-geopolitics>, tony)

Ultimately, even if China and Russia do attempt to contest the basic terms of the current global order, the adventure will be daunting and self-defeating. These powers aren’t just up against the United States; they would also have to contend with the most globally organized and deeply entrenched order the world has ever seen, one that is dominated by states that are liberal, capitalist, and democratic. This order is backed by a U.S.-led network of alliances, institutions, geopolitical bargains, client states, and democratic partnerships. It has proved dynamic and expansive, easily integrating rising states, beginning with Japan and Germany after World War II. It has shown a capacity for shared leadership, as exemplified by such forums as the G-8 and the G-20. It has allowed rising non-Western countries to trade and grow, sharing the dividends of modernization. It has accommodated a surprisingly wide variety of political and economic models -- social democratic (western Europe), neoliberal (the United Kingdom and the United States), and state capitalist (East Asia). The prosperity of nearly every country -- and the stability of its government -- fundamentally depends on this order. In the age of liberal order, revisionist struggles are a fool’s errand. Indeed, China and Russia know this. They do not have grand visions of an alternative order. For them, international relations are mainly about the search for commerce and resources, the protection of their sovereignty, and, where possible, regional domination. They have shown no interest in building their own orders or even taking full responsibility for the current one and have offered no alternative visions of global economic or political progress. That’s a critical shortcoming, since international orders rise and fall not simply with the power of the leading state; their success also hinges on whether they are seen as legitimate and whether their actual operation solves problems that both weak and powerful states care about. In the struggle for world order, China and Russia (and certainly Iran) are simply not in the game. Under these circumstances, the United States should not give up its efforts to strengthen the liberal order. The world that Washington inhabits today is one it should welcome. And the grand strategy it should pursue is the one it has followed for decades: deep global engagement. It is a strategy in which the United States ties itself to the regions of the world through trade, alliances, multilateral institutions, and diplomacy. It is a strategy in which the United States establishes leadership not simply through the exercise of power but also through sustained efforts at global problem solving and rule making. It created a world that is friendly to American interests, and it is made friendly because, as President John F. Kennedy once said, it is a world “where the weak are safe and the strong are just.”

### -at: retrenchment

#### Retrenchment creates a power vacuum and offshore balancing – Only maintaining primacy checks global conflicts

Dueck, 4-30 – [Colin Dueck, Senior Fellow of the FPRI and an associate professor in the School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs at George Mason University, Graduated from Princeton University in politics, and international relations at Oxford under a Rhodes scholarship, 4-30-2015, The Strategy of Retrenchment and Its Consequences, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?lng=en&id=190230>] Jeong

Overall, US foreign policy under Obama has been characterized by a clearly declared unwillingness to engage in further large-scale ground campaigns overseas; relatively deep cuts in defense spending; a deep aversion to putting boots on the ground; and a keen preference for US allies to take the lead in facing pressing security challenges. The goal has been to retrench US military power overseas without undue risk to basic American interests, and to refocus on domestic policy priorities, or as the President puts it: "nation-building right here at home." [[15]](http://www.fpri.org/articles/2015/04/strategy-retrenchment-and-its-consequences#_ftn15) This approach has achieved some of its intended consequences, but it has held unintended ones as well. Specifically, American retrenchment has left multiple international security threats to germinate in ways dangerous to US interests. Leading actors including the governments of Russia, China, and Iran, together with Islamist militants inside the Arab world and beyond, have naturally interpreted the long-term trend as one of American disengagement, creating power vacuums they are happy to fill. President Obama for his part has never fully appreciated the possible costs, risks, and downsides of strategic retrenchment, and there is little indication he ever will. The unintended negative consequences of US retrenchment under Obama ought to raise questions about the case for offshore balancing. Academic proponents of offshore balancing do not dispute that Obama's regional and functional foreign policy strategies have frequently been incoherent in their specifics. Nor do advocates of offshore balancing dispute that current spasmodic attempts at retrenchment have often been half-hearted and poorly executed. But notice what the offshore balancers argue next: that the answer to any unexpected downsides of existing American strategic retrenchment, must be further and more profound retrenchment. Traditionally, foreign policy realists have recognized that a strategy of retrenchment is not in itself a guarantee of success. Like any other strategy, retrenchment must be implemented with considerable skill, prudence, and rigorous self-awareness, and in the arena of international power politics this is no small thing. Moreover there are certain inherent risks to retrenchment, even at the best of times. There are tradeoffs. Scholars of grand strategy have long understood that strategies with less immediate cost may also involve greater eventual risk, and vice-versa. [[16]](http://www.fpri.org/articles/2015/04/strategy-retrenchment-and-its-consequences#_ftn16) When a great power retrenches, this is easily taken as a sign of growing weakness. The desire to reduce short-term costs may trigger increased strategic and international risk, eventually imposing even greater costs. To put it bluntly, retrenchment doesn't always work out as planned. In one of the great realist scholarly works of the past half-century, War and Change in World Politics, Princeton University Emeritus Professor Robert Gilpin discussed the inevitable downsides of strategic retrenchment. Here is what he said: Retrenchment by its very nature is an indication of relative weakness and declining power, and thus retrenchment can have a deteriorating effect on allies and rivals. Sensing the decline of their protector, allies try to obtain the best deal they can from the rising master of the system. Rivals are stimulated to "close in," and frequently they precipitate a conflict in the process. Thus World War I began as a conflict between Russia and Austria over the disposition of the remnants of the retreating Ottoman Empire. [[17]](http://www.fpri.org/articles/2015/04/strategy-retrenchment-and-its-consequences#_ftn17) This recognition of inevitable tradeoffs with any strategy remains a central insight of classical foreign policy realism. Yet today, the word "realism" is often attached to a proposed course of endless American retrenchment, with little explicit recognition of any possible downside. At the very least, we ought to recognize that offshore balancing is only one possible strategy with a realist or geopolitical logic. Another option, less commonly articulated within the academy but not entirely absent, would be a kind of forward realism, based upon the understanding that in the end a forward strategic presence on the other side of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans is very useful for American interests. Indeed one might say this has been a consistent theme in US grand strategy since the 1940s, and rightly so. Now if America's relative international capabilities were really in steep and inevitable decline, then a grand strategy of deep retrenchment or offshore balancing might be most appropriate. But the US still holds unmatched capabilities, and their imminent demise is hardly inevitable. [[18]](http://www.fpri.org/articles/2015/04/strategy-retrenchment-and-its-consequences#_ftn18) If anything, the risk today is that excessive and ill-managed American retrenchment in recent years feeds into a perception of US decline unnecessarily. And this is exactly what has happened under President Obama.

#### US Hegemony is key to deter escalating aggressions – Retrenchment guarantees great power wars

Kagan, 14 – [Robert Kagan, PhD in American Diplomatic History from American University, Masters of Public Policy from Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, Senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, 5-24-2014, New Republic, Superpowers Don't Get to Retire: What our tired country still owes the world, http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117859/allure-normalcy-what-america-still-owes-world] Jeong

Today, however, Americans seem overwhelmed by the difficulty and complexity of it all. They yearn to return to what Niebuhr called “the innocency of irresponsibility,” or at least to a normalcy in which the United States can limit the scope of its commitments. In this way America has perhaps returned to the mood of the 1920s. There is a difference, however. In the 1920s, it was not America’s world order that needed shoring up. Americans felt, mistakenly as it turned out, that it was Britain’s and Europe’s job to preserve the world order they had created. Today, it is America’s world order that needs propping up. Will Americans decide that it matters this time, when only they have the capacity to sustain it? You never miss the water ’til the well runs dry, or so the saying goes. One wonders whether Americans, including their representatives and their president, quite understand what is at stake. When President Obama first took office five years ago, Peter Baker of The New York Times reported that he intended to deal “with the world as it is rather than as it might be.” It is a standard realist refrain and has been repeated time and again by senior Obama officials as a way of explaining why he decided against pursuing some desirable but unreachable “ideal” in this place or that. What fewer and fewer seem to realize, however, is that the last 70 years have offered Americans and many others something of a reprieve from the world “as it is.” Periods of peace and prosperity can make people forget what the world “as it is” really looks like, and to conclude that the human race has simply ascended to some higher plateau of being. This was the common view in Europe in the first decade of the twentieth century. At a time when there had not been a war between great powers in 40 years, or a major Europe-wide war in a century, the air was filled with talk of a new millennium in which wars among civilized nations had become impossible. Three-quarters of a century and two world wars and a cold war later, millennial thoughts return. Studies cited by Fareed Zakaria purport to show that some “transformation of international relations” has occurred. “Changes of borders by force” have dropped dramatically “since 1946.” The nations of Western Europe, having been responsible for two new wars a year for 600 years, had not even started one “since 1945.” Steven Pinker observes that the number of deaths from war, ethnic conflict, and military coups has declined—since 1945—and concludes that the human race has become “socialized” to prefer peace and nonviolence. The dates when these changes supposedly began ought to be a tip-off. Is it a coincidence that these happy trends began when the American world order was established after World War II, or that they accelerated in the last two decades of the twentieth century, when America’s only serious competitor collapsed? Imagine strolling through Central Park and, after noting how much safer it had become, deciding that humanity must simply have become less violent—without thinking that perhaps the New York Police Department had something to do with it. In fact, the world “as it is” is a dangerous and often brutal place. There has been no transformation in human behavior or in international relations. In the twenty-first century, no less than in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, force remains the ultima ratio. The question, today as in the past, is not whether nations are willing to resort to force but whether they believe they can get away with it when they do. If there has been less aggression, less ethnic cleansing, less territorial conquest over the past 70 years, it is because the United States and its allies have both punished and deterred aggression, have intervened, sometimes, to prevent ethnic cleansing, and have gone to war to reverse territorial conquest. The restraint showed by other nations has not been a sign of human progress, the strengthening of international institutions, or the triumph of the rule of law. It has been a response to a global configuration of power that, until recently, has made restraint seem the safer course. When Vladimir Putin failed to achieve his goals in Ukraine through political and economic means, he turned to force, because he believed that he could. He will continue to use force so long as he believes that the payoff exceeds the cost. Nor is he unique in this respect. What might China do were it not hemmed in by a ring of powerful nations backed by the United States? For that matter, what would Japan do if it were much more powerful and much less dependent on the United States for its security? We have not had to find out the answers to these questions, not yet, because American predominance, the American alliance system, and the economic, political, and institutional aspects of the present order, all ultimately dependent on power, have mostly kept the lid closed on this Pandora’s box. Nor have we had to find out yet what the world “as it is” would do to the remarkable spread of democracy. Skeptics of “democracy promotion” argue that the United States has often tried to plant democracy in infertile soil. They may be right. The widespread flowering of democracy around the world in recent decades may prove to have been artificial and therefore tenuous. As Michael Ignatieff once observed, it may be that “liberal civilization” itself “runs deeply against the human grain and is achieved and sustained only by the most unremitting struggle against human nature.” Perhaps this fragile democratic garden requires the protection of a liberal world order, with constant feeding, watering, weeding, and the fencing off of an ever-encroaching jungle. In the absence of such efforts, the weeds and the jungle may sooner or later come back to reclaim the land. One wonders if even the current economic order reflects the world “as it is.” A world in which autocracies make ever more ambitious attempts to control the flow of information, and in which autocratic kleptocracies use national wealth and resources to further their private interests, may prove less hospitable to the kind of free flow of commerce the world has come to appreciate in recent decades. In fact, from the time that Roosevelt and Truman first launched it, the whole project of promoting and defending a liberal world order has been a concerted effort not to accept the world “as it is.” The American project has aimed at shaping a world different from what had always been, taking advantage of America’s unique situation to do what no nation had ever been able to do. Today, however, because many Americans no longer recall what the world “as it is” really looks like, they cannot imagine it. They bemoan the burdens and failures inherent in the grand strategy but take for granted all the remarkable benefits. Nor do they realize, perhaps, how quickly it can all unravel. The international system is an elaborate web of power relationships, in which every nation, from the biggest to the smallest, is constantly feeling for shifts or disturbances. Since 1945, and especially since 1989, the web has been geared to respond primarily to the United States. Allies observe American behavior and calculate America’s reliability. Nations hemmed in or threatened by American power watch for signs of growing or diminishing power and will. When the United States appears to retrench, allies necessarily become anxious, while others look for opportunities. In recent years, the world has picked up unmistakable signals that Americans may no longer want to carry the burden of global responsibility. Others read the polls, read the president’s speeches calling for “nation-building at home,” see the declining defense budgets and defense capabilities, and note the extreme reticence, on the part of both American political parties, about using force. The world judges that, were it not for American war-weariness, the United States probably would by now have used force in Syria—just as it did in Kosovo, in Bosnia, and in Panama. President Obama himself recently acknowledged as much when he said, “It’s not that it’s not worth it. It’s that after a decade of war, you know, the United States has limits.” Such statements set the web vibrating. In East Asia, nations living in close proximity to an increasingly powerful China want to know whether Americans will make a similar kind of calculation when it comes to defending them; in the Middle East, nations worried about Iran wonder if they will be left to confront it alone; in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states, American security guarantees are meaningless unless Americans are able and willing to meet them. Are they? No one has taken a poll lately on whether the United States should come to the defense of its treaty allies in the event of a war between, say, China and Japan; or whether it should come to the defense of Estonia in a Ukraine-like conflict with Russia. The answers might prove interesting. Meanwhile, the signs of the global order breaking down are all around us. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and seizure of Crimea was the first time since World War II that a nation in Europe had engaged in territorial conquest. If Iran manages to acquire a nuclear weapon, it will likely lead other powers in the region to do the same, effectively undoing the nonproliferation regime, which, along with American power, has managed to keep the number of nuclear-armed powers limited over the past half century. Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Russia are engaged in a proxy war in Syria that, in addition to the 150,000 dead and the millions displaced, has further destabilized a region that had already been in upheaval. In East Asia, nervousness about China’s rise, combined with uncertainty about America’s commitment, is exacerbating tensions. In recent years the number of democracies around the world has been steadily declining, while the number of autocracies grows. If these trends continue, in the near future we are likely to see increasing conflict, increasing wars over territory, greater ethnic and sectarian violence, and a shrinking world of democracies. How will Americans respond? If the test is once again to be “national interests” narrowly construed, then Americans may find all of this tolerable, or at least preferable to doing something to stop it. Could the United States survive if Syria remains under the control of Assad or, more likely, disintegrates into a chaos of territories, some of which will be controlled by jihadi terrorists? Could it survive if Iran acquires a nuclear weapon, and if in turn Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Egypt acquire nuclear weapons? Or if North Korea launches a war on the South? Could it survive in a world where China dominates much of East Asia, or where China and Japan resume their old conflict? Could it survive in a world where Russia dominates Eastern Europe, including not only Ukraine but the Baltic states and perhaps even Poland? Of course it could. From the point of view of strict “necessity” and narrow national interest, the United States could survive all of this. It could trade with a dominant China and work out a modus vivendi with a restored Russian empire. Those alarmed by such developments will be hard-pressed, as Roosevelt was, to explain how each marginal setback would affect the parochial interests of the average American. As in the past, Americans will be among the last to suffer grievously from a breakdown of world order. And by the time they do feel the effects, it may be very late in the day. Looking back on the period before World War II, Robert Osgood, the most thoughtful of realist thinkers of the past century, discerned a critical element missing from the strategic analyses of the day. Mere rational calculations of the “national interest,” he argued, proved inadequate. Paradoxically, it was the “idealists,” those who were “most sensitive to the Fascist menace to Western culture and civilization,” who were “among the first to understand the necessity of undertaking revolutionary measures to sustain America’s first line of defense in Europe.” Idealism, he concluded, was “an indispensable spur to reason in leading men to perceive and act upon the real imperatives of power politics.” This was Roosevelt’s message, too, when he asked Americans to defend “not their homes alone, but the tenets of faith and humanity on which their churches, their governments, and their very civilization are founded.” Perhaps Americans can be inspired in this way again, without the threat of a Hitler or an attack on their homeland. But this time they will not have 20 years to decide. The world will change much more quickly than they imagine. And there is no democratic superpower waiting in the wings to save the world if this democratic superpower falters.

# BAD

## Unique Alternatives

### -decline now

#### Hegemony fails and destabilizes regional powers – no impact to the transition – turns case – disregard their fearmongering

Posen 14 – Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT and the director of MIT's Security Studies Program (Barry, “Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy,” Cornell University Press, p. 60-62, June 24, 2014, tony)

Partisans of Liberal Hegemony might accept some of the factual statements above but would argue that the good the strategy has achieved far outweighs the bad. As noted in the introduction, partisans assume that liberal democracy, human rights, market economies, free trade, nuclear nonproliferation, middle and great powers that do not take responsibility for their own security, and U.S. political and military hegemony are all mutually causative, and all lead ineluctably to a vast improvement in the security and welfare of others, and hence to the U.S. security position. 124 They also posit that the world is fragile; damage to one of these good things will lead to damage to other good things, so the United States must defend all. The “fragile and interconnected” argument is politically effective. By accident or design, the argument derives an inherent plausibility due to the inevitable limits of our substantive knowledge, fear, uncertainty, liberal ideology, and U.S. national pride. Most targets of the argument do not know enough about the world to argue with experts who claim these connections; the chain of posited connections always leads to danger for the United States, and fear is a powerful selling tool. Once fear is involved, even low-probability chains of causation can be made to seem frightening enough to do something about, especially if you believe your country has overwhelming power. It is pleasant to believe that the spread of U.S. values such as liberty and democracy depend on U.S. power and leadership. The argument does not stand close scrutiny. First, it obscures the inherently strong security position of the United States, which I have already reviewed. The economic, geographic, demographic, and technological facts supporting this point are seldom discussed, precisely because they are facts. It takes very large events abroad to significantly threaten the United States, and more moderate strategies can address these possibilities at lower costs. Typical Liberal Hegemony arguments for any new project take the form of domino theory. One small untended problem is expected easily and quickly to produce another and another until the small problems become big ones, or the collection of problems becomes overwhelming. Whether these connections are valid in any particular case will always be open to debate. Even if the connections are plausible, however, it is unlikely given the inherent U.S. security position that the United States need prop up the first domino. It has the luxury of waiting for information and choosing the dominos it wishes to shore up, if any. Second, proponents of Liberal Hegemony often elide the difference between those benefits of the strategy that flow to others, and those that flow to the United States. Individually, it is surely true that cheap-riders and reckless-drivers like the current situation because of the welfare, security, or power gains that accrue to them. United States commitments may make the international politics of some regions less exciting than would otherwise be the case. The United States, however, pays a significant price and assumes significant risks to provide these benefits to others, while the gains to the United States are exaggerated because the United States is inherently quite secure. Third, Liberal Hegemonists argue that U.S. commitments reduce the intensity of regional security competitions, limit the spread of nuclear weaponry, and lower the general odds of conflict, and that this helps keep the United States out of wars that would emerge in these unstable regions. This chain of interconnected benefits is not self-evident. United States activism does change the nature of regional competitions; it does not necessarily suppress them. For example, where U.S. commitments encourage “free-riding,” this attracts coercion, which the United States must then do more to deter. Where the United States encourages “reckless driving,” it produces regional instability. United States activism probably helps cause some nuclear proliferation, because some states will want nuclear weapons to deter an activist United States. When the United States makes extended deterrence commitments to discourage proliferation, the U.S. military is encouraged to adopt conventional and nuclear military strategies that are themselves destabilizing. Finally, as is clear from the evidence of the last twenty years, the United States ends up in regional wars in any case. Fourth, one key set of interconnections posited by Liberal Hegemonists is that between U.S. security provision, free trade, and U.S. prosperity. This is a prescriptive extension of hegemonic stability theory, developed by economist Charles Kindleberger from a close study of the collapse of global liquidity in 1931 and the ensuing great depression. 125 Professor Kindleberger concluded from this one case that a global system of free trade and finance would more easily survive crises if there was a “leader,” a hegemon with sufficient economic power such that its policies could “save” a system in crisis, which would also have the interest and the will to do so, precisely because it was so strong. 126 Subsequent theorists, such as Robert Gilpin, extended this to the idea that a global economic and security hegemon would be even better. 127 Robert Keohane, and later John Ikenberry, added to this theory the notion that a “liberal” hegemon would be still better, because it would graft transparent and legitimate rules onto the hegemonic system, which would make it more acceptable to the “subjects” and hence less costly to run. 128 A comprehensive rebuttal of hegemonic stability theory is beyond the scope of this book. But this theory has fallen into desuetude in the study of international politics in the last twenty years. Proponents did not produce a clear, consolidated version of the theory that integrated economics, security, and institutional variables in a systematic way that gives us a sense of their relative importance and interdependence, and how they work in practice. The theory is difficult to test because there are only two cases: nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain, and post–World War II United States, and they operated in very different ways under very different conditions. Finally, testing of narrow versions of the theory did not show compelling results. 129 These problems should make us somewhat skeptical about making the theory the basis for U.S. grand strategy.

#### US hegemonic decline is inevitable – Overstretching is happening now

Astore, 6-13 – [William Astore, Retired lieutenant colonel (USAF), is a TomDispatch regular. He has taught at the Air Force Academy and the Naval Postgraduate School, and now teaches History at the Pennsylvania College of Technology, 6-13-2015, America's Military Strategy? Persistent Overreach, The World Post, Huffington Post, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-astore/americas-military-strateg_b_7575900.html>] Jeong

Reports that President Obama is considering even [more troops and bases](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/12/world/middleeast/iraq-isis-us-military-bases-martin-e-dempsey.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_hplink) to fight ISIS in Iraq put me to mind of Roman general [Publius Quinctilius Varus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Publius_Quinctilius_Varus%22%20%5Ct%20%22_hplink). Two millennia ago, Varus committed three Roman legions to the [Teutoburg Forest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Teutoburg_Forest%22%20%5Ct%20%22_hplink) in Germania [in terrain](http://www.livius.org/te-tg/teutoburg/teutoburg-kalkriese.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_hplink) that neutralized Roman advantages in firepower and maneuverability. Ambushed and caught in a vise, his legions were destroyed in detail as Varus took his own life. To Rome the shock and disgrace of defeat were so great that Emperor Augustus cried, "Quinctilius Varus, give me back my Legions!" Ever since 9/11, American presidents and their military advisors have repeatedly committed U.S. troops and prestige to inhospitable regions in terrain that largely neutralizes U.S. advantages in firepower and maneuverability. Whether it's the urban jungles of Baghdad or Fallujah or Mosul, or the harshly primitive and mountainous terrain of Afghanistan, American troops have been committed to campaigns that they can't win (in any enduring sense), under conditions that facilitate ambushes by an elusive enemy with superior knowledge of the local terrain. The number of U.S. soldiers killed or seriously wounded in these campaigns is roughly equivalent to those lost by Varus, though unlike Varus, no U.S. general has yet to fall on his sword. Unlike Rome, which did learn from Varus's catastrophe the perils of imperial overreach, the U.S. persists in learning nothing. Perhaps that's because America's defeat is collective and gradual, rather than singular and quick. America may lack a Varus or a calamity like Teutoburg Forest, yet the overall result since 9/11 has been no less debilitating to American foreign policy. Despite setback after setback, American presidents and generals persist in trying to control hostile territory at the end of insecure logistical lines, while mounting punitive raids designed to deny Al Qaeda or ISIS or the Taliban "safe havens." We should have learned the impossibility of doing this from Vietnam, but it seems America's presidents and generals keep trying to get Vietnam right, even if they have to move the fight to the deserts of Iraq or the mountains of Afghanistan. Yet seeking to control territory in inhospitable regions like the Middle East or Afghanistan, whether you use American troops or proxy armies, is an exercise in strategic futility. It's also old-fashioned thinking: the idea that, to exert influence and control, you need large numbers of military boots on the ground. But the world has already moved past such thinking into "borderless" hegemony as demonstrated by the Internet, by global business and finance, and by America's own practice of drone strikes and cyber-war. By repeatedly deploying American troops -- whether in the tens of hundreds or tens of thousands - to so many equivalents of the Teutoburg Forest, our leaders continue a strategy of overreach that was already proven bankrupt in Vietnam. Meanwhile, despite our own early revolutionary history, our leaders seem to have forgotten that no country likes to be occupied or interfered with by foreigners, no matter how "generous" and "benevolent" they claim to be. Let's also not forget that boots on the ground in faraway foreign lands cost an enormous amount of money, a cost that cannot be sustained indefinitely (just ask the British in 1781). America simply cannot afford more troop deployments (and commitments of prestige) that set the stage for more military disasters. When you persist in committing your legions to torturous terrain against an enemy that is well prepared to exact a high price for your personal hubris and strategic stubbornness, you get the fate you deserve. After Varus's calamity, the Romans stopped campaigning east of the Rhine. When will America's leaders learn that persistence in strategic overreach is nothing but folly?

### -multipolarity now

#### The world is multipolar – the United States is not a global hegemon and competing states make hegemony a pipe dream

Mearsheimer 14 -- Professor of political science at the University of Chicago, PhD in international relations (John J., “Realism Reader,” edited by Colin Elman and Michael A. Jensen, London ; New York : Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, p. 179-188, tony)

Hegemony's limits Great powers, as I have emphasized, strive to gain power over their rivals and hopefully become hegemons. Once a state achieves that exalted position, it becomes a status quo power. More needs to be said, however, about the meaning of hegemony. A hegemon is a state that is so powerful that it dominates all the other states in the system.21 No other state has the military wherewithal to put up a serious fight against it. In essence, a hegemon is the only great power in the system. A state that is substantially more powerful than the other great powers in the system is not a hegemon, because it faces, by definition, other great powers. The United Kingdom in the mid-nineteenth century, for example, is sometimes called a hegemon. But it was not a hegemon, because there were four other great powers in Europe at the time- Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia- and the United Kingdom did not dominate them in any meaningful way. In fact, during that period, the United Kingdom considered France to be a serious threat to the balance of power. Europe in the nineteenth century was multipolar, not unipolar. Hegemony means domination of the system, which is usually interpreted lo mean the entire world. It is possible, however, to apply the concept of a system more narrowly and use it to describe particular regions, such as Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Western Hemisphere. Thus, one can distinguish between global hegemons, which dominate the world, and regional hegemons, which dominate distinct geographical areas. The United States has been a regional hegemon in the Western Hemisphere for at least the past one hundred years. No other state in the Americas has sufficient military might to challenge it, which is why the United Stales is widely recognized as the only great power in its region. My argument ... is that except for the unlikely event wherein one state achieves clear-cut nuclear superiority, it is virtually impossible for any state to achieve global hegemony. The principal impediment to world domination is the difficulty of projecting power across the world's oceans onto the territory of a rival great power. The United States, for example, is the most powerful state on the planet today. But it does not dominate Europe and Northeast Asia the way it does the Western Hemisphere, and it has no intention of trying to conquer and control those distant regions, mainly because of the stopping power of water. Indeed, there is reason to think that the American military commitment to Europe and Northeast Asia might wither away over the next decade. In short, there has never been a global hegemon, and there is not likely to be one anytime soon. The best outcome a great power can hope for is to be a regional hegemon and possibly control another region that is nearby and accessible over land. The United States is the only regional hegemon in modern history, although other states have fought major wars in pursuit of regional hegemony: imperial Japan in Northeast Asia, and Napoleonic France, Wilhelmine Germany, and Nazi Germany in Europe. But none succeeded. The Soviet Union, which is located in Europe and Northeast Asia, threatened to dominate both of those regions during the Cold War. The Soviet Union might also have attempted to conquer the oil-rich Persian Gulf region, with which it shared a border. But even if Moscow had been able to dominate Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf, which it never came close to doing, it still would have been unable to conquer the Western Hemisphere and become a true global hegemon. States that achieve regional hegemony seek to prevent great powers in other regions from duplicating their feat. Regional hegemons, in other words, do not want peers. Thus the United States, for example, played a key role in preventing imperial Japan, Wilhelmine Germany, Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Union from gaining regional supremacy. Regional hegemons attempt to check aspiring hegemons in other regions because they fear that a rival great power that dominates its own region will be an especially powerful foe that is essentially free to cause trouble in the fearful great power's backyard. Regional hegemons prefer that there be at least two great powers located together in other regions, because their proximity will force them to concentrate their attention on each other rather than on the distant hegemon. Furthermore, if a potential hegemon emerges among them, the other great powers in that region might be able to contain it by themselves, allowing the distant hegemon to remain safely on the sidelines. Of course, if the local great powers were unable to do the job, the distant hegemon would take the appropriate measures to deal with the threatening state. The United States, as noted, has assumed that burden on four separate occasions in the twentieth century, which is why it is commonly referred to as an "offshore balancer." In sum, the ideal situation for any great power is to be the only regional hegemon in the world. That state would be a status quo power, and it would go to considerable lengths to preserve the existing distribution of power. The United States is in that enviable position today; it dominates the Western Hemisphere and there is no hegemon in any other area of the world. But if a regional hegemon is confronted with a peer competitor, it would no longer be a status quo power. Indeed, it would go to considerable lengths to weaken and maybe even destroy its distant rival. Of course, both regional hegemons would be motivated by that logic, which would make for a fierce security competition between them . . .

### -multilateralism

#### No impact to retrenchment – Multilateralism check escalation

**Fuller, 14** – [Roslyn Fuller, research Associate at the INSYTE Group, Lecturer at Trinity College and the National University of Ireland, 2014, “The Ukraine and the beginning of the multipolar world”, RT.com, 3/7/14, <http://rt.com/op-edge/ukraine-beginning-multipolar-world-430/>] Jeong

That was the theory, anyway. What happened, unfortunately, was that a few people – by and large based in Western nations, but by no means representative of their fellow citizens – took this opportunity to “take it all”, or at least as much of it as they could swallow without choking. Historically, this type of behavior has been de rigeur in international relations and old habits die hard. This “take it while it’s going” attitude meant using all the old institutions (the UN, the IMF) and the new ones (like the International Criminal Court) purely in pursuit of their own self-interests. These were quite narrow, as the people in charge of Western nations at this point were by and large corporate-friendly types who didn’t harbor too much sympathy for the unwashed masses. As a result, the post-War Keynesian economic framework was systematically dismantled, whole new nations entered the bond-servitude of IMF debt, and the new International Criminal Court was wielded effectively against recalcitrant third world leaders (Laurent Gbagbo, Muammar Gaddafi), while intervention-happy first world countries like Britain and the United States disingenuously claimed that over the 70 years since the Second World War they had been unable to come up with a definition of “aggression” (a feat all the more amazing, when one considers that the whole realm of international criminal law was kicked off by exactly these nations prosecuting leading Nazis for precisely this crime). Through all of these short-sighted policies, the message came through loud and clear: my way or the highway. Nothing’s changed. The multipolar world as an answer? International law practitioners could not fail to notice that in some respects our world was getting worse. In particular, inequality was increasing and control of our political and economic framework was rapidly devolving on fewer and fewer individuals, who made decisions that very few people could even understand, much less partake in. We were less well-off than our parents were and shut out from the very political processes that we had been trained to participate in. Money and connections were fast becoming the only qualifications one needed to get any job involving public responsibility, and ideas of economic and political equality that had once been mainstream were dismissed as “radical” and “naïve” with a vehemence that increased with each passing year. And this is why, for at least the past ten years, the multipolar world is a vision that has gained increasing traction in the international relations realm as possibly a fairly decent alternative to rule by the 1 percent. In this particular scenario, the world is again carved up, but this time four or five superpowers are in play. Who are these superpowers? Certainly, the USA and the EU, which work in tandem on many issues. The EU is, of course, still the lesser partner, but the more human and economic resources at its disposal, the more powerful the EU is going to be ten or twenty years down the line; hence, the impetus for rapid eastward expansion. China is also a certainty. With a billion people at its disposal, it is already the world’s second largest economy and has managed to translate this into spot number three in voting power at the World Bank. In this global chess game, Russia (the fourth power here) has adopted a position that has thus far mainly been defensive, not because of any inherent goodness, but merely because that’s where the chips are lying. Traditional client-States, like Syria and Iran, are firmly in Western crosshairs and the EU has already snapped up much of its former sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. While the EU is expanding as far as possible, Russia is trying to double down on what has traditionally been its sphere of influence in order to stay in the game. These familiar actors may eventually be rounded out by India and/or a more integrated South America spearheaded by Brazil. The current wrangling over the Ukraine has really only exposed some of the ways great powers do business with each other, i.e. testing where the boundaries lie. Will the boundary between the EU and Russia be on the eastern border of the Ukraine, the western border of the Ukraine, or smack down the middle? It’s hardly the type of question where you just sit back and see how things shake out when you are literally responsible for the fate of your nation (especially when military facilities are at stake), and it is a bland truism to point out that when two powerful nations set sights on each other, anyone in between them is in for a rough ride. This painful process is deeply rooted in an international system which shows no mercy for losers and very little for the hapless bystander. As this indicates, the multipolar world is in many respects regressive and nationally-oriented, but it does present a sea change from what we have been experiencing over the past twenty years, which is rule by an unchecked 1 percent and a world descending into modern feudalism. Russia before Putin was run by oligarchs with many a conservative Western analyst openly proposing emulating them. Had that continued and had China’s thousands of billionaires and millionaires gotten onboard, we might be looking at a much worse picture. Now I admit that a choice between Cold War Version 2.0 with new and improved superpowers, or global serfdom is hardly inspiring stuff. But if we want to avoid making that choice, we’re going to have to consider some deep changes. When I talk about the slow-grinding mills of God, I’m not primarily referring to Eastern or Western powers’ ability to call “humanitarian intervention”, “minority rights” or “propaganda black ops” on each other, terms which after decades of misuse retain a legal meaning, but have lost much currency in the broader area of public consumption. I’m referring to us as citizens, citizens primarily in the Western world, because we are still, despite everything, in the strongest position to affect international relations. As citizens we haven’t demanded a great deal of accountability from our governments over the past two decades and have turned a blind eye to policies that have not only served to virtually dispossess us, but also to alienate us from other people whom we, at the end of the day, have no choice but to get along with, given as we’re all inhabiting the same rock. Years of sitting back and hoping that someone else will take care of this mess is all catching up on us now. The good news is that it is perfectly possible to have an international system which does a far better job of providing a principled framework for dispute resolution than the current one does, but only if we all ditch the “my way or the highway” attitude, which has prevented the World Trade Organization, International Criminal Court, International Monetary Fund and United Nations from fulfilling their roles by putting short-term gains for the few ahead of long-term sustainability for everyone. It does require some effort though. Time to ditch reality TV in favor of tracking your MP’s voting record, and replace general complaint hour at the pub with volunteering for any of the myriad causes that don’t just talk about change, but actually do it. Rolling Jubilee which buys up and then writes off debt is a good example, but there are literally thousands of others. Demanding a (truly) independent investigation into sniper attacks on protesters in the Ukraine also comes to mind. Considering EU Foreign Policy Coordinator Catherine Ashton’s lukewarm response when this point was raised with her by the Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet, that might well be necessary. Then there are all the legacy issues: drone strikes, Guantanamo Bay, Iraq… the usual. They’ve blurred the lines of international law – in public perception – and if we want to move forward, those lines need to get sharp again; it means dealing with those issues head on and owning up to what went wrong. The bottom line is that we have worked ourselves into a corner over the past twenty years by dismantling the very international legal system that would have enabled us to achieve our hopes of peace and prosperity. Trust is at an all-time low. We need to start rebuilding confidence in our international system and international law. Together!

### -unsustainable

#### China rise is inevitable and leads to a multipolar regionalized international system

**Kupchan ’14** (Charles A. Kupchan, Professor of International Affairs in the School of Foreign Service and Government Department at Georgetown University and former Director for European Affairs on the National Security Council, “The Normative Foundations of Hegemony and the Coming Challenge to Pax Americana”, 5/16/14, *wcp*)

It is of important geopolitical consequence that hegemony has normative dimensions and that power transitions entail clashes among competing norms. **The world is entering a period of transformation as power shifts from the West to the rising rest.** One school of thought—which dominates in Washington—holds that emerging powers are poised to embrace the existing international order; Western norms are universal norms, and the dictates of globalization are ensuring their worldwide spread. According to Ikenberry, “The United States’ global position may be weakening, but the international system the United States leads can remain the dominant order of the twenty- first century.” The West should “sink the roots of this order as deeply as possible” to ensure that the world continues to play by its rules even as its material preponderance wanes. “China and other emerging great powers,” he concludes, “do not want to contest the basic rules and principles of the liberal international order; they wish to gain more authority and leadership within it.”82 The analysis in this article suggests that such conventional wisdom is illusory; emerging powers will not readily embrace the order on offer from the West. Regardless of the presumed functionality of the current order from a liberal, transactional perspective, emerging powers—China, India, Brazil, Turkey, to name a few—are following their own paths to modernity based on their own cultural, ideological, and socioeconomic trajectories. Their nor-mative and social orientations will produce quite disparate approaches to building and managing international order. Unlike during earlier periods of multipolarity, when different hegemonies often operated independently of each other, in today’s globalized world, multiple hegemonic zones will intensely and continuously interact with each other. In light of its growing economic and military power, **China is likely to pose the most significant challenge to the ordering norms of Pax Americana**. It is true that China for now is not challenging many of the rules associated with the Western liberal order, particularly when it comes to commerce. But as all great powers have done throughout history, China will likely seek to recast that order when it has the power to do so. Indeed, **China is set to become the world’s leading economy by the end of the next decade.**83 Drawing on its historical, cultural, and socioeconomic trajectory, Beijing is poised to bring to the fore a set of ordering norms that contrast sharply with those of Pax Americana. The normative orientation of China’s past approach to exercising hegemony is hardly a reliable predictor of the ordering norms that might shape a Chinese sphere of influence in the future. Nonetheless, the historical record provides a basis for informed speculation.84 China may well aspire to resurrect in East Asia a sphere of influence that is arrayed in concentric circles around a Sinicized core. Through this tiered structure, China might attempt to exercise a brand of regional hegemony modeled on the tributary system. China’s material primacy would serve as the foundation for its economic, strategic, and cultural centrality. Its neighbors would demonstrate deference to Beijing through both policy and ritual, but they would maintain their autonomy and their independent relations with each other. Nonetheless, **China would become the region’s strategic and economic hub**, playing a role similar to that of the United States in the Americas. Beijing could well unfurl its own version of the Monroe Doctrine, laying claim to primacy in Northeast Asia and guardianship of the region’s sea lanes. Indeed, Beijing has already ramped up maritime activities in the East China Sea and South China Sea and rejected Washington’s call for addressing the area’s territorial disputes through multilateral negotiation. Such a Sinocentric brand of hegemony in East Asia is of course in- compatible with the current security architecture in which the United States continues to serve as the region’s geopolitical hub. Accordingly, the United States and China have strong incentives to turn to diplomacy to tame their relationship over the course of this decade—before the naval balance in the western Pacific becomes more equal. On the table will have to be both the material and the normative dimensions of order. If Beijing and Washington succeed in reaching a meeting of the minds, a peaceful power transition in East Asia may be in the offing. If not, a historic confrontation may well loom. Should diplomacy fail to avert rivalry, Sino-American competition may nonetheless fall short of the bipolar enmity of the Cold War. **China and the United States are economically interdependent** whereas the Soviet Union and the United States carved out separate economic blocs. Moreover, China’s geopolitical ambition, at least for the foreseeable future, seems focused primarily on East Asia, suggesting that rivalry with the United States could be more contained than the global competition that ensued between the United States and the Soviet Union. China’s regional ambitions are, however, poised to clash head-on with America’s determination to maintain strategic primacy in Northeast Asia. Even if it does not match the hostility of the Cold War, the resulting confrontation could well resemble the naval race between Great Britain and Germany that commenced at the turn of the twentieth century.85 Although Wilhelmine Germany did not threaten the global dominance of the Royal Navy, its naval buildup in the European theater fueled a spiral of hostility that culminated in World War I. On the socioeconomic front, China has successfully fashioned a stable compact between its ruling elite and its rising bourgeoisie. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Imperial China was particularly adept at co-opting a rising merchant class into the existing political order. The same goes for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) today. The CCP has deliberately incorporated China’s rapidly expanding middle class into the centralized state, ensuring at least for now that the spread of private wealth does not undermine the party’s unitary grip on power. As Kellee Tsai notes, “China’s capitalists are pragmatic and creative but they are not budding democrats.” “Economic growth,” she concludes, “has not created a prodemocratic capitalist class.”86 The status quo certainly faces challenges from economic inequality, corruption, environmental degradation, factional strife within the CCP, and restive minority populations. But meritocratic entry into public service, the continued competence of China’s leaders, and governance that is broadly aimed at shared societal gains rather than rent-seeking augur in favor of political stasis. From this perspective, China’s ascent should not be expected to transform its socioeconomic order along Western lines any time soon. On the contrary, its domestic order is likely to continue shaping its economic and geopolitical ascent, favoring policies that advantage the compact between the party and the middle class. If so, China is poised to emerge as a hegemonic power well before it democratizes, meaning that the world’s leading economy will not ascribe to the dominant political norms associated with the Western liberal order. To be sure, the CCP’s partial embrace of a market economy and its growing concern with legitimacy and accountability do moderate the “ideological distance” between Beijing and Washington.87 Nonetheless, China and the United States remain miles apart on fundamental norms, including human rights, the rule of law, and representative government. **That gap may necessitate international deliberation about what constitutes legitimate forms of governance.** One option would be to associate legitimacy with responsible governance rather than procedural democracy. States that govern so as to meet the needs and fulfill the aspirations of their citizens, not just those that hold multiparty elections, would be considered in good standing.88 Such revision to the normative foundations of Pax Americana may be needed to promote normative consensus as Western hegemony wanes. The ethnocentrism of China’s imperial past suggests that a new era of Chinese hegemony would likely be characterized by cultural particularism, not universalism.89 As it has already begun to do, Beijing will continue to develop a worldwide commercial network affording the extraction of raw materials and the development of export markets. But China shows few signs of wanting to export globally its own cultural and ideological norms—in sharp contrast with the universalizing ambition of both Britain and the United States. In this respect, China’s ascent may mean that cultural dividing lines will matter more than they have during the era of American hegemony. **China would accept**—and perhaps even encourage—**a global order characterized by pluralism**. Whereas the United States has sought to construct an international order that rests on universal rules, norms, and institutions, **China might favor greater diversity and the devolution of authority to regional bodies that represent cultural groupings.** Just as China has long argued that America’s political and social values are not appropriate for the Chinese, so too would a hegemonic China likely deem it inappropriate and unnecessary for the Chinese to propagate their own norms beyond a Sinicized sphere of influence in East Asia. In this respect, **a hegemonic China would likely welcome a more variegated global order**, with different regions guided by their own cultural, social, and political norms. Contra Samuel Huntington’s prediction of a clash of civilizations, **regional groupings that fall along civilizational lines are by no means destined to collide with one another.**90 However, managing relations among them would require a level of political and ideological pluralism inconsistent with the universalism of Pax Americana. As for its commercial orientation, China’s ongoing economic success rests on a hybrid economic model that combines state control with market mechanisms. So-called “state capitalism” has afforded multiple advantages, including long-range strategic planning, programmatic investment in infras- tructure, and a regulatory framework that has helped mitigate the financial turbulence that has recently plagued the more open economies of the democratic West. To be sure, the Chinese economy faces multiple vulnerabilities, including unfavorable demographic trends; a relationship among the state, industry, and finance that impairs competition; and a lack of entrepreneurial innovation. Nonetheless, success breeds continuity. Beijing will likely continue to place a premium on the profitability of the export sector and state-owned enterprises, which enriches party elites as well as private entrepreneurs. It will also concentrate on expanding international access to the energy supplies and raw materials needed to fuel its manufacturing and industrial base. Its foreign economic policy is poised to remain extractive and mercantilist, with little emphasis on using economic penetration as an instrument of political reform. State-planning at home and mercantilism abroad are set to be enduring features of Beijing’s commercial strategy. As its economy continues to expand, China will remain interested in embracing, at least to some degree, the rules of open multilateralism. It is worth keeping in mind, however, that although China joined the World Trade Organization over a decade ago, it is continuing to practice a state-led brand of capitalism—the state sector still produces some 40 percent of the country’s GDP—and to exploit concessions won during accession negotiations to use the body to its advantage.91 In this respect, it would be illusory to expect Beijing to bend increasingly to prevailing international rules as China’s power rises. On the contrary, as Chinese power grows, Beijing will likely bend the rules to favor China’s political and economic needs and norms—just as all great powers before it have done as they emerge as hegemons. Indeed, China’s leading role in the Shanghai Cooperation Council and the BRICS grouping, as well as its support for a regional trade group that excludes the United States, reveals that **Beijing is already seeking to circumvent institutions dominated by the West**, not work within them. China will not be alone among rising powers in pursuing a new brand of international governance that reflects its own interests and normative orientations. **A key challenge for coming decades will be to forge a major power consensus** that embraces a broad array of different ordering norms. As Zarakol warns, “There may be a limit to how long the majority of the world’s population will tolerate living under an international system whose rules they have very little input in.”92 The **West will have to make room for the alternative approaches and visions of rising powers and prepare for an international system in which its principles no longer serve as the primary ideational and normative anchor.** If the next international system is to be characterized by a rules-based order rather than competitive anarchy, it will have to be predicated on great power consensus and toleration of political and social diversity rather than universalization of the liberal international order erected during the West’s watch. **Multipolarity and normative diversity suggest the onset of a more regionalized international system.**93 Major powers—or supranational polities, as in the case of the European Union—would each seek to push outward its normative preferences within its regional sphere of influence. In the interdependent world of the twenty-first century, effective global governance would require a combination of tolerance and coordination among such regional groupings. As the world’s two leading powers, China and the United States would have a unique role to play in shaping this hybrid order—one that would at once recognize the political autonomy and normative diversity of different regions but also rest on a working consensus among regional groupings. China has a long tradition of regional hegemony. The United States is skilled at constructing hegemony in parts and in acting as a hemispheric power. These experiences may serve both countries well as they seek to manage peacefully the transition to a new and more regionalized international order.

#### Hegemony is declining now – trying to reinstate power risks lashout from BRIC powers

Suslov 14 – National Research University Higher School of Economics (Dmitry, “US Global Leadership Dilemma as a Challenge for the US-Russia Relations,” p. 3-6, February 20, 2014, tony)

The central challenge that the US faces today is that in less than 20 years since the US declared victory in the Cold War, became the only superpower and quickly assumed the role of a center of the unipolar world, a global leader and manager of its own international system with a global reach, a global sheriff and bearer of values that seemed universal, it faced a sudden and comprehensive economic, foreign policy and political crisis.2 The magnitude and shock of this crisis, which is still to be realized and comprehended, is no less dramatic, than the history of the US rise itself, which in 200 years turned itself from a colony to the only superpower and center of a unipolar world.3 Indeed, the US history is a history of unprecedented success, expansion and dynamism. Moreover, until now it seemed as if the historic development itself was “proving” the basic American ideological assumptions: that it is an exceptional nation with universal values, which is destined to lead the world to a universal democratic peace. But as soon as the US reached the apex and, it appeared as if a key and decisive moment has come for the US to fulfill its historic mission – transform the international system in accordance with the US interests and values – something went wrong.4 In the economy, the US, still being the biggest nation-state economy in the world, most diversified and traditionally dynamic and technologically advanced among the developed economies, still the founder and most influential player of the global economic governance institutions, became the center of the deepest economic crisis since the Great Depression. The major pillar of the world economic order has become its major problem. The role the US plays in global economic and financial governance is increasingly at odds with the volume of its foreign debt and to American monetary policies (printing more dollars). It takes a much longer time than it used to be for the US to resume growth after crisis (and the ways out of the current “Great Recession” are unclear). Unemployment is high (for US standards) and not reducing. Finally, for the 1st time in a century the US is losing an image of the most vibrant, dynamic economy and foundation of the world’s economic growth to China.5 China, India, other “new rising centers” and Asia as a whole are perceived today as the “last hope” of the world economy, not the US. While trust in the US economic dynamism and progress has been one of the major foundations of American soft and hard power. Symbolic (in terms of determining perceptions of the vector, which is of utmost importance in today world) is a comparison between the booming Shanghai with the aging infrastructure in the US. Politically, the US is facing unprecedented in recent decades and self-destructing polarization between Democrats and Republicans, which can hardly find anything to agree upon in both domestic and foreign policies, and their mutual diminishing popularity and loss of appeal – witness the Tea Party movement. Both Parties, and especially the Republicans, are undergoing dangerous transformation, with the traditional center depleting and the center of gravity going to the flanks, which aggravates polarization. This means that for the next years the US political system will remain to be paralyzed, and thus reducing effectiveness of the US domestic and foreign policies, reducing a US capacity to act as a responsible and a reliable partner. In foreign and national security policy the US faces a crisis of leadership and military overextension.6 It turned out that indispensable of all its power preponderance and global presence, its diplomatic, military, economic, ideological, cultural and other instruments and assets, it is incapable of directing development of the international system in a way favorable for the US, incapable of transforming the world as it wishes. Despite the fact that the US is still the most powerful nation on Earth – militarily, diplomatically and economically, despite its efforts to consolidate unipolarity and global leadership under Bill Clinton and George W. Bush and renew its global leadership under Barack Obama, despite its efforts to transform the international system in accordance with the US interests and values, the world is clearly developing in a way unfavorable for the United States.7 And quite notably, that it started developing that way after the US acquired a hegemonic positions in the world.  The US has failed to preserve itself as an undisputed pole of a unipolar system. The “unipolar moment” was indeed a moment, while “unipolar stability” turned out to be a fake in the global context.  The US has failed to achieve the macro- and micro tasks in the sphere of global security it was claiming to deal with during the last 2 decades. Afghanistan and Iraq, democratization and modernization of the Broader Middle East, Arab-Israeli conflict, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international terrorism, etc. – in all or majority of cases the situation is worse than before the American “management”. There are reasons to say that Libya and Syria will follow these examples.  Power is shifting from the West, including the US, to the rising centers, especially in Asia, and also diffusing more broadly among multiple actors.8 Thus, it is increasingly difficult for the US to consolidate and organize others to fulfill an American agenda: these others are more and more either unwilling or demand a bigger price for their cooperation. The examples of Syria, Iran, North Korea, Middle Eastern conflict, US-Chinese relations, global climate change, nuclear reduction agenda, etc. vividly depict that the capacity of the US to determine and drive events, both multilaterally and unilaterally, has reduced.  As the power of the “new centers” rise, while the US relative and even absolute (decreasing defense budget and Armed Forces personnel, unwillingness of the Americans to fight new wars, economic troubles, deficit) power decreases, the US needs these new power centers to fulfill its agenda and pursue – sometimes vital - national interests. However, unless there is a convergence of interests, which is far from being the rule, these centers are unwilling to cooperate.  Due to the diffusion of power the correlation of interests between the US and its allies and partners is becoming more complicated and non-lineal. On some cases they can be strong supporters of the US policy, while on the other, sometimes no less important ones for the US, they create difficulties. Turkish policies on Syria on the one hand, and on Iran and Iraq, on the other hand, is a bright example of this complexity. This puts additional limits on American leadership.  The world is again becoming pluralistic and heterogeneous in terms of values. Universality of the American values is again under fire, which undermines the US basic ideological believes and world perceptions.9  The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan showed that the capacity of the US military power to fulfill the necessary political targets – promoting democratization and overall reform of the international system through forceful regime change from the outside - was limited, and that the US is incapable to pursue an imperial foreign policy in the current conditions – just as all the other great powers. Besides these wars guarantee that the US will not return to an imperial practice in the observable future – which is already stipulated on the official level in Obama Administration’s Strategic Defense Guidance in 2012 (rejection of long-term occupation).10 This significantly reduces the transformative component in the US Grand Strategy as such, making it to do more with the US “conventional” national interests, rather than with transformation of the international system, especially with the help of the military force. Moreover, these wars have exhausted the US military, decreased American physical capability and moral will to engage in new wars (witness the Obama Administration’s approach on Libya, Syria and Iran), and contributed to a situation, when the US was compelled to start reducing its defense budget and reviewing its global defense role and responsibility. The latter is illustrated in the 2012 Strategic Defense Guidance and the 2011 “National Strategic Narrative” paper by “Mr.Y”.11 This contrasts with dynamic increase of the new poles’ defense budgets, including China, Russia and India. For the 1st time since the end of the Cold War the gap in military expenditures between the US and the nonWestern power centers started to shrink. It is still enormous, but dynamic and vector matter. This all makes the future of the American global leadership in the increasingly multipolar and even polycentric world the central problem of the US foreign policy for the years to come.12 The major challenge that the US faces is how to adapt itself to the new international conditions, what kind of modus operandi to employ, to preserve the US primacy and leadership and reverse the tendency of the international environment becoming less favorable for the US. This adaptation was – and still is – at the core of the Obama’s Grand Strategy. Another answer to the same question is provided by the Republicans.

#### Primacy of the dollar is ending causing hegemonic decline– decrease in political influence and long term military power

**Stokes ’14** (Doug Stokes, Professor in International Security and Strategy @ University of Exeter, “Achille’s Deal: Dollar Decline and US grand strategy after the crisis”, 2014, *wcp*)

THE DECLINE OF US HEGEMONY Whilst there was a general agreement that the interregnum between the end of the Cold War and the events of 11 September 2001 (9/11) represented a more or less solid period of unchallenged and US-centric systemic unipolarity, debates over the decline of American power, polarity shifts and hegemonic transitions are now firmly back in fashion (Ikenberry et al., 2009). The US-led 2003 Iraq war led to broad comparisons between the US and previous empires, all of which had declined, most often through complex forms of imperial overstretch and the rise of other powers (Kennedy, 1987). The seeming failure to indigenize power in Iraq and Afghanistan, with US troops pulling out of those countries in 2011 and 2014, respectively, has added to the perception that even when deploying its formidable military power on weaker adversaries, **the US can still not impose its will or compel others to accept political outcomes conducive to its national interests**. Whilst scholars have debated the relative merits of primacy versus offshore balancing in the context of a purported US decline, most agree that militarily at least, the US continues to remain preponderant (Brown et al., 2009). However, whilst US military unipolarity may still be an enduring feature of international politics, what are less certain are the economic preconditions of American power. In 2011, for example, the US deficit reached US$1.3 trillion, the second highest on record behind 2009’s $1.42 trillion, a figure equal to a total of 8.7 per cent of US gross domestic product, with the US military budget in the same year accounting for $700 billion, more than that of the rest of the world combined. In 2012, the deficit fell, but remained stubbornly above $1 trillion. Drawing upon hegemonic stability theory, a number of declinists argue that the global public goods system the US has underwritten in the postwar order has seen a gradual diffusion of power to contender states, with **the US itself now increasingly subject to the forces of globalization and economic competition.** The burden of underwriting this system is now undermining US leadership, which is ever more conditional on the very states that are free-riding on US public goods. Given the heavy reliance on US dollar hegemony, **US power is thus increasingly conditional on ‘foreign central banks doing the right thing’ with America’s fate ‘in foreign hands.** Foreigners may seek to exact a price from the United States in return for their assistance. In a crisis the United States will have little ability to resist’ (Eichengreen, 2011: 262**). A move away from the dollar could be sudden, or more gradual, but either way, US options in a fiscally tighter world would shrink considerably** (Helleiner and Kirshner, 2009). Thus, given the budget deficit, an important precondition for US power is the capacity to get others to fund it – a very shaky foundation indeed for continued US hegemonic leadership. As Setser argues, **‘political might is often linked to financial might, and a debtor’s capacity to project military power hinges on the support of its creditors’** (Setser, 2008: 3). The financial crisis of 2008 has made this vulnerability even more acute, as the Anglo-American form of liberal capitalism is losing its appeal and its structural underpinnings of easy credit and ‘loose money’ have evaporated. Beyond its hard power, **US soft power and global influence have been said to have taken a mortal blow**: ‘the global financial turmoil formally put an end to the unipolar post-Cold War era, in which the U.S. power preponderance, its alleged universal politico economic model of development (often referred to as the Washington Consensus), and its overwhelming international influence had been a defining feature’ (Xinbo, 2010: 155**). If the sun is setting on the West, it is quickly rising in the East**, with a corresponding shift in polarity. As Calleo notes, ‘China’s suddenly critical role indicates that **America’s unipolar economic pretensions are being challenged by more radical global changes than a fitfully uniting Europe.** The most significant such change is the rising power and wealth of the nascent Asian superpowers.’ The financial crisis of 2008 has accelerated this trend, with global market forces no longer conspiring to ‘finance America’s unipolar role. **Instead, economics will more and more constrain America’s unipolar pretensions** . . . . The challenge is both immediate and long term. In the near term, severe problems appear to lie in wait for the dollar’ (2009: 103–5). Aside from the capacity of the Chinese to use their economic power to influence US decision-making, geopolitical tensions between the US and other powers could also trigger the so-called nuclear monetary option, where dollar purchasers ‘might be prepared to take losses on reserves for both strategic reasons and geopolitical objectives in direct response to the US administration’s foreign and security policy’ (Subacchi, 2008: 359). This would represent a further check on the US’ capacity to exercise global influence. For declinists, there is thus a profound weakness to US capabilities in that its hegemonic burdens and global public goods system impose huge costs on it, with its heavy reliance on the reserve currency status a dangerous vulnerability. Moreover, its hegemony has become increasingly conditional on rising powers’ willingness to fund it through debt purchases with the globalization of markets, itself a US-led project, making the US more reliant on emerging powers: **the ‘growing importance of emerging markets has sharply reduced the United States’ economic dominance**, weakening the logic for why the dollar should constitute the largest part of central-bank reserves and be used to settle trade and financial transactions’ (Eichengreen, 2009: 53). The Barack Obama administration’s 2011 announcement that the US will retract from Europe as well as cut $500 billion from the defence budget over the next decade has been interpreted as recognition of this reality (Walt, 2011).

#### Current military overstretch makes US heg unsustainable – Retrenchment is the only peaceful solution

Buchanan, 6-9 –[Patrick J. Buchanan, White House Communications Director, Masters in Journalism from Columbia University, Senior advisor to [U.S. Presidents](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_States) [Richard Nixon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nixon), [Gerald Ford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_Ford), and [Ronald Reagan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan), 6-9-2015, Imperial Overstretch, Human Events, <http://humanevents.com/2015/06/09/imperial-overstretch/>] Jeong

Toward the end of the presidency of George H.W. Bush, America stood alone at the top of the world — the sole superpower. After five weeks of “shock and awe” and 100 hours of combat, Saddam’s army had fled Kuwait back up the road to Basra and Bagdad. Our Cold War adversary was breaking apart into 15 countries. The Berlin Wall had fallen. Germany was reunited. The captive nations of Central and Eastern Europe were breaking free. Bush I had mended fences with Beijing after the 1989 massacre in Tiananmen Square. Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin were friends. The president declared the coming of a “new world order.” And neocons were chattering about a new “unipolar world” and the “benevolent global hegemony” of the United States. Consider now the world our next president will inherit. North Korea, now a nuclear power ruled by a 30-something megalomaniac, is fitting ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads. China has emerged as the great power in Asia, entered claims to all seas around her, and is building naval and air forces to bring an end to a U.S. dominance of the western Pacific dating to 1945. Vladimir Putin is modernizing Russian missiles, sending ships and planes into NATO waters and air space, and supporting secessionists in Eastern Ukraine. The great work of Nixon and Reagan — to split China from Russia in the “Heartland” of Halford Mackinder’s “World Island,” then to make partners of both — has been undone. China and Russia are closer to each other and more antagonistic toward us than at any time since the Cold War. Terrorists from al-Qaida and its offspring and the Islamic Front run wild in Libya, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Nigeria and Somalia. Egypt is ruled by a dictatorship that came to power in a military coup. Japan is moving to rearm to meet the menace of North Korea and China, while NAT0 is but a shadow of its former self. Only four of 28 member nations now invest 2 percent of their GDP in defense. With the exception of the Soviet Union, some geostrategists contend, no nation, not defeated in war, has ever suffered so rapid a decline in relative power as the United States. What are the causes of American decline? Hubris, ideology, bellicosity and stupidity all played parts. Toward Russia, which had lost an empire and seen its territory cut by a third and its population cut in half, we exhibited imperial contempt, shoving NATO right up into Moscow’s face and engineering “color-coded” revolutions in nations that had been part of the Soviet Union and its near-abroad. Blowback came in the form of an ex-KGB chief who rose to power promising to restore the national greatness of Mother Russia, protect Russians wherever they were, and stand up to the arrogant Americans. Our folly with China was in deluding ourselves into believing that by throwing open U.S. markets to goods made in China, we would create a partner in prosperity. What we got, after $4 billion in trade deficits with Beijing, was a gutted U.S. manufacturing base and a nationalistic rival eager to pay back the West for past humiliations. China wants this to be the Chinese Century, not the Second American Century. Is that too difficult to understand? But it was in the Middle East that the most costly blunders were committed. Believing liberal democracy to be the wave of the future, that all peoples, given the chance, would embrace it, we invaded Iraq, occupied Afghanistan and overthrew the dictator of Libya. So doing, we unleashed the demons of Islamic fanaticism, tribalism, and a Sunni-Shiite sectarian war now raging from North Africa to the Near East. Yet though America’s relative economic and military power today is not what it was in 1992, our commitments are greater. We are now obligated to defend Eastern Europe and the Baltic republics against a resurgent Russia, South Korea against the North, Japan and the Philippines against a surging China. We bomb jihadists daily in Iraq and Syria, support a Saudi air war in Yemen, and sustain Kabul with 10,000 U.S. troops in its war with the Taliban. Our special forces are all over the Middle East and Africa. And if the neocons get back into power in 2017, U.S. arms will start flowing to Kiev, that war will explode, and the Tomahawks and B-2s will be on the way to Iran. Since 1992, the U.S. has been swamped with Third World immigrants, here legally and illegally, many of whom have moved onto welfare rolls. Our national debt has grown larger than our GDP. And we have run $11 trillion in trade deficits since Bush I went home to Kennebunkport. Thousands of U.S. soldiers have died, tens of thousands have been wounded, trillions of dollars have been expended in these interventions and wars. Our present commitments are unsustainable. Retrenchment is an imperative.

#### Imperial overstretch makes hegemony unsustainable – can’t check rising powers

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There is a third form of decline, however, unique to hegemonic actors like the United States. According to [hegemonic stability theory](http://www.e-ir.info/2011/07/15/why-the-precarious-rise-of-china-will-not-lead-to-global-hegemony/) (HST), a world leader can only maintain the ability to ensure international stability for a limited time (approximately 70 to 100 years). At the end of that period, **the world leader experiences a process of hegemonic decline**. Aspects of relative or absolute decline could easily accompany this process, but hegemonic decline is unique. Typically occurring in the leading state’s military and economic sectors, hegemonic decline frequently results from what Yale historian [Paul Kennedy](http://history.yale.edu/people/paul-kennedy%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) calls **“[imperial overstretch](http://www.randomhouse.com/book/91615/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-great-powers-by-paul-kennedy%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank),”** and ultimately entails a retreat from global commitments. US Hegemonic Decline With a proper understanding of decline in mind, there is a compelling case to be made that the US may in fact be experiencing hegemonic decline. By withdrawing its troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, and waffling on Iran in 2009, Libya in 2011, and Syria in 2013, it’s hardly a wonder that many of the president’s critics perceive him as abdicating in the Middle East and Central Asia. If **American foreign policy really is in [retreat](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/richard-cohen-susan-rice-and-the-retreat-of-american-power/2014/02/24/e9d347dc-9d82-11e3-9ba6-800d1192d08b_story.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**, then declinist [rhetoric](http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303945704579391492993958448%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) may be justified. After all, **this pull back is characteristic of hegemonic decline**. This might further explain why the Obama Administration has had difficulty acting in Syria or Ukraine. An ailing hegemon—even in a unipolar system—simply cannot stand up to the great/emerging powers seeking to alter the balance of power in every situation. Add to that the fact that **US resources in the region have been minimized as a result of the end of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan**, and we can see why America’s strategic interests are limited. Of course, this is to say nothing of an alternative possibility. There is an equally compelling argument to be made that US grand strategy in the Middle East and Central Asia has always focused on promoting instability and sowing the seeds of discord. George Friedman, of the geopolitical forecasting firm [STRATFOR](http://www.stratfor.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), [suggests](http://www.randomhouse.com/book/56543/the-next-100-years-by-george-friedman%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) that the US will continue this strategy to prevent the rise of a regional hegemon, among other things. As such, the “failure” to act on Syria may have been a calculated decision meant to leave Assad’s regime in something of a state of chaos. From this perspective, the withdrawal of US troops from the region, and the “retreat” of American foreign policy may just be seen as a corrective to the previous onset of imperial overstretch [caused](http://www.zedbooks.co.uk/hardback/imperial-overstretch%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) by the neo-Reaganite/neoconservative promoted wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ultimately, it may be difficult to argue against the fact that American hegemony has been in decline and will continue to do so as time goes on. However, this decline is not absolute in nature, and while it is relative to an extent, it is primarily a hegemonic decline. To argue that China, Russia or any other BRICS state is close to the US in terms of capabilities measurement is a far stretch. Relatively speaking, the US still dominates the international system in most every measurable category that would seem to speak against arguments surrounding relative decline. The US’ hegemonic decline has profound implications moving forward. Though the US may still have a preponderance of power, **it no longer has the ability to unilaterally deter or compel the actions of other great powers**. Recent years have demonstrated that **other larger powers are testing the proverbial waters** on just how far the US will go to maintain its position in the system, and if it is perceived the US is weak or unwilling, great powers will assert themselves. Ukraine is just the latest example of Russia pushing the limits of American dominance. Indeed, the limited [withdraw of some troops](http://www.npr.org/2014/03/04/285580883/latest-on-crimea-devlopments%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) near the Ukrainian border may further illustrate this point. And other examples, such as Russia’s involvement in the Syrian Civil War, Iran’s nuclear program, and Arctic aggression all demonstrate clearly that **the Russians no longer believe the US is fully capable of containing or deterring their actions**. This also sets a dangerous precedent for other emerging powers, as questions abound regarding how China will approach Taiwan, Japan and other matters of its regional interests.

#### Russia rise means end of heg – declining military presence, lack of diplomatic clout, energy dominance and Crimean crisis prove

**Mahapatra ’14** (Chintamani Mahapatra, Chairman of School of International Studies at Nehru University, “US, Ukraine and the End of Unipolarity”, 6/14/14, <http://www.ipcs.org/article/peace-and-conflict-database/us-ukraine-and-the-end-of-unipolarity-4387.html>, *wcp*)

When Ukraine became a sovereign independent republic following the Soviet disintegration, a unipolar world order was born. Now with Crimea’s secession from Ukraine and the annexation to Russia, **the death of the unipolar world seems certain.** US unilateralism during the era of a unipolar world order remained unchallenged. There was no one to question then US President Bill Clinton’s decision to rain missiles on Afghanistan as a response to the bombing of two US embassies in Africa; no one could challenge then US President George Bush’s decision to unilaterally abrogate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, withdraw from Kyoto Protocol, invade Iraq, and overthrow Saddam Hussein from power. Incumbent US President Barack Obama promised to promote a liberal world order; employ more diplomacy and less force; end occupation of Iraq; talk Iran out of a suspected nuclear weapon programme; bring North Korea back to the Non-Proliferation Treaty; positively engage the Islamic world; strive for establishment of a nuclear weapon free world; reach out to the largest democracy of the world; make China a responsible stakeholder; make Russia a partner for peace; and many more. However, project Obama, although partially successful, it has largely failed. President Obama can be given credit for Iran’s decision to accept the détente with the US, Syria’s willingness to destroy its chemical weapons, US Navy Seal’s spectacular assassination of Osama bin Laden, and his successful approach to stemming the country’s downward economic spiral. Nevertheless, his foreign policy flops appear more stunning. The Arab world is clearly on fire with dangerous political upheavals and unrelenting violence. The White House will have to accept a fair share of the blame for the Libyan chaos, Egyptian instability, the interminable civil war in Syria, and the North Korean nuclear tenacity. Additionally, the US is not in a position to inspire confidence among its Asian allies at the time of growing Chinese assertiveness. All goodwill between India and the US appears to have become a thing of the past following the fierce diplomatic discord sparked by the arrest and perceived mistreatment of an Indian consular officer by the New York Police Department. The Marshall Plan aid to Europe in the post World War II period remains in the history books, and the present day US is simply incapable of instituting a similar assistance programme to rescue Europe from its current economic calamity. In other words, **the unipolar world order was already facing the risk of extinction, when Russia’s response to the political turbulence in Ukraine threatened to alter that order.** During the period of Soviet disintegration, pundits could not predict the final outcome of events in Moscow. Similarly, in the case of the Ukrainian political turmoil, no one could imagine the speed with which Russian President Vladimir Putin would be able to dismantle Ukrainian political geography and annex Crimea. The Obama administration’s response was slow and meek. Along with the EU, it imposed sanctions against some Russian individuals. Although Russia’s membership from the G8 and its voting rights in the Council of Europe was suspended, no sanctions could be imposed on critical sectors of the Russian economy, and nor could any military measure be contemplated. High rhetoric and docile measures highlight Washington’s response. **All these are the result of the resilience of a resurgent Russia and the relative decline of the US.** The US military presence in Europe is far less today compared to that during the height of the Cold War. There are no US aircraft carrier groups in the Mediterranean; US navy personnel numbers in Europe have reduced to 7000 from 40,000; and army personnel numbers have been reduced to 66,000 from over several hundred thousand in the recent past. **Reduction in the US military presence has coincided with the increased Russian leverage in Europe**, especially in the energy sector. Germany purchases one-third of Moscow’s gas; Russia accounts for over half of Austria’s gas imports; and Finland imports all of its gas from Russia. Germany’s exports to Russia stand at $40 billion a year; France’s banks have over $50 billion claims from Russia; and UK reaps billions of dollars of profit from the indulgences of Russian Oligarch in London. How can the US and the EU unite to resist expansion of Russian sway over Ukraine? While the European allies have developed mistrust in the US since the Snowden episode, Asian allies lack credibility in the US in the wake of Chinese muscle flexing. Brazil is upset with the US’s eavesdropping activities and India is more than offended by the State Department’s handling of the Devyani Khobragade incident. President Obama managed his relations with US allies, strategic partners and emerging powers shoddily, and finds it difficult to deal with Russian advances in Ukraine. South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Crimea have fallen into Russian hands, and three provinces in Eastern Ukraine seem to be in the queue. **As the dominoes fall, the unipolar global order also appears to be breaking down.**

## Specific Scenarios

### -china

#### U.S. hegemony risks great power war with China

Ikenberry 14 -- PhD, Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University in the Department of Politics and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs (G. John, “From Hegemony to the Balance of Power,” http://www.dbpia.co.kr.proxy.lib.umich.edu/Journal/ArticleDetail/3570128, p. 51-53, tony)

This old U.S.-led regional system is now giving way to something new. Fundamentally, this transformation is being driven by the rise of China and the global power transitions currently underway. After two decades of rapid economic growth, China is increasingly in a position to project regional and global power and influence. Countries in the region that previously have had the United States as their leading trade partner now find China in that position. Old American allies — such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia — are now economically tied to China, even as they remain security partnerships with the United States. China’s massive growth in economic capacity and wealth is providing a platform for a rapid buildup and moderniza tion of its military power. It is also pursuing an expanding agenda of regional and global diplomacy. The United States, in the meantime, has struggled through a period of economic downturn and weakness that has put pressure on its global hegemonic capacities. Out of these shifts, East Asia is undergoing a transition that, at the broadest level, might be described as a movement from a hegemonic logic to a balance of power logic. In the old hegemonic order, China was largely on the outside. During most of the Cold War, it was relatively weak and peripheral. But today, the lines of authority and power are shifting, and the hegemonic order is eroding — or at least it is being supplemented and complicated by other more traditional balance of power dynamics.10 Indeed, the shift underway in the region might best be seen as a double shift. First, there is a return to more explicit balancing calculations and logics. Great power politics has returned to the region. The region is returning to balance in the literal sense that the “oversized” American presence in the region is being reduced by the growing presence of China. This is a “return to balance” in the sense that there is more than one major great power in the region. The United States now has a great power competitor. China is a rising power that is making new geopolitical claims in the region and seeking to establish itself as a regional leader. This development is creating more thinking within the capitals of the region about power balance, alliance commitment, counter-weights, and great power politics.11 Second, there is an expansion of the geopolitical playing field for regional alliance and great power politics. East Asia is no longer a fuller-contained region or sub-region. Increasingly, it is Asia or the Asia-Pacific that is the relevant geographic expanse for politics and economics. India, Australia, and the United States are all in the region. It is Asia — not East Asia — that defines the region. The East Asia Summit is increasingly the diplomatic body that fully encompasses that states that are relevant to regional governance. Out of these developments and shift, it is easy to see why observers are worried about a full “return” to balance of power politics and great power rivalry. There are more states that are relevant to the maintenance of stable order. The distribution of power is shifting, which creates worries, insecurity, and new possibilities for miscalculations. There is more competition — either bipolar competition between the United States and China or a wider multipolar balance of power dynamic. In a competitive balancing of power system, the “problems of anarchy” threaten to return. These are problems of arms racing, security dilemma-driven conflict, risk-taking, and the possibility of war. If the region truly is shifting from a U.S.-led hegemonic order to a more free-wheeling balancing of power order, the dangers will no doubt mount.

#### U.S-China war causes extinction

Lieven 12 – Professor in War S Studies Department – King’s College and Senior Fellow – New America Foundation (Anatol, “Avoiding US-China War,” New York Times, June 12, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/13/opinion/avoiding-a-us-china-war.html>, tony)

Relations between the United States and China are on a course that may one day lead to war. This month, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced that by 2020, 60 percent of the U.S. Navy will be deployed in the Pacific. Last November, in Australia, President Obama announced the establishment of a U.S. military base in that country, and threw down an ideological gauntlet to China with his statement that the United States will “continue to speak candidly to Beijing about the importance of upholding international norms and respecting the universal human rights of the Chinese people.” The dangers inherent in present developments in American, Chinese and regional policies are set out in “The China Choice: Why America Should Share Power,” an important forthcoming book by the Australian international affairs expert Hugh White. As he writes, “Washington and Beijing are already sliding toward rivalry by default.” To escape this, White makes a strong argument for a “concert of powers” in Asia, as the best — and perhaps only — way that this looming confrontation can be avoided. The economic basis of such a U.S.-China agreement is indeed already in place. The danger of conflict does not stem from a Chinese desire for global leadership. Outside East Asia, Beijing is sticking to a very cautious policy, centered on commercial advantage without military components, in part because Chinese leaders realize that it would take decades and colossal naval expenditure to allow them to mount a global challenge to the United States, and that even then they would almost certainly fail. In East Asia, things are very different. For most of its history, China has dominated the region. When it becomes the largest economy on earth, it will certainly seek to do so. While China cannot build up naval forces to challenge the United States in distant oceans, it would be very surprising if in future it will not be able to generate missile and air forces sufficient to deny the U.S. Navy access to the seas around China. Moreover, China is engaged in territorial disputes with other states in the region over island groups — disputes in which Chinese popular nationalist sentiments have become heavily engaged. With communism dead, the Chinese administration has relied very heavily — and successfully — on nationalism as an ideological support for its rule. The problem is that if clashes erupt over these islands, Beijing may find itself in a position where it cannot compromise without severe damage to its domestic legitimacy — very much the position of the European great powers in 1914. In these disputes, Chinese nationalism collides with other nationalisms — particularly that of Vietnam, which embodies strong historical resentments. The hostility to China of Vietnam and most of the other regional states is at once America’s greatest asset and greatest danger. It means that most of China’s neighbors want the United States to remain militarily present in the region. As White argues, even if the United States were to withdraw, it is highly unlikely that these countries would submit meekly to Chinese hegemony. But if the United States were to commit itself to a military alliance with these countries against China, Washington would risk embroiling America in their territorial disputes. In the event of a military clash between Vietnam and China, Washington would be faced with the choice of either holding aloof and seeing its credibility as an ally destroyed, or fighting China. Neither the United States nor China would “win” the resulting war outright, but they would certainly inflict catastrophic damage on each other and on the world economy. If the conflict escalated into a nuclear exchange, modern civilization would be wrecked. Even a prolonged period of military and strategic rivalry with an economically mighty China will gravely weaken America’s global position. Indeed, U.S. overstretch is already apparent — for example in Washington’s neglect of the crumbling states of Central America.

### -great power war

#### Pursuit of US Primacy guarantees Chinese and Russian Aggression – That goes nuclear

Roberts 14 – [Paul Craig Roberts, Chairman of The Institute for Political Economy, Senior Research Fellow in the Hoover Institution, Georgetown University where he held the William E. Simon Chair in Political Economy in the Center for Strategic and International Studies, US hegemonic drive makes war with Russia/China inevitable, PressTV, <http://jhaines6.wordpress.com/2014/05/27/presstv-us-hegemonic-drive-makes-war-with-russiachina-inevitable-by-paul-craig-roberts>] Jeong

Professor Samuel Walker concluded that President George W. Bush used the “war on terror” for an across the board assault on US civil liberty, making the Bush regime the greatest danger American liberty has ever faced. Lincoln forever destroyed states’ rights, but the suspension of habeas corpus and free speech that went hand in hand with America’s three largest wars was lifted at war’s end. However, President George W. Bush’s repeal of the Constitution has been expanded by President Obama and codified by Congress and executive orders into law. Far from defending our liberties, our soldiers who died in “the war on terror” died so that the president can indefinitely detain US citizens without due process of law and murder US citizens on suspicion alone without any accountability to law or the Constitution. The conclusion is unavoidable that America’s wars have not protected our liberty but, instead, destroyed liberty. As Alexander Solzhenitsyn said, “A state of war only serves as an excuse for domestic tyranny.” Southern secession did pose a threat to Washington’s empire, but not to the American people. Neither the Germans of WWI vintage nor the Germans and Japanese of WWII vintage posed any threat to the US. As historians have made completely clear, Germany did not start WWI and did not go to war for the purpose of territorial expansion. Japan’s ambitions were in Asia. Hitler did not want war with England and France. Hitler’s territorial ambitions were mainly to restore German provinces stripped from Germany as WWI booty in violation of President Wilson’s guarantees. Any other German ambitions were to the East. Neither country had any plans to invade the US. Japan attacked the US fleet at Pearl Harbor hoping to remove an obstacle to its activities in Asia, not as a precursor to an invasion of America. Certainly the countries ravaged by Bush and Obama in the 21st century–Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Pakistan, and Yemen posed no military threat to the US. Indeed, these were wars used by a tyrannical executive branch to establish the basis of the Stasi State that now exists in the US. The truth is hard to bear, but the facts are clear. America’s wars have been fought in order to advance Washington’s power, the profits of bankers and armaments industries, and the fortunes of US companies. Marine General Smedley Butler said, “I served in all commissioned ranks from a second Lieutenant to a Major General. And during that time, I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street, and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism.” It is more or less impossible to commemorate the war dead without glorifying them, and it is impossible to glorify them without glorifying their wars. For the entirety of the 21st century the US has been at war, not war against massed armies or threats to American freedom, but wars against civilians, against women, children, and village elders, and wars against our own liberty. Elites with a vested interest in these wars tell us that the wars will have to go on for another 20 to 30 years before we defeat “the terrorist threat.” This, of course, is nonsense. There was no terrorist threat until Washington began trying to create terrorists by military attacks, justified by lies, on Muslim populations. Washington succeeded with its war lies to the point that Washington’s audacity and hubris have outgrown Washington’s judgment. By overthrowing the democratically elected government in Ukraine, Washington has brought the United States into confrontation with Russia. This is a confrontation that could end badly, perhaps for Washington and perhaps for the entire world. If Gaddafi and Assad would not roll over for Washington, why does Washington think Russia will? The Bush and Obama regimes have destroyed America’s reputation with their incessant lies and violence against other peoples. The world sees Washington as the prime threat. Worldwide polls consistently show that people around the world regard the US and Israel as posing the greatest threat to peace. (see here and here) The countries that Washington’s propaganda declares to be “rogue states” and the “axis of evil,” such as Iran and North Korea, are far down the list when the peoples in the world are consulted. It could not be more clear that the world does not believe Washington’s self-serving propaganda. The world sees the US and Israel as the rogue elements. The US and Israel are the only two in the world that are in the grip of ideologies. The US is in the grip of the Neoconservative ideology which has declared the US to be the “exceptional, indispensable country” chosen by history to exercise hegemony over all others. This ideology is buttressed by the Brzezinski and Wolfowitz doctrines that are the basis of US foreign policy. The Israeli government is in the grip of the Zionist ideology that declares a “greater Israel” from the Nile to the Euphrates. Many Israelis themselves do not accept this ideology, but it is the ideology of the “settlers” and those who control the Israeli government. Ideologies are important causes of war. Just as the Hitlerian ideology of German superiority is mirrored in the Neoconservative ideology of US superiority, the Communist ideology that the working class is superior to the capitalist class is mirrored in the Zionist ideology that Israelis are superior to Palestinians. Zionists have never heard of squatters’ rights and claim that recent Jewish immigrants into Palestine – invaders really – have the right to land occupied by others for millennia. Washington’s and Israel’s doctrines of superiority over others do not sit very well with the “others.” When Obama declared in a speech that Americans are the exceptional people, Russia’s President Putin responded, “God created us all equal.” To the detriment of its population, the Israeli government has made endless enemies. Israel has effectively isolated itself in the world. Israel’s continued existence depends entirely on the willingness and ability of Washington to protect Israel. This means that Israel’s power is derivative of Washington’s power. Washington’s power is a different story. As the only economy standing after WWII, the US dollar became the world money. This role for the dollar has given Washington financial hegemony over the world, the main source of Washington’s power. As other countries rise, Washington’s hegemony is imperiled. To prevent other countries from rising, Washington invokes the Brzezinski and Wolfowitz doctrines. To be brief, the Brzezinski doctrine says that in order to remain the only superpower, Washington must control the Eurasian land mass. Brzezinski is willing for this to occur peacefully by suborning the Russian government into Washington’s empire. “A loosely confederated Russia . . . a decentralized Russia would be less susceptible to imperial mobilization.” In other words, break up Russia into associations of semi-autonomous states whose politicians can be suborned by Washington’s money. Brzezinski propounded “a geo-strategy for Eurasia.” In Brzezinski’s strategy, China and “a confederated Russia” are part of a “transcontinental security framework,” managed by Washington in order to perpetuate the role of the US as the world’s only superpower. I once asked my colleague, Brzezinski, that if everyone was allied with us, who were we organized against? My question surprised him, because I think that Brzezinski remains caught up in Cold War strategy even after the demise of the Soviet Union. In Cold War thinking it was important to have the upper hand or else be at risk of being eliminated as a player. The importance of prevailing became all consuming, and this consuming drive survived the Soviet collapse. Prevailing over others is the only foreign policy that Washington knows. The mindset that America must prevail set the stage for the Neoconservatives and their 21st century wars, which, with Washington’s overthrow of the democratically elected government of Ukraine, has resulted in a crisis that has brought Washington into direct conflict with Russia. I know the strategic institutes that serve Washington. I was the occupant of the William E.Simon Chair in Political Economy, Center for Strategic and International Studies, for a dozen years. The idea is prevalent that Washington must prevail over Russia in Ukraine or Washington will lose prestige and its superpower status. The idea of prevailing always leads to war once one power thinks it has prevailed. The path to war is reinforced by the Wolfowitz Doctrine. Paul Wolfowitz, the neoconservative intellectual who formulated US military and foreign policy doctrine, wrote among many similar passages: “Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere [China] that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union. This is a dominant consideration underlying the new regional defense strategy and requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power.” In the Wolfowitz Doctrine, any other strong country is defined as a threat and a power hostile to the US regardless of how willing that country is to get along with the US for mutual benefit. The difference between Brzezinski and the Neoconservatives is that Brzezinski wants to suborn Russia and China by including them in the empire as important elements whose voices would be heard, If only for diplomatic reasons, whereas the Neoconservatives are prepared to rely on military force combined with internal subversion orchestrated with US financed NGOs and even terrorist organizations. Neither the US nor Israel is embarrassed by their worldwide reputations as posing the greatest threat. In fact, both are proud to be recognized as the greatest threats. The foreign policy of both is devoid of any diplomacy. US and Israeli foreign policy rests on violence alone. Washington tells countries to do as Washington says or be “bombed into the stone age.” Israel declares all Palestinians, even women and children, to be “terrorists,” and proceeds to shoot them down in the streets, claiming that Israel is merely protecting itself against terrorists. Israel, which does not recognize the existence of Palestine as a country, covers up its crimes with the claim that Palestinians do not accept the existence of Israel. “We don’t need no stinking diplomacy. We got power.” This is the attitude that guarantees war, and that is where the US is taking the world. The prime minister of Britain, the chancellor of Germany, and the president of France are Washington’s enablers. They provide the cover for Washington. Instead of war crimes, Washington has “coalitions of the willing” and military invasions that bring “democracy and women’s rights” to non-compliant countries. China gets much the same treatment. A country with four times the US population but a smaller prison population, China is constantly criticized by Washington as an “authoritarian state.” China is accused of human rights abuses while US police brutalize the US population. The problem for humanity is that Russia and China are not Libya and Iraq. These two countries possess strategic nuclear weapons. Their land mass greatly exceeds that of the US. The US, which was unable to successfully occupy Baghdad or Afghanistan, has no prospect of prevailing against Russia and China in conventional warfare. Washington will push the nuclear button. What else can we expect from a government devoid of morality? The world has never experienced rogue elements comparable to Washington and Israel. Both governments are prepared to murder anyone and everyone. Look at the crisis that Washington has created in Ukraine and the dangers thereof. On May 23, 2014, Russia’s President Putin spoke to the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, a three-day gathering of delegations from 62 countries and CEOs from 146 of the largest Western corporations. Putin did not speak of the billions of dollars in trade deals that were being formalized. Instead Putin spoke of the crisis that Washington had brought to Russia, and he criticized Europe for being Washington’s vassals for supporting Washington’s propaganda against Russia and Washington’s interference in vital Russian interests. Putin was diplomatic in his language, but the message that powerful economic interests from the US and Europe received is that it will lead to trouble if Washington and European governments continue to ignore Russia’s concerns and continue to act as if they can interfere in Russia’s vital interests as if Russia did not exist. The heads of these large corporations will carry this message back to Washington and European capitals. Putin made it clear that the lack of dialogue with Russia could lead to the West making the mistake of putting Ukraine in NATO and establishing missile bases on Russia’s border with Ukraine. Putin has learned that Russia cannot rely on good will from the West, and Putin made it clear, short of issuing a threat, that Western military bases in Ukraine are unacceptable. Washington will continue to ignore Russia. However, European capitals will have to decide whether Washington is pushing them into conflict with Russia that is against European interests. Thus, Putin is testing European politicians to determine if there is sufficient intelligence and independence in Europe for a rapprochement. If Washington in its overbearing arrogance and hubris forces Putin to write off the West, the Russian/Chinese strategic alliance, which is forming to counteract Washington’s hostile policy of surrounding both countries with military bases, will harden into preparation for the inevitable war. The survivors, if any, can thank the Neoconservatives, the Wolfowitz doctrine, and the Brzezinski strategy for the destruction of life on earth. The American public contains a large number of misinformed people who think they know everything. These people have been programmed by US and Israeli propaganda. They are led to believe that Islam, a religion, is a militarist doctrine that calls for the overthrow of Western civilization, as if anything remains of Western civilization. Many believe this propaganda. The US has departed Iraq, but the carnage today is as high as or higher than during the US invasion and occupation. The daily death tolls from the conflict are extraordinary. The West has overthrown itself. In the US the Constitution has been murdered by the Bush and Obama regimes. Nothing remains. As the US is the Constitution, what was once the United States no longer exists. A different entity has taken its place. Europe died with the European Union, which requires the termination of sovereignty of all member countries. A few unaccountable bureaucrats in Brussels have become superior to the wills of the French, German, British, Italian, Dutch, Spanish, Greek, and Portuguese peoples. Western civilization is a skeleton. It still stands, barely, but there is no life in it. The blood of liberty has departed. Western peoples look at their governments and see nothing but enemies. Why else has Washington militarized local police forces, equipping them as if they were occupying armies? Why else has Homeland Security, the Department of Agriculture, and even the Postal Service and Social Security Administration ordered billions of rounds of ammunition and even submachine guns? What is this taxpayer-paid-for arsenal for if not to suppress US citizens? As the prominent trends forecaster Gerald Celente spells out in the current Trends Journal, “uprisings span four corners of the globe.” Throughout Europe angry, desperate and outraged peoples march against EU financial policies that are driving the peoples into the ground. Despite all of Washington’s efforts with its well funded fifth columns known as NGOs to destabilize Russia and China, both the Russian and Chinese governments have far more support from their people than do the US and Europe. In the 20th century Russia and China learned what tyranny is, and they have rejected it. In the US tyranny has entered under the guise of the “war on terror,” a hoax used to scare the sheeple into abandoning their civil liberties, thus freeing Washington from accountability to law and permitting Washington to erect a militarist police state. Ever since WWII, Washington has used its financial hegemony and the “Soviet threat,” now converted into the “Russian threat,” to absorb Europe into Washington’s empire. Putin is hoping that the interests of European countries will prevail over subservience to Washington. This is Putin’s current bet. This is the reason Putin remains unprovoked by Washington’s provocations in Ukraine. If Europe fails Russia, Putin and China will prepare for the war that Washington’s drive for hegemony makes inevitable.

#### The pursuit of U.S. Primacy leads to war with Russia and China – That escalates and goes nuclear

Roberts, 6-2 – [Paul Craig Roberts, Senior Research Fellow in the Hoover Institution, PhD in Economic Policies from the University of Virginia, 6-2-2015, “Nuclear War our Likely Future”: Russia and China won’t accept US Hegemony, Paul Craig Roberts, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/nuclear-war-our-likely-future-russia-and-china-wont-accept-us-hegemony-paul-craig-roberts/5453098>] Jeong

The White House is determined to block the rise of the key nuclear-armed nations, Russia and China, neither of whom will join the “world’s acceptance of Washington’s hegemony,” says head of the Institute for Political Economy, Paul Craig Roberts. The former US assistant secretary of the Treasury for economic policy, Dr Paul Craig Roberts, has written on his [blog](http://www.paulcraigroberts.org/2015/05/11/war-threat-rises-economy-declines-paul-craig-roberts/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) that Beijing is currently “confronted with the Pivot to Asia and the construction of new US naval and air bases to ensure Washington’s control of the South China Sea, now defined as an area of American National Interests.” Roberts writes that Washington’s commitment to contain Russia is the reason “for the crisis that Washington has created in Ukraine and for its use as anti-Russian propaganda.” “How America Was Lost” among the latest titles, says that US “aggression and blatant propaganda have convinced Russia and China that Washington intends war, and this realization has drawn the two countries into a strategic alliance.” Dr Roberts believes that neither Russia, nor China will meanwhile accept the so-called“vassalage status accepted by the UK, Germany, France and the rest of Europe, Canada, Japan and Australia.” According to the political analyst, the “price of world peace is the world’s acceptance of Washington’s hegemony.” “On the foreign policy front, the hubris and arrogance of America’s self-image as the ‘exceptional, indispensable’ country with hegemonic rights over other countries means that the world is primed for war,” Roberts writes. He gives a gloomy political forecast in his column saying that “unless the dollar and with it US power collapses or Europe finds the courage to break with Washington and to pursue an independent foreign policy, saying good-bye to NATO, nuclear war is our likely future.” Russia’s far-reaching May 9 Victory Day celebration was meanwhile a “historical turning point,” according to Roberts who says that while Western politicians chose to boycott the 70th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany, “the Chinese were there in their place,” China’s president sitting next to President Putin during the military parade on Red Square in Moscow. A recent poll targeting over 3,000 people in France, Germany and the UK has recently revealed that as little as 13 percent of Europeans think the Soviet Army played the leading role in liberating Europe from Nazism during WW2. The majority of respondents – 43 percent – said the US Army played the main role in liberating Europe. “Russian casualties compared to the combined casualties of the US, UK, and France make it completely clear that it was Russia that defeated Hitler,” Roberts points out, adding that “in the Orwellian West, the latest rewriting of history leaves out of the story the Red Army’s destruction of the Wehrmacht.”

#### Trying to sustain hegemony incites Sino-Russian counterbalancing

Posen 14 – Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT and the director of MIT's Security Studies Program (Barry, “Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy,” Cornell University Press, p. 21-31, June 24, 2014, tony)

Most observers agree that the United States has faced little balancing. 11 Why might this have been the case? Because the United States is at a great distance from other states, true conquest of others is a costly matter, which both mutes U.S. ambitions and increases its costs, so its power may appear less threatening. Other factors, such as the nuclear weapon, also defend weaker powers against the risk that the United States could turn highly aggressive. The U.S. strategy has not aimed for formal empire or territorial conquest and annexation. Finally, the distribution of capabilities among other states has made the formation of balancing coalitions difficult. At present, the aggregate capabilities of three disparate states would be required to arithmetically exceed U.S. capabilities (see table 2 ). In the real world of alliance management, this is problematical. It is also the case that the rest of the consequential powers in the world are concentrated in Eurasia, which tends to make them more fearful of one another than they are of the powerful, but distant United States. 12 Balancing efforts have occurred, however, and more are to be expected. The level of U.S. power, as well as the activist strategy that it enables, are likely to be perceived as a problem by other independent actors. At the same time, a “diffusion of power” is underway, as China and India ascend to the top ranks of world powers, and a handful of states such as Russia, Japan, and perhaps Brazil remain sufficiently capable to matter as allies. Thus some states will be more able to tilt with the United States on their own, or more able to form smaller and more manageable balancing coalitions. Scholars following the trajectory of the “unipolar moment” have debated whether or not balancing is present. A new, somewhat useful distinction has been drawn between “soft” and “hard” balancing. “Soft balancing” captures concerted behavior by other states to increase the costs of the activist hegemon, short of the use or threat of violence, or the mobilization of material capabilities. 13 Many scholars have observed that hegemons typically attempt to legitimate their power position. 14 They would like others to believe that their might is also right. This helps the hegemon control costs. Soft balancing aims to deprive the hegemon of that legitimacy. Thus it consists mainly of diplomacy, particularly in venues that the hegemon hopes to employ to legitimate its action. The United States, as a liberal hegemon, is particularly vulnerable to this kind of action. Students of soft balancing point to action by Russia and France to deprive the United States of a U.N. security council resolution to authorize Operation Iraqi Freedom as an example. One could argue that China is engaged in soft balancing in its effort to protect traditional norms of sovereignty versus new interpretations advanced by the United States and other Western states. 15 China has used its position in the U.N. Security Council to slow U.S.-led efforts to pressure Iran into giving up its nuclear enrichment projects. Iran is a close associate of China. Given China’s growing dependence on oil and gas imports from the Persian Gulf, it is plausible that Beijing is balancing U.S. power in that region. Russia and China have collaborated to keep the Syrian civil war off the agenda of the UN Security Council. Soft balancing is consistent with its modifier, and it is difficult to argue that it has done much to slow U.S. behavior. That said, the practice is a leading indicator that U.S. hegemony does not sit well, sometimes even with its friends. “Hard balancing,” the assemblage of military capability, provides the real energy in international politics. “External” balancing aims to concert hard power, or the threat of hard power, through alliances. International diplomacy is often about generating the concern in the bumptious target state that a coalition could be formed against it. 16 At some future point, that potential coalition could be a military coalition. But developments need not go that far. Balance of power diplomacy has usually stopped short of building formal alliances. During the Cold War, analysts accustomed themselves to the notion that balancing coalitions would be accompanied by formal institutions such as NATO or the Warsaw Pact with bureaucracies, command structures, and permanently stationed military forces, or the elaborate U.S. base structure that had become attached to the U.S. - Japan Security Treaty. In the past this kind of institutionalization has not occurred until well into a war, if at all. Today balance of power diplomacy is already widely practiced. Russia and China do have a weak standing institution, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. 17 More remarkable has been the significant sales of top-of-the-line Russian armaments to China. 18 Students of the Cold War will recall that the Soviet Union and China became bitter enemies, and the United States profited from this under President Nixon. The end of the Cold War precipitated a shift of affections, even as tensions between the United States and China quickly developed. 19 Despite the obvious fact that those parts of Russia bordering China are quite vulnerable to Chinese military action, and are the subject of long-standing irredentist claims, Russia has sold China advanced fighter aircraft, surface-to-air missile systems, warships, and naval weapons. Of course, some of this is merely a business proposition; Russia wants to keeps it arms industry viable and exports are a way to do so. But it is equally clear that Russia is happy to help China create risks for the United States and probably views the sale of arms to China as less risky to itself due to the evolving tension between China and the United States. Russia has also done what it can to limit the extent of U.S. penetration of their former republics in Central Asia. More generally, Russia has become assertive and is trying with some success to build a sphere of influence on its periphery. And it has used force in one case, Georgia, to make the point that it believes it has a droit de regard in these regions. United States strategists see Russian behavior of this kind as aggressive. The possibility that prior Western activities are prompting a Russian balancing response is seldom conceded. NATO “enlargement” is conveniently forgotten; Russia should not mind that the alliance that crushed its Soviet parent has been picking up all the chips on Europe’s poker table and moving its frontier inexorably in Russia’s direction. Moreover, diplomatic historian Mary Sarotte finds that U.S. and German officials verbally assured Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that NATO would not do this, though the assurances were never written into a treaty. 20 So to the evident creep of NATO’s power in an easterly direction was added the experience of bad faith. Balance of power theorists would have expected Russia to push back as soon as it had the power; it has a little power, and it is pushing back. The Western powers themselves have not been immune to the lure of balance of power diplomacy. Even U.S. allies in Europe have done what they can to punch up the capacity of the European Union for independent foreign policy action, including the development of a shadow military command structure outside of NATO. 21 The purpose here is limited, to have a capability in reserve against the possibility that the United States could prove capricious, and the Europeans would have to go it alone. This should not be exaggerated; progress on EU integration is slow. What is surprising is that it has happened at all in an institution whose members typically find the very question of military force to be distasteful.

#### That risks World War III

Lukin 14 -- Associate Professor and Deputy Director for Research at the School of Regional and International Studies at Far Eastern Federal University (Artyom, “Sino-Russian Entente Would Move the World a Step Closer to 1914,” <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/artyom-lukin/china-russia-world-war-three_b_5625485.html>, July 28, tony)

Artyom Lukin says the U.S. policy of containment is pushing China and Russia ever closer to forming a powerful anti-Western alliance, greatly raising the possibility of a Third World War VLADIVOSTOCK -- Whereas the first two world wars broke out and were fought mainly in Europe, the Third World War, if it is not avoided, will most probably erupt in the Asia-Pacific region. Quite a few scholars and political leaders have found striking similarities between what took place in Europe before the First World War and what we are now witnessing in Asia. The current security situation in the Asia-Pacific -- with competing sovereignty claims, the rise of nationalism among both major and lesser countries, and great power rivalry -- increasingly resembles Europe a century ago. A world war is a very special kind of military conflict -- one which features a clash of two mighty coalitions led by great powers and possessing roughly comparable strategic resources, so that one side will not easily and swiftly prevail over the other. Are we going to see this sort of war breaking out in the Asia-Pacific? China is, of course, the rising power whose growing ambitions put it straight on a collision course with the incumbent hegemon -- the United States -- much like Anglo-German antagonism set the stage for the First World War. However, even if China becomes, as widely predicted, the No 1 economy and manages to close the military gap with the U.S., this will not be nearly enough to mount a viable challenge to U.S. hegemony. For China would have to confront not the U.S. alone but the U.S.-led bloc, counting, among others, Japan, Canada, Australia, and perhaps India. Beijing currently has just one formal ally -- North Korea, while Pakistan can be viewed as something of a de facto ally, at least vis-à-vis India. Although valuable to China, these countries can hardly be regarded as huge strategic assets. China lacks a dependable ally of a truly great power standing. The only plausible candidate is Russia. An alliance with Moscow would no doubt embolden Beijing. With Moscow as a close friend, China could be confident about the security of its northern borders and could count on unimpeded access to Russia's natural resources. Thus, Beijing would be much less vulnerable to naval blockades that the U.S. and its maritime allies would be sure to use in case of a serious confrontation. Should they form an entente, Moscow and Beijing could have Central Asia, as well as Mongolia, to themselves, effectively shutting out all external powers from the heart of Eurasia. An alliance with Moscow would also put Russia's military-industrial complex and its vast military infrastructure in Eurasia at Beijing's service. What might ultimately emerge is a Eurasian league, which, in controlling the continental heartland, would be reminiscent of the Central Powers alliance formed in the middle of Europe by Imperial Germany and the Habsburg empire. There is a strong tendency in the West to underestimate the potential for a Russia-China entente. A Sino-Russian strategic partnership is often portrayed as an "axis of convenience" founded on a shaky basis. Moscow, the argument goes, will be loath to form an alliance with Beijing because it distrusts and fears a rising China. The main problem with such thinking is that the U.S.-led West is seen by Moscow as a much bigger threat than China. The consensus in the Kremlin is that, for at least the next 20 years, China will not pose a threat to Russia, Beijing's and Moscow's common foe being the U.S. It would not be accurate to describe the Sino-Russian strategic partnership as an alliance yet, but the relationship is certainly growing stronger, evidenced by, among other things, the recent mega gas deal, Russia's willingness to sell China its most advanced arms and the expanding scale of bilateral military exercises. The Ukraine crisis may well become a tipping point, sealing the fate of Eurasian alignments. The Western push to punish and isolate Russia is drawing Moscow closer to Beijing, which, tellingly, has taken a stance of benevolent neutrality towards the Kremlin's actions in Ukraine and its takeover of Crimea. One may suspect that, in exchange, Beijing would expect from Moscow the same kind of "benevolent neutrality" regarding its assertions in East Asia and the Western Pacific. The personalities of the Russian and Chinese leaders, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping, are going to be a major factor in deciding the Russo-Chinese alignment. They are two autocratic chief executives who have concentrated in their hands almost exclusive powers to make foreign policy decisions. Putin and Xi seem to get along quite well and share a flair for hardball realpolitik. Matched against contemporary Western leaders with underwhelming foreign policy performances, the Putin-Xi duo is going to be a formidable force. It is significant that Putin and Xi will be here for a long time: Putin is likely to seek, and win, re-election in 2018, while Xi will not quit until 2022 and may continue to serve as paramount leader beyond then. The international system is at a critical juncture with U.S. unipolarity waning and the contours of the new order taking shape. The crucial question is whether this emerging order will be one of multipolarity and a flexible balance of power or one divided into two hostile alliances. It takes two to tango -- it takes two grand alliances to unleash a world war. In fact, one alliance has already been in place for over 60 years. Or, rather, the network of alliances led by Washington - NATO in the western part of Eurasia and the "hub-and-spoke" security pacts in East Asia. Whether the opposing bloc -- that of Russia and China -- ever comes into being depends to a large degree on Washington. If America continues its present policy of dual containment -- against both Russia and China -- it will be hard for them to resist the temptation of forming an anti-Western alliance. There were many ingredients that went into the mix that finally burst into the First World War. However, that mix became truly explosive once Europe split into two opposing alliances -- the triple entente of France, Russia and Britain versus the triple alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. If, a century later, we again fall into the trap of hostile alliance politics, the consequences may be no less tragic.

### -laundry list

#### Hegemony drains the economy, risks great power war from rising powers, incites terrorists, undermines diplomacy and causes imperial overstretch– turns the aff – this card is almost as fire as my mixtape

Posen 14 – Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT and the director of MIT's Security Studies Program (Barry, “Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy,” Cornell University Press, p. 65-68, June 24, 2014, tony)

Liberal Hegemony is a costly, wasteful, and self-defeating grand strategy. The strong inherent security position of the United States makes it unnecessary. The United States has spent vast sums to sustain omnidirectional military superiority. The United States has endeavored to reassure wealthy and prosperous allies and to deter former, present, and potential future adversaries. It has waged war to reorganize the internal politics of other states, usually weak ones that constituted little threat to the United States or its interests. Liberal Hegemony is not making the United States more secure. The huge global military presence and the frequent resort to force produce several unfortunate outcomes. First, the United States is causing countervailing behavior. The United States has stimulated actions great and small from the world’s middle powers, which increase U.S. costs, or aim to erode U.S. advantages. Most of this activity has not quite risen to the level of true “balancing,” but rather constitutes a kind of erratic but sustained obstructionism. China, however, is developing the underlying economic power to permit true balancing and is building up its military capability. It is the nature of a competitive anarchical system that what one side does to defend itself often has offensive potential versus others. So it is hard to tell how much Chinese military activity is balancing, and how much is the common phenomenon of a rising power developing sharper elbows. At the same time, Russia which is not a rising power, and which has reason to fear China, nevertheless often makes common cause with it. This looks more like old-fashioned balancing. So-called “rogue” states also do what they can to build their capability—some is for mischief but some is a search for a deterrent against future U.S. intervention. As other states grow in capacity relative to the United States, which seems to be in the cards, there will likely be more balancing if the United States remains so energetic. As others build their capabilities, the Liberal Hegemony project will become even more costly. Second, the common response by U.S. allies to the U.S. project has been to “cheap ride” or “reckless drive.” Most allies have cut their defense efforts since the end of the Cold War. This is understandable in Europe, where the direct threat from Russia is difficult to discern. Nevertheless, the continuing U.S. commitment to NATO makes this an easy choice for the Europeans. Japan is the more striking free rider. Its low defense spending is noteworthy given the oft expressed concerns of Japanese policymakers about the rise of China. Jawboning by the United States of its allies—asking for higher defense spending and more efficient defense efforts—has for the most part failed to elicit much cooperation. Advocates of Liberal Hegemony may argue that this makes the case for continuing the strategy. The liberal democratic allies of the United States are somehow unwilling to look after themselves, so the United States must, in its own interest. This ignores the fact that they make their defense decisions in the face of extravagant United States promises to defend them. They will not do more unless the United States credibly commits to doing less. And in the case of Europe, we must acknowledge that they may simply have gauged the security situation on their continent better than has the United States. Be that as it may, underdefended allies mean more work for the United States. Reckless driving by U.S. allies is also a significant problem. Secure in the knowledge that the United States will serve as the military lender of last resort, they invest in policies that redound to the political disadvantage of the United States, which can ultimately precipitate real military costs. Israel is the easiest example; its policies in the occupied territories contribute to the negative image of the United States in the Arab world, complicating both the struggle with Al-Qaeda and now the effort to contain Iran. Many would argue that Israeli policies are not even good for Israel. United States military backing makes the costs of this policy low for Israel. Indeed the U.S. security subsidy probably demobilizes potential domestic opposition in Israel, because the financial costs are not fully realized by Israelis. It is not easy to translate these political costs into explicit security costs for the United States. We only have the testimony of U.S. diplomats and soldiers that these Israeli policies complicate efforts to cooperate with Arab states. Another kind of reckless driving emerges among the domestic partners found by the United States in its counterinsurgency and statebuilding efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The U.S. relationship with the Maliki government and the Karzai government reveals a long- understood tension in counterinsurgency conducted by outside powers, waged on behalf of internal political factions. Counterinsurgency depends for its success on a combination of tactical “best practices” and political solutions. But the regimes backed by the United States mainly have an interest in perpetuating their hold on power. Moreover, these dependencies are slower to reform their own militaries, because the United States is there to take up the slack. If the United States is fighting their enemies, then they can focus on their internal friends. If negotiations with insurgents are launched, they have an equal interest in securing the most favorable deal for themselves. The politics of the arrangement works against internal reforms that would win “hearts and minds,” and against negotiated solutions. This puts a heavier burden on the outside military effort, which in these cases means the United States. It also ultimately renders the military effort somewhat futile. Third, Liberal Hegemony is insufficiently sensitive to identity politics. Nation, ethnicity, and religion remain strong forces in the world today, especially in areas experiencing rapid social and economic change. Identity politics has posed three large problems for the strategy of Liberal Hegemony. First, in some parts of the world there is simply great opposition to the very presence of the United States. This is particularly true in the Arab world. Second, a good deal of internal violence is associated with identity politics, which complicates the U.S. effort to install liberal institutions as part of a peace-making, nation- and state-building strategy. Power sharing is more easily mobilized in principle than in practice. Bosnia-Herzegovina and Iraq testify to the difficulty of installing a working “consociational democracy” as a solution to civil wars embedded in identity politics. Finally, the U.S. experience in Iraq and now Afghanistan demonstrates that small numbers of motivated militants with roots in local society can mount very effective violent resistance movements on thin resource bases. While many members of these societies, perhaps most, would rather sit out a violent insurgency, the local fighters nevertheless have a home court advantage. That the United States managed to suppress the Iraqi insurgencies, build a semicompetent Iraqi security force, and install a ramshackle system of governance should not ~~blind us to~~ [make us ignore] the mediocrity of the outcome and the high costs in blood and treasure it took to get there. The Expansionist Dynamic Liberal Hegemony cannot rest on its laurels. It is inherently expansionist and seems destined to drift regularly into military action. According to one analysis, measured by months, the United States has been at war nearly twice as often since the Cold War ended as it was during the Cold War. 135 The United States has expanded its formal alliances, taking on new responsibilities in the former Warsaw Pact states invited into NATO. The geographic scope of U.S. security interests now encompasses most of the globe. The United States is very powerful, and the Cold War ended with U.S. alliances and forces far forward in the world. With the collapse of Soviet power, the areas just beyond the frontiers came to seem both unstable and open to U.S. action. Realist theorists have coined the phrase “imperialism of great power” to explain the consequences that arise from this opportunity. 136 Great states tend to dominate weak ones. To this basic dynamic is added an obsession with credibility, which arises in part from the sheer magnitude of U.S. commitments, and the fear that any sign of weakness could produce more simultaneous challenges than even U.S. power could manage. There is also a great fear that the power advantage, which is unusual, could prove precarious. So the United States goes to great lengths to preserve it; the obsession with nuclear proliferation and the consideration of preventive war to stop it flows naturally from this concern. Finally, because liberalism is embedded in the hegemonic project, both as purpose and source of legitimacy, the U.S. policy community feels obliged to take up the question of whether military intervention is necessary in the bloody civil wars that emerge from time to time beyond the borders of the U.S. alliance system, and which challenge liberal principles. 137 Involvement in each of these wars is far from inevitable, but involvement in some of them is all but assured. For all these reasons, Liberal Hegemony tends toward political expansion, high defense spending, and war. It is not a status quo policy.

### -middle eastern instability

#### Increased US influence causes Middle East terrorism, regional economic decline, and Iranian backlash

**Kim ’14** (Aejung Kim, Departmnt of Political Science, Kent State University, “The Effects of the U.S. Hegemony on Economic Growth in East Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa”, 2/28/14, *wcp*)

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA): Inappropriately adopted economic policies, poor governance, and “Rentier state” epitomizing the MENA do not completely provide the compelling argument of the reason for poor economic performance in the region. Some literature has sought to explain why the economy of the MENA countries is not successful with business groups in the region. They argue that business groups were newly established under the state-led growth economy in the Middle East. New social interest groups benefited from state policies impeded the way of economic development. However, the lack of these arguments worthy to point out is the significance of the hegemonic system indicated in the case of East Asia. They do not devote much attention to the hegemonic role. **The weak economic developments in the MENA region were generated by the U.S. hegemon** with the geostrategic motivation of the regional Islamic movement threat posed by Iran, and energy security. The doctrine of the new government launched by the 1979 Iranian revolution emphasizing Islamic ideology debilitated the Western socio, cultural, and economic ideologies dominated in the Muslims of regions. The potential influence of anti-Western policy of the Iranian revolutionary government on other Muslims areas threatened the interest of the United States in the Muslim regions, and undermined its pro-Western policies in the regions20. In particular, tensions between Iran and the U.S. have increased since the end of the Cold War by confronting in some issues such as Iran’s support for Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Palestain, its antagonism policy against Israel, and human rights. Above all, Iran’s nuclear program has been the hottest issue between Iran and the U.S. by claiming different purposes or consequences of the nuclear program 21 . Political economy of the Middle East is usually described as the politics of oil. The United States has attempted to protect the oil supply in the global level by securing the system of scarcity. This system of scarcity was achieved by creating the antimarket arrangement such as the exclusive control of oil production and limits to quantity of oil22. It has been argued that oil has had a great impact on the U.S. policy in the MENA such as the CIA’s involvement in the overthrow of the Mussadeq government in Iran, and the close alliance with Saudi Arabia23. The U.S. owned companies have concentrated on having a large number of contracts regarding oil industries such as exploration, production, and refining with several countries in the MENA, particularly the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)24 . In order to fulfill their own needs of containing regional power and securing energy, the U.S. has supported and exploited illegitimate, dictatorial and economically bankrupt regimes. **The U.S. support for the authoritarian regimes has affected the economy in the Middle East by tolerating the mismanagement and corruption of regimes.** Since authoritarian regimes with abundant natural resource lowered taxes and perform welfare policies, there was little pressure on economic policies from the opposition groups25. The Arab Spring of 2011 was ignited with public fury partially caused by authoritarian regimes’ poor economic performances with low growth rate, and high rate of unemployment26. Another way of weakening the MENA’s economy is to sanction the regional power¸ Iran. Since the 1979 Revolution, the U.S. has imposed economic sanctions against Iran by banning the import of Iranian crude oil, and non-oil products into the U.S. The sanctions have led to depreciation of Iran’s currency, the rise in inflation, shortages of medicines, and international restrictions in financial and business sectors27 . While national economic growth in East Asia helped the U.S. to prevent the spread of communism, support for authoritarian regimes in the MENA indifferent to national economic performance, and sanction against Iran promoted the U.S. to contain the regional power and obtain energy security in the region. The U.S. was also allied with the authoritarian regimes in boosting its own oil companies and other manufacturers to gain enormous benefits. While strong national economic relationship was built between East Asia and the United States, corporate economic relationship was constructed between the MENA and the U.S. based on different motivations. Economic development and economic growth generally have a negative effect on conflict by decreasing the likelihood of conflict28 . No economic development is possible without peace and stability. The major powers paid more attention to their own interests based on the geostrategic motive rather than strengthening social, political and economic progress29. Considering that economic power allows countries to be stabilized, national economic growth in the MENA does not satisfy the U.S. geostrategic desire. **Here, the hegemon influences not to provide the productive economic performance.**

### -north korean prolif

#### U.S. Primacy threatens North Korea and drives them to proliferate – that ensures conflict

Cho 14 – Prof. Department of Political Science, St Francis Xavier University (Youngwon, “Method to the madness of Chairman Kim: The instrumental rationality of North Korea’s pursuit of nuclear weapons,” International Journal, March 2014 vol. 69 no. 1, tony)

North Korea is broke and has been so for a very long time. Its conventional military preparedness is qualitatively degraded. It confronts a hostile and far more powerful alliance whose combined military strength dwarfs Pyongyang’s. Even as it is facing an adversary that has continuously and explicitly identified it as a potential target for a nuclear strike, its own nuclear umbrella has been yanked away and Pyongyang stands alone. North Korea, in short, has neither the economic capacity to engage in internal balancing through conventional arms buildup nor the diplomatic means to engage in external balancing through alliance formation.38 Consequently, it should be hardly surprising, or at least not so irrational, that Pyongyang would see nuclear weapons, the great equalizer and the only weapons system that can truly level the playing field for the humble and the haughty alike, as the singular source of salvation. Any other state facing a similarly dire strategic situation would likely have found nuclear weapons equally irresistible. Indeed, it is highly doubtful that South Korea, in a counterfactual scenario where the Cold War is presumed to have been won by the Soviet Union and it is the ROK that is facing an existential crisis, would have behaved any better than its northern brother. States have sought nuclear weapons for far lesser reasons—for something as vain as international prestige and nationalist pride. By comparison, survival is all the more compelling a reason for going nuclear.39 Not only are nuclear weapons the most reassuring means to ensure North Korea’s survival, they are also the cheapest, which makes them even more appealing for a country as broke as the DPRK. The cost-effectiveness of nuclear weapons is widely known. Because the bang produced by nuclear weapons is so big, both literally for its destructiveness and figuratively for its wider strategic impact, the economic cost of nuclearization can be easily justified in terms of return on investment. Relative to the spending requirements of upgrading its decaying conventional forces, the financial cost of North Korea’s nuclear weapons program and the related missile program has in fact been very low. According to one estimate, North Korea’s core spending on nuclear weapons and missile programs in 2010 and 2011 was around US$0.5 billion each.40 While half a billion dollars is a large sum of money for a desperately poor country, as a proportion of North Korea’s total military expenditures, it is not such a huge sum, falling well within a single digit range of around 6 to 8 percent in the most recent years. Another estimate, coming from sources within the ROK government, puts the total cumulative cost of Pyongyang’s nuclear weapons and missile programs, including its long-range ballistic missile test in March of 2012, at around US$3.1 billion (see Table 3 for details). The expenditure on the strictly nuclear side has been surprisingly small, costing Pyongyang only US$1 billion for initial development and production, and less than half a billion dollars for the first two nuclear tests.41 About US$0.8 billion was spent on the two Taepodong missile launches conducted in 2006 and 2009, and the Unha-2 launched in April 2012 is estimated to have cost Pyongyang another US$0.8 billion. The expenditure will surely go up as North Korea attempts to miniaturize its nuclear warheads and fine-tune its ballistic missiles, but overall, the financial burden borne by North Korea in its nuclear pursuit has not been excessively punishing. On the other hand, the bang produced by it is undoubtedly much bigger than anything North Korea could have accomplished by spending the equivalent sum on conventional weaponry. A US$3.1 billion investment in nuclear weapons and delivery systems has enabled the DPRK to come very close to bridging a cumulative defence spending gap of nearly US$200 billion since 1992, restoring parity to the overall military balance in the Korean peninsula, and potentially acquiring deterrence capabilities against the US. By comparison, South Korea spent almost US$3 billion, about the same amount North Korea has spent on its nuclear and missile development, on just three Aegis-equipped destroyers. While these KD-III destroyers are no doubt significant enhancements to the force level of the ROK navy, their strategic impact pales in comparison to that of North Korea’s nuclear weapons. The ultimate vindication for the DPRK’s pursuit of nuclear weapons is the very fact that the Kim regime has defied all odds and repeated predictions of an inevitable collapse to hang on to its half of the Korean peninsula on an arguably much stronger strategic footing. Of course, the debacle that is the North Korean economy continues, as does the untold suffering of North Koreans. However, in terms of its external security situation, it cannot be denied that North Korea’s strategy of pursuing internal balancing asymmetrically—that is, by going nuclear—has produced tangible and substantial results. The numerous concessions and assistance that Pyongyang managed to extract from the international community, while significant, are secondary benefits. The most obvious and important outcome is the irrefutable reality that instead of being destroyed by the US as was Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, or sharing East Germany’s fate of being absorbed out of existence, the DPRK continues to exist as an independent state. As Kim Jong Un recently declared in his first public speech, “Superiority in military technology is no longer monopolized by imperialists, and the era of enemies using atomic bombs to threaten and blackmail us is forever over.”42 This declaration, while exaggerated, as one would expect from the DPRK, is not mere grandstanding and bravado; there is a significant kernel of truth in Kim’s claim, in that nuclearization has in fact enhanced North Korea’s security. This is not to suggest that the DPRK is now secure. On the contrary, the incomplete weaponization of its nuclear devices and its lack of a credible long-range delivery system mean that North Korea’s deep-seated insecurity is yet to be put permanently to rest. Nonetheless, Pyongyang’s nuclear quest has achieved the singular objective sought by North Korea, its survival, at a bargain price equivalent to just three destroyers. It is in this Herculean achievement, the fact that the world is still grappling with the headache that is the DPRK two decades after the demise of the Cold War, that we can locate the method in the madness of Chairman Kim and the instrumental rationality of Pyongyang’s pursuit of nuclear weapons.

### -overstretch

#### Attempts to sustain hegemony cause imperial overstretch – causes war with rising powers

**Herrington ’13** (Luke Herrington, Has an MA in Global and International Studies from the University of Kansas, “Syria and the Hegemon’s Dilemma: Ontological Insecurity vs. Imperial Overstretch”, 9/10/13, *wcp*)

In Progress The Hegemon’s Dilemma: Imperial Overstretch War fatigue may not be an excuse for inaction in Syria, but what about imperial overstretch? Secretary Kerry seems like he’s forgotten the same lesson of hegemonic stability theory (HST) that neoconservatives[1] missed in the run up to wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, that **a hegemon too eager to overextend its military resources will ultimately precipitate its own decline**. This is, as historian Paul Kennedy has termed, the problem of “imperial overstretch.” A hegemon thus has the responsibility to avoid unnecessary forays into international conflict, for doing so will be a drain on its abilities, and ultimately **diminish its ability to intervene in future conflict situations that have a real bearing on international stability**. This is a source of hegemonic decline, which, according to HST, can lead to larger, global wars. Of course, I am not saying that U.S. action in Syria will lead to World War III as some in social media have naively (and hyperbolically) suggested. What I am suggesting though is that after two major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, after a campaign in Libya, after a pivot to the Pacific which involves hedging the U.S. military and its allies against the People’s Republic of China, and given the continuation of the global war on terror in Somalia, Yemen, and elsewhere, attacking Syria could be a real drain on U.S. military resources that could ultimately undermine the U.S.’s ability to maintain international stability in the future. Some, like my colleague Robert Murray, assume that President Obama has intentionally eroded U.S. hegemony. I disagree with such declinist notions, but the U.S. has nevertheless been at war for almost the entirety of the 21st century, and both the public and military are tired of conflict. Even if Secretary of State John Kerry is right, and this war fatigue is not an excuse for inaction in Syria, the implications of imperial overstretch very well may be. Especially given the widespread international opposition to military strikes in Syria mentioned above, this is a question to which U.S. policymakers and IR theorists must give serious consideration both before and after the U.S. makes its ultimate decision, for it will ultimately bear on the discussion of U.S. hegemonic decline for years to come.

### -author indict

#### Prefer our evidence – their authors inflate threats to satisfy constituencies

Fettweis 14 – associate professor of political science and statistics at Tulane University (Christopher, “Delusions of Danger: Geopolitical Fear and Indispensability in US Foreign Policy,” A Dangerous World?: Threat Perception and U.S. National Security, October 7, 2014, p. 548-53. Tony)

Anxiety in the public can be at least partially explained by inadequate information about the level of risk that America faces today and perhaps by the lingering effects of 9/11. The beliefs of those who ought to know better, however, often remain immune to the facts. To take but one example, General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was fully aware of the statistics concerning conflict and threats in April 2012 when he gave an address to Harvard’s Kennedy School. The general began by reviewing Steven Pinker’s The Better Angels of Our Nature, perhaps the best-known review of the decline of violence worldwide, and then went on to explain how its findings—although empirically indisputable—are functionally irrelevant. His reexamination of the evidence led Dempsey to argue that although the world “seems less dangerous,” it is “actually more dangerous.” That “security paradox,” as he called it, was due to the proliferation of destructive technologies such as ballistic missiles, exploding fertilizer, and computer viruses. “More people have the ability to harm us or deny us the ability to act than at any point of my life,” he argued. 28 So although those technologies have yet to affect U.S. security or international politics in any meaningful way, the general believed that catastrophe was right around the corner. The message coming from the top is that danger still exists, so no one should relax. Dempsey’s remarks might be dismissed as merely the cynical obfuscation of someone with a professional interest in denying safety. Indeed, a number of institutions provide their members with a vested interest in identifying threats and then exaggerating them when necessary. The budget and overall raison d’être of the military, for instance, would be called into question in a fundamentally safe world. The intelligence services issue quarterly assessments of the security environment that regularly foresee drastically worse futures than the present; only the degree and form of chaos change. 29 Geopolitical fear has a number of institutional constituencies, in other words, that are professionally inclined to detect threats whether or not they exist. “It is difficult to get a man to understand something,” Upton Sinclair famously noted, “when his salary depends upon his not understanding it.” 30 That statement is not to imply that leaders are always, or even usually, insincere when they issue warnings about the various present dangers. People are quite capable of aligning their political interests with their beliefs about security. “Humans are compulsive rationalizers,” wrote the journalist Daniel Gardner in his review of the psychology literature on that issue. “Self-interest and sincere belief seldom part company.” 31 Even initially disingenuous motivations quickly become the truth, as a result of every human being’s desire to be internally consistent. No matter what President George W. Bush’s initial calculations were regarding Iraq, for example, one should have little doubt that he truly believed (and continues to, despite all evidence to the contrary) that Saddam Hussein represented a clear and present danger and that removing him was the right thing to do. To believe otherwise would be cognitively unacceptable for almost anyone who had ordered men into battle. Although manipulation of the evidence by elites with vested interests can account for a portion of America’s geopolitical fear, for a complete explanation of its existence one must look elsewhere. The belief in the inherent dangers of the outside world has deep historical roots in the United States. It persists in the post–Cold War era because of a number of factors, at least four of which are worthy of brief mention. First, their high levels of religiosity compared with the rest of the Western world make the people of the United States more prone to moralism and Manichaeism, as well as more likely to be comfortable with the existence of evil as a palpable force in constant struggle with good. 32 Second, because no other state has a political movement quite like neoconservatism in the United States, nowhere else is fear given such promotion in the marketplace of ideas. 33 One of the central, defining features of neoconservatives is their enthusiasm for identifying threats. Though hawks exist in every country, no other ideological group advocates quite the same mixture of evangelical faith in democracy and pathological fear of the other. In particular, neoconservatives construct a complex, completely misleading web of danger with every speech they give and op-ed they write. 34 Third, the American media have little incentive to present the public with realistic information on risk when impending catastrophe sells more papers and attracts the most viewers. Glenn Beck, who is almost a parody of the kind of person Richard Hofstadter had in mind when he wrote “The Paranoid Style in American Politics,” consistently attracts more listeners than does NPR. 35 And fourth, the relative power of the United States predisposes its people to geopolitical fear. Unipolar powers are, by nature, supporters of the status quo, any alteration of which can appear to threaten their position. Rich people worry a great deal about their security. They build tall fences, install motion detectors, and hire private security guards to protect themselves and their belongings from the throngs of have-nots they assume are plotting to take what is theirs. Wealth creates insecurity in individuals, and it seems to do so in states as well. Those who have more than what could be considered their fair share, perhaps bothered a bit by subconscious guilt, worry about losing what they have more than those who live in relative penury. In international politics, the United States has the most and fears the most too. “America may be uniquely powerful in its global scope,” former national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski believes, so as a result “its homeland is also uniquely insecure.” 36 That kind of thinking has a certain amount of intuitive appeal, even if it is utterly devoid of logic; if unchecked, it can lead to disaster. Persistent geopolitical fear filters out of U.S. foreign policy debates any news regarding the decline of warfare, of the miniscule risks to individuals from terrorism, of the deep divides among even Islamic fundamentalists, and of the essential safety of the United States. The notion that the world is a fundamentally dangerous place has long ago passed into the realm of belief, especially among foreign policy elites, where it is rarely subjected to evaluation. Mere reviews of facts are unlikely to change minds on that issue. Those who matter most in the foreign policy process—the elites across the political and strategic spectra, inside and outside of government—rarely give the possibility of fundamental safety much of a hearing. For them, the world is likely to remain a dark place, full of terrors.

### -at: solves econ

#### Heg cant solve economic security – mutual deterrence checks trade imbalance

Posen 14 – Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT and the director of MIT's Security Studies Program (Barry, “Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy,” Cornell University Press, p. 62-64, June 24, 2014, tony)

The transformation of hegemonic stability theory into a foreign policy doctrine is problematical. First, if there is a gain to having a global hegemon, we do not know its magnitude, and we do not know whether the gains to the United States are commensurate with the costs to the United States. I argue they are not. It is easy enough to imagine that the Great Depression could have been avoided had there been a leader in the 1931 banking crisis; it could also have been avoided, as we saw in 2007, had the central bankers of a handful of major states had a better understanding of economics and banking. Second, the theory tells us that the hegemon must have both the power and the will to sustain the system. How much power is an open question; I doubt that the United States actually has enough power to fulfill its appointed role in this system, especially its appointed economic role. For example, theorists argue that the hegemon must be both the lender and the market of last resort to perform its stabilizing role in crisis. The United States can no longer do either. Third, the question of how much of the hegemon’s power needs to be economic, and how much needs to be military is not a settled matter. This is particularly important given that the U.S. share of global GDP is destined to diminish; can the United States protect its hegemonic position by simply hyperinvesting in military power and deploying it around the world? Does the provision of military security provide a level of stability that inherently supports a global economic system, which would otherwise collapse? Is the existence of that global economy so central to U.S. economic power that if it did collapse, the United States would suffer disproportionately? 130 Because U.S. economic performance is connected to U.S. power, a realist ought to be concerned if there is some strong connection between Liberal Hegemony, international trade, and relative U.S. economic power. Two points are in order. The United States does not depend very much on international trade; imports and exports made up about 29 percent of GDP in 2010, among the smallest shares of advanced economies. 131 Moreover, nearly a third of that trade is with Canada and Mexico, states the United States secures inherently by securing itself. 132 China, at 13 percent, ranks as one of the top three U.S. trading partners, even as the U.S. Department of Defense begins to view it as a near-peer strategic competitor. Another third of U.S. trade is spread among a dozen nation states across the globe, and the rest is scattered across many more. It would take an unusual series of capitulations, conquests, or just plain market closures to close down enough trade to affect greatly the U.S. economy. A security hegemon is, in any case, unnecessary to insure international trade. Liberal Hegemonists worry that if states feel insecure, their concern about relative gains from trade, and the effect of those relative gains on relative power, will drive out trade. But states have traded with one another under a variety of power constellations. Though political scientists—especially hegemonic stability theorists—and historians view Britain as the global hegemon in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was at best “first among equals” in a multipolar great power system, and its grand strategy looks much more like “offshore balancing” or Restraint than it does Liberal Hegemony. Britain was not the day-to-day global security provider. Rather it was the balancer of last resort. Peter Liberman notes that in this period, British-German trade climbed, despite the fact that each came to identify the other as their principal naval rival. Similarly, U.S.-Japan trade grew in the interwar period, even as U.S.-Japan relations deteriorated. 133 States trade with one another due to mutual commercial interest; it seems to take quite a lot of fear and hostility to change the calculus. It is also likely, as Liberman suggests, that the existence of nuclear weapons has reduced whatever relative gains concerns there once might have been, insofar as great powers armed with nuclear weapons do not really depend on economic autonomy for their military power and hence their security. It is therefore improbable that a less militarily activist United States would lead to a collapse of international trade. Some argue that a global military hegemon is necessary to secure peace and order in the global commons—sea, air, space, and cyberspace—to enable international trade and globalization. As a global naval power, Britain did bring a measure of peace and order to the global commons for most of the nineteenth century. But by the early twentieth century all great trading states had navies capable of securing their merchant ships against any predator who was not a great power. And the fact that other great powers might interfere with this trade did not prevent them from trading with one another, because such interference would have meant war. Mutual deterrence protected the global trade routes. In any event, as I will be argue in chapter 3, the military strategy of Restraint is committed to maintaining what I have called “command of the commons.” That is the bedrock military capability needed by the United States to influence geopolitical events abroad, should that prove necessary. Whatever side benefits for world trade that might arise from the capability to keep order in the commons would still be present. The U.S. interest in maintaining command of the commons is premised on its contribution to U.S. national security, not its contribution to global trade.

### -at: solves peace

#### Their authors don’t assume the flaws with maintain primacy – Unipolarity isn’t effective

Preble, 3-23 – [Christopher Preble, ice president for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute, PhD in History from Temple University, Our Unrealistic Foreign Policy, War on the Rocks, <http://warontherocks.com/2015/03/our-unrealistic-foreign-policy/>] Jeong

U.S. foreign policy is crippled by a dramatic disconnect between what Americans expects of it and what the nation’s leaders are giving them. If U.S. policymakers don’t address this gap, they risk pursuing a policy whose ends don’t match with the means the American people are willing to provide. What is our foreign policy? Leadership. That word appears 35 times in President Obama’s latest [National Security Strategy](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015_national_security_strategy.pdf). His predecessors have all wanted the same thing, although most managed to work in a few more synonyms. At the dawn of the post-Cold War era, officials in the George H.W. Bush administration aspired for the United States to be the sole global power. Now that the nation’s long-time rival had disappeared, the object of U.S. foreign policy, according to an early draft of the [Defense Planning Guidance](http://www.nytimes.com/1992/03/08/world/excerpts-from-pentagon-s-plan-prevent-the-re-emergence-of-a-new-rival.html), was to “prevent the re-emergence of a new rival” capable of challenging U.S. power in any vital area, including Western Europe, Asia, or the territory of the former Soviet Union. To accomplish this task, the United States would retain preponderant military power, not merely to deter attacks against the United States, but also to deter “potential competitors” – including long-time U.S. allies such as Germany and Japan – “from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role.” Echoing those sentiments a few years later, Bill Kristol and Robert Kagan characterized the proper U.S. role in the world as “[benevolent global hegemony](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/52239/william-kristol-and-robert-kagan/toward-a-neo-reaganite-foreign-policy).” “The aspiration to benevolent hegemony,” they conceded in their famous Foreign Affairs essay from 1996, “might strike some as either hubristic or morally suspect. But a hegemon is nothing more or less than a leader with preponderant influence and authority over all others in its domain.” Kristol and Kagan claimed, “Most of the world’s major powers welcome U.S. global involvement and prefer America’s benevolent hegemony to the alternatives.” Indeed, they continued, “The principal concern of America’s allies these days is not that it will be too dominant but that it will withdraw.” That latter point has never been tested: U.S. troops have remained in Europe and Asia, and the U.S. military presence expanded in other regions. But whether it is good for others doesn’t necessarily make it good for us. For the most part, American taxpayers, and especially American troops, have borne the burdens of “benevolent hegemony,” while U.S. allies have been content to focus their attention on domestic spending, while their underfunded defenses languish. Modern-day advocates of our current foreign policy opt for a less grandiose name – “[deep engagement](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/138468/stephen-g-brooks-g-john-ikenberry-and-william-c-wohlforth/lean-forward?page=show)” – but the substance is the same as that advocated by Kristol and Kagan from nearly two decades ago. And the fact that U.S. foreign policy encourages other countries to neglect their defenses continues to be its key selling point. “By reassuring allies and actively managing regional relations,” Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry and William C. Wohlforth explain, “Washington dampens competition in the world’s key areas, thereby preventing the emergence of a hothouse in which countries would grow new military capabilities.” According to this view, the fact that U.S. allies have chosen not to invest in their own defenses is the clearest sign that the strategy is working as intended. “Since 1991,” Brooks and his co-authors enthuse, U.S. allies “have kept their military expenditures as a percentage of GDP to historic lows.” Curb Your Enthusiasm Because U.S. security guarantees to wealthy allies have caused them to under-provide for their own defense, they also have less capacity to deal with common security challenges, from ethnic violence in the Balkans in the late 1990s to combatting terrorism and piracy in the Middle East, South Asia, or the Horn or Africa today. But that isn’t the main flaw underlying U.S. foreign policy today. Cheerleaders for benevolent hegemony contend that Americans are inclined to carry these burdens indefinitely, a function of American exceptionalism combined with a pervasive culture of weakness among our allies. “The American people can be summoned to meet the challenges of global leadership,” Kristol and Kagan concluded in 1996, “if statesmen make the case loudly, cogently, and persistently.” American “statesmen” have typically opted for a different approach. They tend to sell U.S. foreign policy through misdirection and subterfuge to the extent that they ever talk about it at all. Astute observers of U.S. foreign policy understand why elites have neglected to make the case loudly, cogently, or persistently; the American people haven’t bought into this ambitious global mission, and they are unlikely to ever do so. Nor is it clear that other countries welcome U.S. leadership as much as the advocates of global hegemony contend. The key problem with “benevolent hegemony,” Francis Fukuyama explained in his book, [America at the Crossroads](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0300122535/ref%3Das_li_qf_sp_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0300122535&linkCode=as2&tag=httpwaronthec-20&linkId=2PD44YHPR4OSCGXO), is that it “rests on a belief in American exceptionalism that most non-Americans simply find not credible.” He continued, “The idea that the United States behaves disinterestedly on the world stage is not widely believed because it is for the most part not true and, indeed, could not be true if American leaders fulfill their responsibilities to the American people.” Even strong advocates of global hegemony concede that it might not be realistic to expect Americans to bear the burdens of global governance indefinitely. For Americans, Michael Mandelbaum grudgingly admitted in his book, [The Case for Goliath](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1586484583/ref%3Das_li_qf_sp_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1586484583&linkCode=as2&tag=httpwaronthec-20&linkId=CVAR56MJO5ZLYZUC), our own “nation’s interests have priority.” This “does not bespeak unusual financial stinginess or moral callousness: Americans approach the world much as other people do….For the American public, foreign policy, like charity, begins at home.” For that reason, above all others, Mandelbaum predicted, “the American role in the world may depend in part on Americans not scrutinizing it too closely.”