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Section One:

(1)

Drezner argues that US foreign policy has lost balance and bipartisanship due to weakened public interest, congressional polarization, and heavy reliance on the executive branch without checks of the position's power (2019). Drezner further argues that president Donald Trump exposed these flaws in the system by touting ogre-ish foreign policy measures which went unchecked, damaging some of the US's international relationships with no repercussions. Drezner is wary that if this trend continues, us foreign policy will be reactionary from president to president, and that experts may never have a say in foreign policy again (2019).

In the past, US foreign policy had the tendency to balance itself. Drezner presents us with examples of this, such as congress's push for humanitarianism in the USSR during Nixon's Realpolitik (2019). Though today, Drezner credits a lack of executive contestation by the other branches as cause for such tumultuous foreign policy. According to our author, political polarization in congress has inhibited its ability to swiftly counter executive orders, and the supreme court has "persistently deferred to the president on matters of national security" (Drezner, 2019, p. 4). Ultimately, the election of Joe Biden did follow Drezner's prediction that President Trump's successor would be a "left-wing populist" (Drezner, 2019, p. 4). Like Drezner predicted, Biden has gone on to repeal and reverse some of Trump's policies, most notably immigrant bans (Thrush, 2021).

(2)

Since World War II, conflict has changed on many fronts including stage, players, and tactics. According to Scott et al. (2022), new wars have developed with five distinct tendencies. The first discussed by our authors is the Increasing deadliness of international conflict. Our authors cite a statistic indicating that before 1899, war killed an average of 1 million participants every 50 years, but since then, that period of time has shrunk to only one year (Scott et al., 2019, p. 123). In addition to this, limited-scale conflicts and the involvement of developing countries have characterized modern war. Since 1945, world powers have mostly refrained from conflict with each other, shifting world focus to war in developing nations (Scott et al., 2019, p. 125). Along with this shift, the prevalence of civil wars and unconventional wars has also grown. According to the Uppsala Conflict Data Project 90% or more of the armed conflicts since 1989 have been intrastate conflicts (as cited in Scott et al., 2019, p. 126). This change in conflict has given rise to irregular forces and non-state actors engaging in war, which is linked to unconventional tactics and participants. These unconventional wars increasingly lack connection to government and military forces (Scott et al., 2019, p. 127). Such can be seen in today's culture through terrorism with groups using hijackings, bombings and other coordinated attacks on civilians.

(3)

As for any security community, the formation of such an organization is not enough to guarantee its success. In the case of the United Nations, Scott et al. (2022, p. 173) suggests that major powers must “share common interests and a general commitment to peace” in order for the organization to function as intended. The United Nations has faced difficulty ensuring cooperation due to a lack of real authority, diversity of participating nations, and the complexity of international issues (Scott et al. 2022, p. 217). The United Nations relies on the commitment of its members for militarized response, and does not have a dedicated military for enforcement of its policies. The UN also suffers from diversity of its members, with each nation having different values and likely seeking differing resolutions to given conflicts (Lecture Notes). This can be seen ever so today with China, Russia, and the United States all being members of the UNSC. Historically, the UN has had difficulty mobilizing collective security efforts during times of conflict between key players, such as the Cold War, and conflicts of non-interest to larger nations, like those occurring in Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda (Scott et al. 2022, p. 217). Due to lack of agreement among participating nations, commitment of troops or resources to collective security, and the growing complexity of the international system, the United Nations is largely ineffective at promoting collective security.

Option 2:

The COVID-19 pandemic proved to be the quintessential international security dilemma for nearly every nation. Scott et al. describes security dilemmas as “threats to either (a nation’s) survival or essential interests” (2022, p. 147). We can categorize Covid as a security dilemma due to its inherently destructive nature. Countries infected with the disease cannot function as normal and pursue essential interests effectively. Covid impacts the health of citizens, which ultimately distorts economic activity and civil function of a country. From the realist perspective, covid is a security dilemma to nations when protective forces are infected and disabled since nations “actively use military might to gain security and resolve conflict” (Scott et al. 2022, p. 149). Thus, a nation is weakened when its military cannot effectively protect. From a liberal perspective, covid becomes a security dilemma due to the stress which the pandemic puts on international relations and security communities. Security communities and diplomatic relations can break down when they must face self interest vs. collective good (lecture notes). Such practice was observed in the vaccine hoarding tendencies of nations at the start of the pandemic.

As a global health crisis, the Covid 19 pandemic requires unique cooperation between nations as public health becomes a matter of collective security. Nuzzo (2021) emphasized the lack of communication about covid information as a critical flaw in global response efforts to the disease. Had countries communicated earlier, some effects of the pandemic might have been mitigated and its transmission limited (Nuzzo, 2021). Barriers for the spread of a disease such as Covid were in place prior to the rise of the pandemic. One such precaution to prevent the spread of Covid is the IHR, which has the power to “require governments to develop the capacity to respond to outbreaks that have the potential to spread widely” (Nuzzo, 2021). This manifests in

inspections of healthcare systems and mandated reporting of infectious disease numbers. In addition to the presence of the IHR, states have the inherent ability to restrict travel and trade with foreign nations, such as those that might have a larger infected population.

Though no solution proved perfect for the pandemic. Nuzzo (2021) indicates that the IHR has no official power to restrict travel and trade, allowing nations to adhere to their own perspectives. This proved to ultimately be one of the reasons that covid spread so effectively. Some nations did not listen to professional advice from the WHO or IHR. This begins to demonstrate a break between nations who work from a liberalist perspective, and nations that work from a realist perspective. When fighting a global pandemic, international cooperation becomes essential since the actions of nations impact the health of global populations. Realist nations, who prioritize the security and power of their own country, may hoard vaccines or, counter-intuitively, keep borders open to support their economy. These decisions, when contrasted with those of liberalist nations, do not align. A nation working from a liberalist perspective supports and follows policies implemented by the international organizations they are a part of. In the context of the pandemic, advice from the IHR to shut borders and international efforts to share vaccines would be agreed with and followed. This misalignment can be catastrophic during a pandemic where global cooperation and communication is the most effective method to keeping earth's population safe.

References

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