**[Insert 2nd speaker name] and I negate the resolution**

**Contention 1 is preserving US credibility**

**Right now, our Indo-pacific Allies feel safe because of promised US support.**

Hal **Brands**, 8-28-20**24**, "**If South Korea Goes Nuclear, So Will the World**," American Enterprise Institute - AEI, https://www.aei.org/op-eds/if-south-korea-goes-nuclear-so-will-the-world/ // EC

**Nuclear nonproliferation is one of America’s** greatest, and **most underrated, strategic achievements. Almost 80 years after Hiroshima, fewer than 10 countries possess the** world’s deadliest **weapons** — a testament to international cooperation and US power. On a recent trip to Seoul to participate in the annual Munhwa Future Report, hosted by the Munhwa Ilbo newspaper, I got a glimpse of what makes the nonproliferation regime so resilient, and what could eventually bring it down. **Nuclear weapons are clearly on** **the** collective **South Korean mind these days**. Last year’s Washington Declaration between presidents Joe Biden and Yoon Suk Yeol committed the US to make South Korea a closer partner in planning for the potential wartime use of nuclear weapons. Analysts and politicians now debate whether Seoul should seek the return of US tactical nuclear weapons to the Korean peninsula after nearly three decades. According to opinion polling, a strong majority of South Koreans even want the country to build its own nuclear weapons. The sentiment is understandable. North Korea’s nuclear and missile arsenals are growing more fearsome. South Korean analysts I spoke to fear that the north’s dictator, Kim Jong Un, could soon boast a true nuclear triad of land-based missiles, nuclear-missile submarines and nuclear-armed aircraft. They also worry that Kim’s new alliance with Russia will bring technological aid for the development of his missiles. Once North Korea’s arsenal outstrips America’s homeland missile defenses, the thinking goes, the US won’t fight to defend Seoul if doing so could bring nuclear strikes on America itself. Then there is the Donald Trump factor. The publicly unstated, but unmistakable, fear is that a second Trump presidency would rupture the alliance with Washington, leaving South Korea alone and vulnerable. **Still, the odds are against South Korea building the bomb anytime soon.** South Korea would find it hard to pay for nuclear weapons without gutting its conventional forces. Quitting the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (or NPT) could put South Korea in the company of the world’s rogues. The US came down hard when Seoul thought seriously about acquiring nukes in the 1970s; a new push could seriously damage the alliance today. **Yet the South Korean nuclear debate remains noteworthy**, for what it reveals about the larger nonproliferation regime. That **global order is enshrined in the NPT**, an accord signed by nearly all the world’s countries. But **international cooperation**, in this instance, **has rested on a foundation of US power**. For decades, the US has threatened potential proliferators with sanctions, isolation and even military action. It has cultivated international norms and agreements meant to keep the nuclear club small and elite. **Most important, America has offered its allies military protection that makes it unnecessary for them to acquire nuclear arms. In doing so, it has held back the international anarchy in which countries everywhere might conclude that those weapons represent their only means of survival.** That only nine countries have nuclear weapons — of the dozens that have the technological capacity and other resources to build them — is a marker of this strategy’s success. But a scan of the contemporary international landscape highlights three factors that could eventually rupture that regime. One is the shifting military balance. The US and its allies still dominate their enemies conventionally in Europe and the Middle East. But in Asia, an epochal change is underway. China’s buildup is putting frontline states under ever-greater pressure. If that expansion of Beijing arsenal continues for another decade, key countries — perhaps Japan or Australia — could reluctantly conclude that conventional resistance is hopeless and nuclear weapons are a vital means of defense. A second factor is aggression by nuclear-armed predators against non-nuclear prey. Russia has brutally assailed Ukraine, which gave up its nuclear weapons in the 1990s. Moscow then used its arsenal to deter the US from intervening directly. That Ukraine has held its own in this war has limited the global fallout. But a world in which countries with the bomb repeatedly brutalize countries without it will quickly become a far more nuclearized world. **If China was to invade Taiwan — and the US was** unable or **unwilling to stop it** — **proliferation pressures could increase dramatically**. The final factor, and **what most concerns South Korean officials — a potential American withdrawal** — is what **would most devastate the non-proliferation regime**. **As long as US alliances are strong and credible, US allies have better, cheaper options than nuclear self-help**. Even if Iran goes nuclear, for instance, stronger US security guarantees for Saudi Arabia — and support for the kingdom’s civil nuclear program — can probably keep it from doing likewise. **But if the US pulls back, erstwhile allies from Eastern Europe to East Asia might feel that they face a choice between nuclear proliferation and national suicide** — which is why debates about acquiring those weapons have gotten louder in the age of Trump. If Trump wins in November, he probably won’t actually quit US alliances: Then he would lose the ability to gripe about them. But he will continue to sow doubt about America’s geopolitical commitments, and some of his once-and-perhaps-future advisers say proliferation by US allies wouldn’t be so bad after all. A second Trump presidency would be an era of nuclear anxiety. **And if the US** someday **removes** the **power and commitment** that sustains **the nonproliferation order**, that order **could crumble in many places at once**.

**Unfortunately, removing US military presence from Taiwan contradicts decades of foreign policy, destroying credibility.**

**Easley 16 – (**Leif-Eric Easley, Spring 2016, “Grand Bargain or Bad Idea? U.S. Relations with China and Taiwan”, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43828318>)//EC

Glaser not only sets aside Taiwan's ability to affect outcomes; he does not consider the roles of other states in Asia. Japanese, Indian, and Southeast Asian strategists doubt that China's territorial goals are limited, based on their observation of China's expand- ing power projection capabilities and resource needs. Glaser writes that Taiwan is the only dispute important enough to bring the United States and China into conflict, but the divided Korean Peninsula remains an area where the two could clash in, for ex- ample, a contingency precipitated by a North Korean attack or a race to secure nuclear weapons and fissile material during post-collapse stabilization missions. When political change comes to North Korea, China should be integral to processes of peaceful denuclearization, economic integration, and eventual unification, but Washington's interests will be tied to close cooperation with Seoul and Tokyo. It would be extremely counterproductive if damaged U.S. credibility motivated leaders in Beijing to expect (and those in Seoul and Tokyo to fear) a U.S.-China deal to seal the fate of Korea. **Abandonment of Taiwan would be a greater shock for U.S. credibility than the 2008 financial crisis, Arab Spring, Syrian civil war, or Ukrainian conflict because it would contradict decades of U.S. policy**, be a sin of commission rather than omission, and have greater direct relevance to Asia's geopolitics**. A grand bargain with China would not only degrade U.S. soft power and alliances; it could drive Asian countries to unilaterally enhance their own defenses, fueling an arms race and further diminishing security in the region**. Glaser suggests that such dynamics could be avoided if U.S. leaders visit Japan and South Korea with security treaties in hand and clarify why those countries are different from Taiwan. Alliances among democracies are based not only on treaties and national interests, however, but also on shared values and popular support. Perceptions of reliability affect how people vote and can redirect democratic processes behind alliance cooperation.

**Showing that the US is committed is especially critical now, as allies currently face pressing threats from other regional actors.**

**Romei 23** — (Sayuri Romei [Sayuri Romei is the associate director of programs at the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation, where she is responsible for the Mansfield Foundation – CIIS Forum on Northeast Asia Cooperation on energy and environmental issues, among other programs. Prior to joining the Foundation, Romei was a Stanton nuclear security fellow at the RAND Corporation, where she researched Japan’s evolving perceptions on U.S. extended nuclear deterrence and ways to strengthen U.S.-Japan relations. Prior to that, she was a public policy fellow at the Wilson Center, the fellow for security and foreign affairs at Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, and a MacArthur nuclear security fellow at Stanford University’s Center for International Security and Cooperation. Romei holds a BA in English Language and Literature from the University of Sorbonne, a BA in International Relations from the University of Roma La Sapienza, an MA in International Relations and a PhD in Political Science from Roma Tre University. Her work was featured in the Washington Post, Kyodo News, The Air Force Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs, among others, and she appeared on BBC World News and BBC World Service, PBS NewsHour, and the National Journal to comment on security issues in East Asia.], 7-20-2023, "Watching Ukraine, South Korea and Japan eye nuclear weapons. Here's what the US should do.", Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, https://thebulletin.org/2023/07/watching-ukraine-south-korea-and-japan-eye-nuclear-weapons-heres-what-the-us-should-do/) //FK

As neighbors, **South Korea and Japan face similar regional threats** and are both long-time US allies. But they see their national security in the region slightly differently: **South Korea’s main concern remains North Korea, while Japan focuses on China as its main threat.** Although Japan’s official stance towards Taiwan and Beijing has not changed, the Russian invasion of Ukraine made Tokyo more vocal and serious about deterring a potential forceful change of status quo by Beijing. Japan is still convinced that China will not abandon its ambitions on Taiwan, and Japan’s new National Security Strategy, released in December 2022, describes China’s current stance as “a matter of serious concern” and “an unprecedented and the greatest strategic challenge.” Prominent political figures in Japan have also recently stated that a Taiwan contingency is a contingency for Tokyo.

**Thus, with a drop in US credibility, allies will rush to create nuclear weapons to defend themselves against aggressors.**

**Easley 16 – (**Leif-Eric Easley, Spring 2016, “Grand Bargain or Bad Idea? U.S. Relations with China and Taiwan”, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43828318>)//EC

Glaser not only sets aside Taiwan's ability to affect outcomes; he does not consider the roles of other states in Asia. Japanese, Indian, and Southeast Asian strategists doubt that China's territorial goals are limited, based on their observation of China's expand- ing power projection capabilities and resource needs. Glaser writes that Taiwan is the only dispute important enough to bring the United States and China into conflict, but the divided Korean Peninsula remains an area where the two could clash in, for ex- ample, a contingency precipitated by a North Korean attack or a race to secure nuclear weapons and fissile material during post-collapse stabilization missions. When political change comes to North Korea, China should be integral to processes of peaceful denuclearization, economic integration, and eventual unification, but Washington's interests will be tied to close cooperation with Seoul and Tokyo. It would be extremely counterproductive if damaged U.S. credibility motivated leaders in Beijing to expect (and those in Seoul and Tokyo to fear) a U.S.-China deal to seal the fate of Korea. **Abandonment of Taiwan would be a greater shock for U.S. credibility than the 2008 financial crisis, Arab Spring, Syrian civil war, or Ukrainian conflict because it would contradict decades of U.S. policy**, be a sin of commission rather than omission, and have greater direct relevance to Asia's geopolitics**. A grand bargain with China would not only degrade U.S. soft power and alliances; it could drive Asian countries to unilaterally enhance their own defenses, fueling an arms race and further diminishing security in the region.** Glaser suggests that such dynamics could be avoided if U.S. leaders visit Japan and South Korea with security treaties in hand and clarify why those countries are different from Taiwan. Alliances among democracies are based not only on treaties and national interests, however, but also on shared values and popular support. Perceptions of reliability affect how people vote and can redirect democratic processes behind alliance cooperation.

**Specifically, two of our allies would be likely to proliferate.**  
  
**The first is Japan.**

**Japan isn’t proliferating right now because of US assurance.**

Richard Javad **Heydarian** **19**. Assistant professor in international affairs and political science at De La Salle University. He previously served as a policy advisor at the Philippine House of Representatives. "U.S. Ambiguity Is Pushing the Philippines Toward China." https://nationalinterest.org/feature/us-ambiguity-pushing-philippines-toward-china-43917?page=0%2C1//EC

quent North Korean nuclear test.43 Japan’s nuclear forbearance is certainly made easier by Japanese public opinion, which is frequently described as allergic to nuclear weapons as a result of the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, a feeling that was only reinforced with the disaster at Fukushima.44 Nevertheless, reliable U.S. security assurances, supported by the presence of a large number of U.S. troops in Japan, have played a key role in maintaining Japan’s unique forbearance against nuclear weapons. After all, Japan is the world’s third largest economy and possesses full control of the nuclear fuel cycle, yet remains a nonnuclear state. **Faced with a rising and increasingly assertive China** and with a rapidly growing North Korean nuclear ability to target the Japanese islands, **Tokyo more than ever relies on U.S. security guarantees to be able to deter aggression without its own autonomous nuclear arsenal.** **Should the** Trump administration **question U.S. commitments** to its East Asian allies, **T**okyo may **be pushed to** change its policy of nuclear forbearance.

**Unfortunately, Japanese proliferation is quick and destabilizing.**

**Peng 18** --- (Wang Peng, 1-16-2018, "Capable of possessing nuclear weapons overnight, Japan's nuclear issue draws attention again", http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA\_209163/TopStories\_209189/7957970.html) //EC

Japanese media recently reported that the Japan-US Nuclear Cooperation Agreement that will terminate in July 2018 was automatically extended on January 16, 2018. As the agreement allows Japan to promote the reprocessing of nuclear fuel, it is the basis for Japan's nuclear fuel recycling policy, and the extension of the agreement has caught the world’s close attention. **Japan** reportedly **has** a current **47 tons of plutonium, enough for** about **6,000 nuc**l**e**ar bomb**s**. Under such circumstances, it is an open secret that Japan has strong capability of nuclear weapon manufacturing. In March 1995, a Japanese magazine announced that **Japan was able to manufacture a nuc**lear bomb **in 183 days**. Now,

**The second ally who would proliferate is South Korea.**

**South Korea is teetering on the edge, but credibility is high enough that the government has still ruled it out for now.**

Choe **Sang-Hun**, 8-17-20**24**, "Doubting America’s ‘Nuclear Umbrella,’ Some South Koreans Want Their Own," No Publication, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/17/world/asia/south-korea-nuclear-arsenal.html // MH + recut EC

Ever since the Korean War was halted in an uneasy truce in 1953, **South Koreans have lived under an American promise to defend their country,** if necessary, with nuclear weapons. President Biden emphatically reiterated that commitment last year, vowing that any nuclear attack by North Korea would lead to the destruction of its government. But decades of American assurances have failed to deter North Korea from building a nuclear arsenal and then expanding it. Led by Kim Jong-un, **North Korea has** also **become more provocative, testing missiles powerful enough to reach the United States.** And it has **rattled South Korea** by reviving a Cold War-era defense agreement with Russia, another nuclear-armed state. **The South has long considered it a taboo to pursue atomic weapons in defiance of Washington’s nonproliferation policy. But jitters about security** here **have been intensified** by the possible re-election of former President Donald J. Trump, whose commitment to the alliance between Washington and Seoul appears to be shaky at best. **Now, a growing majority of South Koreans say their country needs its own nuclear weapons instead of relying on the U**nited **S**tates for protection. **The idea, although still disavowed by the South Korean government, is increasingly becoming part of mainstream political debate**. Polls show that **many South Koreans** say they can no longer trust the American nuclear umbrella to guard them from North Korea. They **doubt that Washington would come to their aid in the event of a conflict** with North Korea now that Pyongyang is racing to develop the ability to attack American cities with nuclear warheads.

**Similar to Japan, South Korea proliferation is quick**

**Oswald 18** --- (Rachel Oswald, 4-11-2018, "If It Wanted To, South Korea Could Build Its Own Bomb", https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/if-it-wanted-south-korea-could-build-its-own-bomb) //EC

**South Korea** has one of the world’s largest atomic energy industries and **an immediate and growing existential threat on its border** in the form of North Korea’s nuclear arsenal. That Seoul thus far has chosen not to develop a nuclear weapon owes almost entirely to the nuclear deterrence guarantees made by the United States.But South Korean confidence in the U.S. nuclear umbrella **is wavering**, at least among the country’s conservatives. **If Seoul decides to build its own nuke, how long** **would it** take, given the country’s existing atomic know-how and infrastructure?The answer to that question may determine whether lawmakers approve an updated nuclear trade deal with South Korea that could be submitted in 2021. U.S. lawmakers are increasingly leery of approving atomic energy export deals with countries such as Saudi Arabia that might seek to acquire a bomb.Washington and Seoul agreed in 2015 to jointly conduct a technical study into **a new form of nuclear waste reprocessing** known as pyro-processing, which South Korea has pioneered. Proponents of the new technology **argue it is more resistant to nuclear prolif**eration than traditional fuel recycling **as the plutonium removed from the spent fuel would remain in a form poorly suited for fueling a military-grade warhead**.“I’ve been worried that it’s been turned into a playpen,” says Princeton University physicist Frank von Hippel, a prominent nonproliferation expert. **Work on the joint** **pyroprocessing** **study**, he says, is unfocused and dominated by scientists in the United States and South Korea who are advocates of the technology.Not all South Korean nuclear scientists are behind the program. Among them is Hwang Yongsoo, **a principal researcher at the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute**, who says the process of building a low-yield nuclear bomb from plutonium produced by pyro-processing may be time-consuming but “it can be done.”Because South Korea’s nuclear energy program relies on U.S. reactor designs licensed **under** what’s called **a 123 nuclear trade agreement**, **the country needs U.S. government permission if it wants to engage in certain sensitive nuclear activities** that can also be used to build a weapon.In the United States, nuclear experts are largely unmoved by South Korea’s environmental and economic arguments for why it should be allowed to have a reprocessing capability, seeing instead a nationalist desire by Seoul for any technology that its former colonizer Japan is allowed to have.

**Unfortunately, new nuclear powers lack control of their nuclear weapons, risking an all-out nuclear conflict from accidental miscalculation.**

**Kroenig 15**

Matthew Kroenig, Associate Professor and IR Field Chair-Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, Senior Fellow-Brent Snowcroft Center on International Security at the Atlantic Council, The History of Proliferation Optimism: Does it Have a Future?, Journal of Strategic Studies Volume 38, Issue 1-2, 2015 pp. 98-125

**ar, nuclear** **terrorism, global and regional** **instability**, **constrained** **US** **freedom of action**, **weakened alliances**, **and** the **further proliferation** of nuclear weapons. In so doing, this essay makes several contributions to our understanding of proliferation optimism and nuclear weapons proliferation. First, it proposes a novel argument about how bureaucratic considerations and resource constraints were conducive to the intellectual diffusion of proliferation optimism. Second, it responds to recent calls for proliferation pessimists to stop ‘playing small ball’ and to rebut head **nuclear** **proliferation** **contributes to a real risk of nuclear war even in a situation of MAD among rational states**.35 35 Robert Powell, ‘Nuclear Brinkmanship with Two-Sided Incomplete Information’, American Political Science Review 82/1 (1988), 155–78; Robert Powell, ‘Nuclear Deterrence and the Strategy of Limited Retaliation’, American Political Science Review 83/2 (1989), 503–19. View all notes Moreover, realizing that nuclear war is possible does not depend on peculiar beliefs about the possibility of escaping MAD.36 36 Charles Glaser, Analyzing Strategic Nuclear Policy (Princeton UP 1990). View all notes Rather, as we will discuss below, these theorists understand that some risk of nuclear war is necessary in order for deterrence to function. To be sure, in the 1940s, Viner, Brodie, and others argued that MAD rendered war (New York: Greenwood Press 1978). View all notes Any nuclear exchange would have devastating consequences no doubt, but, if a feration. Many of these threats will be illuminated with a discussion of a case of much contemporary concern: Iran’s advanced nuclear program. Nuclear War The greatest threat posed by the spread of nuclear weapons is **nuclear war**. **The more states in possession** **of nuclear weapons,** **the greater the probability that somewhere**, someday, there will be a **catastrophic nuclear war**. To date, nuclear weapons have only been used in warfare once. In 1945, the United States used nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, bringing World War II to a close. Many analysts point to the 65-plus-year tradition of nuclear non-use as evidence that nuclear weapons are unusable, but it would be naïve to think that nuclear weapons will never be used again simply because they have not been used for some time. After all, analysts in the 1990s argued that worldwide economic downturns like the Great Depression were a thing of the past, only to be surprised by the dot-com bubble bursting later in the decade and the Great Recession of the late 2000s.48 48 Steven Weber, ‘The End of the Business Cycle?’, Foreign Affairs 76/4 (July/Aug. 1997), 65–82. View all notes This author, for one, would be surprised if nuclear weapons are not used again sometime in his lifetime. **Before reaching a state of MAD,** new nuclear states go through a transition period in which they **lack** a **secure-second strike capability**. In this context, **one or both** **states** **might** believe that it has an incentive to **use** nuclear weapons **first**. For example, if Iran acquires nuclear weapons, neither Iran, nor its nuclear-armed rival, Israel, will have a secure, second-strike capability. Even though it is believed to have a large arsenal, given its small size and lack of strategic depth, Israel might not be confident that it could absorb a nuclear strike and respond with a devastating counterstrike. Similarly, Iran might eventually be able to build a large and survivable nuclear arsenal, but, when it first crosses the nuclear threshold, Tehran will have a small and vulnerable nuclear force. In these pre-MAD situations, there are at least three ways that nuclear war could occur. **First**, the state with the nuclear advantage might believe it has a **splendid first strike** capability. In a crisis, Israel might, therefore, decide to launch a preventive nuclear strike to disarm Iran’s nuclear capabilities. Indeed, this incentive might be further increased by Israel’s aggressive strategic culture that emphasizes preemptive action. **Second**, the state with a small and vulnerable nuclear arsenal, in this case Iran, might feel **use** them **or lose** them **pressures**. That is, in a crisis, Iran might decide to strike first rather than risk having its entire nuclear arsenal destroyed. **Third**, as Thomas Schelling has argued, nuclear war could result due to the **reciprocal fear of surprise attack**.49 49 Thomas Schelling, ‘Reciprocal Fear of Surprise Attack’, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Paper 1958). View all notes If there are advantages to striking first, one state might

**Any nuclear conflict would be devastating.**

**Wigglesworth 22** — (Alex Wigglesworth, 8-15-2022, "Even a limited nuclear war could kill a third of world’s population, study shows", Los Angeles Times, https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2022-08-15/even-limited-nuclear-war-would-kill-billions-study-finds) //FK  
  
As escalating tensions among the United States, Russia and China revive [old fears of nuclear war](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-03-04/the-return-of-nuclear-anxiety-gen-x-and-older-remember-that), some researchers are warning that even a limited-scale exchange between such nations as India and Pakistan could have catastrophic consequences for global food supplies and trigger mass death worldwide. **A nuclear conflict involving less than 3% of the world’s stockpiles could kill a third of the world’s population within two years**, according to a new international study led by scientists at Rutgers University. A larger nuclear conflict between Russia and the United States could kill three-fourths of the world’s population in the same timeframe, according to the research published Monday in [Nature Food](https://www.nature.com/natfood/). “It’s really a cautionary tale that any use of nuclear weapons could be a catastrophe for the world,” said climate scientist and study author Alan Robock, a distinguished professor in Rutgers’ Department of Environmental Sciences.  
 **Contention 2 is Deterring China.**

**China wants Taiwan—they view it as special and will tolerate costs of invasion to stop separatism.**

**Hunzeker** **18**—(Hunzeker - assistant professor at GMU’s Schar School of Policy and Government, PHD from Princeton in public affairs). Hunzeker, Michael, and Alexander Lanoszka. 2018. A Question of Time: Enhancing Taiwan’s Conventional Deterrence Posture. . Accessed 8/28/19.

Whether or not China harbors revisionist intentions towards the **international** **order** matters a great deal for the United States and its allies in East Asia. Unfortunately, it probably **matters little for Taiwan**. Virtually **every analysis** we read draws the **same** **basic** **conclusion**: China wants to reassert political control over the island. **Nor** does China see Taiwan as a **negotiable issue**. Ever since Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist forces fled to Taiwan as the Chinese Civil War drew to a close in 1949, China has been steadfast in its interest in reunification. According to Gregory Moore, China has a “**sacred commitment**” to restoring political control over Taiwan. That is, Taiwan is part and parcel a “basket of **emotional**, **nationalistic**, **historical** and almost **spiritual** notions held by many in China about the **‘sacredness’ of** **territorial** **integrity** and the **commitment of** **the** **founders** **and revolutionaries** **of modern China** to the reunification of the motherland.”52  
  
**Thankfully, for 70 years, US military presence has been the only thing keeping China from invading Taiwan.**

**Henley 23** --- (Lonnie Henley [Lonnie Henley is a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute and a retired U.S. intelligence professional who held several senior positions including Defense Intelligence Officer for East Asia, Senior Defense Intelligence Analyst for China, and National Intelligence Collection Officer for East Asia.], 12-12-2023, "Deterrence and Dissuasion in the Taiwan Strait", https://www.fpri.org/article/2023/12/deterrence-and-dissuasion-in-the-taiwan-strait/) //EC

Other prescriptions center on deterrence by punishment, raising the anticipated cost of a military conflict in the mind of Chinese decision-makers. Discussion of “cost-imposition strategies” peaked in the second Obama Administration, then evolved in recent years to broader “all-of-government” strategies against China. These discussions have two unstated assumptions: that our ability to deter attack on Taiwan is waning as China’s military and economic power grows, but that deterrence is sufficient to avoid conflict if we employ the right combination of denial and punishment. I take issue with both those premises. **Deterrence is working in the Taiwan Strait, as it has for seventy years. Clearly, Chinese forces would have seized Taiwan long ago if it were easy and cheap**. But it is not, and nothing on the horizon will change that. Today’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is vastly more capable than even a decade ago, and it will continue improving. But **invading Taiwan in the face of US military opposition remains among the most daunting military operations any country has considered**. The risk of failure will remain high even with the next generation of PLA hardware, and the one after that. (I have argued elsewhere that China can win despite a failed invasion, but at a very high cost to all involved.)

**However, reducing military support to Taiwan signals to China that confrontational behavior causes us to back down, incentivizing worse aggression in the future.**

**Easley 16 – (**Leif-Eric Easley, Spring 2016, “Grand Bargain or Bad Idea? U.S. Relations with China and Taiwan”, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43828318>) //EC

**Rather than alleviate frictions**, **a** grand **bargain would** likely **motivate beliefs that China could eventually dismantle the U.S.** security architecture in Asia, **emboldening actors on the Chinese side to pursue their interests more assertively**. U.S. abandonment of Taiwan would entail repealing the Taiwan Relations Act, ending the legal basis for defense cooperation and arms sales, immediately undermining deterrence, and steadily degrading Taiwan's defense capabilities in ways difficult to reverse.14 Meanwhile, China's salami tactics, in combination with its ability to quickly redeploy military assets it might agree to pull back and its demonstrated long-term approach to the East China and South China Seas, make any such deal as Glaser suggests not credible. Chinese official documents give no reason to believe that Beijing would be concilia- tory on other claims if the United States accommodated China on Taiwan.15 Taipei also claims sovereignty over the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. Beijing's legal claim to these islands, which it calls the Diaoyu Islands, heavily relies on the history of the Republic of China and the status of "Taiwan Province."16 Meanwhile, Taiwan maintains troops and recently upgraded its facilities on Taiping/Itu Aba, the largest naturally occurring feature of the disputed Spratly Islands, where China has been engaged in land reclamation and construction on features it controls. U.S. aban- donment of Taiwan would likely make Chinese decisionmakers believe they could strengthen their claims in the East China and South China Seas by coercing Taipei to consolidate its positions with those of Beijing

**Empirically, China attacks against perceptually weak opponents.**

**Weiss and Beckley 24** --- (Simon Weiss [Simon Weiss holds a bachelor’s degree in international relations from Tufts University with a focus area on U.S. foreign policy and the trilateral relationship between the United States, China, and Taiwan. He is the original creator of this dataset.] and Michael Beckley [Michael Beckley is associate professor of political science at Tufts University, nonresident senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and Asia director at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.]

, 7-23-2024, "Countering Chinese Aggression in the South China Sea", https://warontherocks.com/2024/07/countering-chinese-aggression-in-the-south-china-sea/) //EC

China engaged in military coercion, ranging from seizing civilian vessels in contested waters to occupying new territory with military force, at least 132 times from 2012 to 2022 — a frequency roughly four times greater than previously estimated by scholars and an order of magnitude greater than any other country in the region. **China has begun a new physical confrontation with its neighbors** once per month on average, using all manner of hostile acts, including firing warning shots near foreign vessels or blocking their passage. China also paired this harassment with **a dramatic expansion of its military presence** across the South China Sea, **including** the construction of **seven military bases atop artificial islands.** China claims it is simply defending its territory against foreign encroachments, engaging in what some Western analysts have called “reactive assertiveness.” In this view, which seemed plausible to some Sinologists in the early 2010s, China’s top leaders generally desire to avoid hostilities and employ coercion mainly in response to provocations from neighboring countries and the United States. The implication is that China might remain at peace, if other countries would cease their threatening and expansionist behavior. The **new data, however, suggests that this view is outdated**, if it were ever true. **Since at least 2012, China’s behavior in the South China Sea and East China Sea could be more accurately described as unprovoked aggression. Only 12 percent of China’s coercive acts were preceded by any sort of perceived hostile foreign move**, such as when then Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi visited **Taiwan** in August of 2022. The remaining **88 percent of Chinese coercive acts were opportunistic, employed against vulnerable targets at times and in places of China’s choosing**. More often than not, that place was the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone, a fact that underscores the grand geopolitical ambitions behind China’s fierce contestation of uninhabited rocks.

**History tells us that without US support, a Chinese invasion would be likely**

Hans **Binnendijk** [Hans Binnendijk is a distinguished fellow at the Atlantic Council. He previously served as senior director for defense policy on the Clinton administration’s National Security Council.], 03/19/20**19**, “5 consequences of a life without NATO,” https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/03/19/5-consequences-of-a-life-without-nato/ // MH

The most catastrophic impact of NATO’s retirement would be the risk of Russian aggression and miscalculation. **Without a clear commitment to defend allied territory** backed up by an American nuclear deterrent, President Vladimir **Putin will certainly see opportunities to seize land** he believes is Russian. He has already done this **[like] in Georgia and Ukraine**. **Had they not joined NATO, the Baltic states would probably already be occupied by Russian troops**. Certainly **Putin would also see an opportunity to seize more of Ukraine without the “shadow” of NATO to protect it. History teaches us that major wars start when aggressive leaders miscalculate**. German leader Adolf **Hitler attacked Poland** in 1939, **believing** that after then-British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain’s Munich Agreement, **England would be unlikely to respond. North Korea attacked South Korea** in 1950 **after the U**nited **S**tates **appeared to remove Seoul from its defensive perimeter**. Iraqi leader **Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait** in 1990, **believing the U**nited **S**tates had signaled that it **would not respond**. In each case, **miscalc**ulation **led to larger conflict**. Secondly, NATO’s retirement would also decrease American military reach, its political influence and its economic advantage. American bases throughout Europe not only provide for the defense of Europe — they bring the U.S. a continent closer to trouble spots that threaten vital American interests. Fighting the Islamic State group, clearly an American interest, would have been markedly more difficult without permanent U.S. bases in Europe and without the American-built coalition that included every NATO nation. Without NATO, the mutual security interests that underpin both U.S. bases and coalition operations would be undermined. This extends to the economic realm. U.S. annual trade in goods and services with Europe exceeds $1 trillion, and U.S. total direct investment in Europe nears $3 trillion. These economic ties enhance U.S. prosperity and provide American jobs, but they require the degree of security now provided by NATO to endure. NATO’s retirement would thirdly exacerbate divisions within Europe. NATO’s glue not only holds European militaries together — it provides the principal forum to discuss and coordinate security issues. The European Union is unlikely to substitute for NATO in this respect because it has no military structure, few capabilities and no superpower leadership to bring divergent views together. Germany and France already seek a plan B should NATO collapse, but without the United Kingdom in the European Union, an all-European approach is likely to fail. The added insecurity of NATO’s collapse would also amplify current populist movements in Europe. The consequence could be renationalization of European militaries, a system that brought conflict to the 19th and early 20th centuries. The fourth consequences of life without NATO would be global. American bilateral alliances in Asia would each be shaken to their core should NATO fail. America’s defense commitments there would become worthless. With China determined to claim a dominant position in Asia, the collapse of NATO would cause America’s Asian partners to seek accommodation with China, much as the Philippines is in the process of doing. Trump’s decision to abandon the economic Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement has already given China new advantages in the region. **Without credible American security commitments, there would be little to stop China from controlling the South China Sea and** probably **occupying Taiwan** as well. **Add to this** equation the **new footholds that China is building in central Asia, Africa and Europe**: Abandoning NATO would help assure China’s competitive success. The final impact of NATO’s retirement would be the near collapse of what has been called the “liberal international order.” This order consists of treaties, alliances, agreements, institutions and modes of behavior mostly created by the United States in an effort to safeguard democracies. This order has kept relative peace in the trans-Atlantic space for seven decades. The Trump administration has begun to unravel elements of this order in the naive notion that they undercut American sovereignty. The entire European project is built on the edifice of this order. NATO is its principal keystone. Collapsing this edifice would undercut the multiple structures that have brought seven decades of peace and prosperity. So the answer is clear. Life without NATO would be more dangerous and less prosperous. Russia and China would be the big winners at America’s expense. NATO simply can’t retire. Yes, NATO has problems. It needs to be managed. But there is too much left to be done for retirement. And there is too much to lose if NATO fails.

**Overall, an invasion would be devastating**

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By focusing largely on military losses, which are chilling enough, both studies grossly underestimate the real costs and potential devastation to Taiwan and much of East Asia. My own instinct tells me that, should China impose a customs blockade on the island, Washington would blink hard at the thought of losing hundreds of aircraft and dozens of warships, including an aircraft carrier or two, and retreat to its long-standing policy of regarding Taiwan as China’s territory. If the United States did challenge that customs interdiction zone, however, it would have to attack the Chinese blockade and might, in the eyes of much of the world, become the aggressor—a real disincentive from Washington’s point of view.

**Should China launch an all-out invasion**, however, Taiwan would likely succumb within a few days once its air force of just 470 combat aircraft was overwhelmed by the PLA’s 2,900 jet fighters, 2,100 supersonic missiles, and its massive navy, now the world’s largest. Reflecting China’s clear strategic advantage of simple proximity to Taiwan, the island’s occupation might well be a fait accompli before the US Navy ships could arrive from Japan and Hawaii in sufficient numbers to challenge the massive Chinese armada. If Beijing and Washington somehow let the pull of policy and planning drag them into such an ever-widening war, however, **the damage could still prove incalculable—with cities devastated, untold thousands dead, and the global economy, with its epicenter in Asia, left in ruins.** Let us only hope that today’s leaders in both Washington and Beijing prove more restrained than did their counterparts in Berlin and Paris in August 1914 when plans for victory unleashed a war that **would leave 20 million dead in its wake**.

Thus, we negate.