## Legitimacy

#### Plan: The United States federal government should begin bilateral economic engagement with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

#### Contention 1 is Legitimacy—

#### International crises are inevitable---Russia expansionism, Iranian prolif, Indo-Pak War and Chinese influence in Latin America are all uniquely likely in the status quo---it’s only a question of US ability to de-escalate conflict

Ghitis 13 (Frida, world affairs columnist for The Miami Herald and World Politics Review. A former CNN producer and correspondent, she is the author of *The End of Revolution: A Changing World in the Age of Live Television*. “World to Obama: You can't ignore us,” 1/22, http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/22/opinion/ghitis-obama-world)

President Obama made it very clear: The second term is all about the domestic agenda. If only the world would cooperate.¶ Obama outlined his goals for the next four years, sketching above all [a progressive vision](http://www.chieftain.com/president-obama-opens-second-term-with-emphasis-on-equality/article_1a670fe0-63f6-11e2-a22a-001a4bcf887a.html" \t "_blank) of a country with less inequality and more justice. And, judging by his inaugural speech, he plans to put his shoulder to the wheel. After all, much of the first term was consumed with averting a national economic catastrophe. Now he can get on with building a legacy, reviving that hope and change he promised back during the 2008 campaign.¶ But the most subtly striking part of [Obama's inauguration speech](http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/21/obama-it-is-now-our-generations-task-to-carry-on-what-pioneers-began/?hpt=hp_t1) was how it largely ignored the rest of the globe. In his 20-minute address, he dedicated perhaps one minute to foreign policy.¶ America, he said, will "try and resolve our differences with other nations peacefully." He vowed the country "will remain the anchor of strong alliances" and it will support democracy. He also declared the United States "must be a source of hope for the poor, the sick, the marginalized, the victims of prejudice..." and stand for "human dignity and justice."¶ Beyond that, he did not spare a single word for tens of thousands killed by dictators, as they have been in Syria; nothing about the struggle for liberal democratic rights in places like Egypt, which sets the tone for the Middle East. Nothing about repression and thwarting of freedom of expression, the rollback of democratic rights, or the push to destroy existing democracies, statements that could have come as welcome words of encouragement for people who share American values of freedom and justice in places like Egypt, China, Iran, Russia or Mali.¶ The president should keep in mind that millions around the world yearn to know they have the backing of the most powerful country on Earth. As he surely knows, even his words make a big difference.¶ And while Obama plans to dedicate his efforts to the domestic agenda, a number of brewing international crises are sure to steal his attention and demand his time. Here are a few of the foreign policy issues that, like it or not, may force Obama to divert his focus from domestic concerns in this new term.¶ Syria unraveling: The United Nations says more than 60,000 people have already died in [a civil war t](http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/02/world/meast/syria-civil-war/index.html)hat the West has, to its shame, done little to keep from spinning out of control. Washington[has warned](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/04/world/middleeast/nato-prepares-missile-defenses-for-turkey.html?_r=0" \t "_blank) that the use of chemical or biological weapons might force its hand. But the regime [may have already used them](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/01/19/us-syria-chemical-newspaper-idUSBRE90I0JV20130119" \t "_blank). The West has failed to nurture a moderate force in the conflict. Now Islamist extremists are growing [more powerful](http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/01/fighter-syria-aleppo-turkey.html" \t "_blank) within the opposition. The chances are growing that worst-case scenarios will materialize. Washington will not be able to endlessly ignore this dangerous war.¶ Egypt and the challenge of democracy: What happens in Egypt strongly influences the rest of the Middle East -- and hence world peace -- which makes it all the more troubling to see liberal democratic forces lose battle after battle for political influence against Islamist parties, and to hear blatantly [anti-Semitic speech](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/15/world/middleeast/egypts-leader-morsi-made-anti-jewish-slurs.html" \t "_blank) coming from the mouth of Mohammed Morsy barely two years before he became president.¶ Iran's nuclear program: Obama took office promising a new, more conciliatory effort to persuade Iran to drop its nuclear enrichment program. Four years later, he has succeeded in implementing international sanctions, but Iran has continued enriching uranium, leading [United Nations inspectors](http://news.yahoo.com/un-credible-evidence-iran-working-nuke-weapons-153544271.html" \t "_blank) to find "credible evidence" that Tehran is working on nuclear weapons. Sooner or later the moment of truth will arrive. If a deal is not reached, Obama will have to decide if he wants to be the president on whose watch a nuclear weapons race was unleashed in the most dangerous and unstable part of the world.¶ North Africa terrorism: A much-neglected region of the world is becoming increasingly difficult to disregard. In recent days, [Islamist extremists](http://edition.cnn.com/2013/01/18/opinion/ghitis-algeria-hostage-crisis/index.html?hpt=op_t1) took American and other hostages in Algeria and France sent its military to fight advancing Islamist extremists in Mali, a country that once represented optimism for democratic rule in Africa, now overtaken by militants who are potentially turning it into a staging ground for international terrorism.¶ Russia repression: As Russian President Vladimir Putin succeeds in [crushing opposition](http://www.france24.com/en/20121027-russian-opposition-leaders-detained-protest-navalny-udaltsov-vladimir-putin" \t "_blank) to his [increasingly authoritarian](http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/russia" \t "_blank)rule, he and his allies are making anti-American words and policies their favorite theme. A recent ban on adoption of Russian orphans by American parents is only the most vile example. But Washington needs Russian cooperation to achieve its goals at the U.N. regarding Iran, Syria and other matters. It is a complicated problem with which Obama will have to wrestle.¶ Then there are the long-standing challenges that could take a turn for the worse, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Obama may not want to wade into that morass again, but events may force his hand.¶ And there are the so-called "black swans," events of low probability and high impact. [There is talk](http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21569757-armed-clashes-over-trivial-specks-east-china-sea-loom-closer-drums-war" \t "_blank) that China and Japan could go to war over a cluster of disputed islands.¶ A war between two of the world's largest economies could prove devastating to the global economy, just as a sudden and dramatic reversal in the fragile Eurozone economy could spell disaster. Japan's is only the hottest of many territorial disputes between China and its Asian neighbors. Then there's North Korea with its nuclear weapons.¶ We could see regions that have garnered little attention come back to the forefront, such as Latin America, where conflict could arise in a post-Hugo Chavez Venezuela.¶ The president -- and the country -- could also benefit from unexpectedly positive outcomes. Imagine a happy turn of events in Iran, a breakthrough between Israelis and Palestinians, the return of prosperity in Europe, a successful push by liberal democratic forces in the Arab uprising countries, which could create new opportunities, lowering risks around the world, easing trade, restoring confidence and improving the chances for the very agenda Obama described in his inaugural speech.¶ The aspirations he expressed for America are the ones he should express for our tumultuous planet. Perhaps in his next big speech, the State of the Union, he can remember America's leadership position and devote more attention to those around the world who see it as a source of inspiration and encouragement.¶ After all, in this second term Obama will not be able to devote as small a portion of his attention to foreign policy as he did during his inaugural speech.¶ International disengagement is not an option. As others before Obama have discovered, history has a habit of toying with the best laid, most well-intentioned plans of American presidents.

#### Russian expansion now

Yashar 11/7 (Graduate Research Assistant at [Hebrew University of Jerusalem](http://www.linkedin.com/company/hebrew-university-of-jerusalem?trk=ppro_cprof)¶ Hebrew English Phone Translator at Comfido Language Services¶ Japanese Translator at etype Omnitech Solutions ltd. – “Putin to Visit Egypt, Replace US Military Ties <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/173739#.Up4F_WRDu6o> - Arutz Sheva)

Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit Egypt later this month, the Washington Free Beacon reports, in what is seen as an attempt to replace the US as the Nile state's military provider.¶ The visit, during which US officials predict Putin will announce a major arms deal, comes as US ties with both Egypt and [Saudi Arabia](http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/173094" \t "_blank) are weakening, and may indicate a shifting of regional influence in Moscow's favor.¶ Tensions rose between the US and Egypt following US President Barack Obama's partial freeze of Egyptian military aid last month. The move came on the heels of Obama's perceived support of ousted President Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood.¶ The Washington Free Beacon notes that Egypt is interested in acquiring Russian fighter jets and Tor anti-aircraft missiles, in addition to upgrades for its Soviet-era tanks, all of which are weapons systems the US has currently blocked.¶ If the visit is successful, Russia will mend military relations with Egypt that were strong until 1977, when then-President Anwar Sadat broke ties in favor of US backing.¶ The announced visit comes after initial reports of Egypt's intention to seal a 15 billion dollar arms deal with Russia, which reportedly will include MiG-29 planes and other military equipment. Egypt expressed its interest after an Egyptian delegation visited Moscow last Thursday.¶ Just before US Secretary of State John Kerry's apparently unsuccessful conciliation visit to Cairo on Sunday, Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmi stated that his country is looking for partners other than the US to meet its security needs.¶ Kerry's visit included a stop in Saudi Arabia, in an attempt to patch things up with the Gulf state which has expressed displeasure over Obama's handling of Syria and the Iranian nuclear threat. Saudi Arabia reportedly will help finance Egypt's Russian arms deal.¶ Russia has been taking an increasingly active role asserting itself in the Middle East, replacing America according to some, as US alliances and influence in the region have faltered.¶ According to Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov Thursday, Russia will be hosting representatives of both the Assad regime and the rebel forces in unofficial peace talks between the two sides. He added that both sides had agreed to the meetings.¶ The development comes after US and western backed initiatives for a Geneva 2 Conference to discuss Syrian peace has fallen apart as the rebel forces have demanded that talks focus on Assad's exit, while Assad insists on staying in power.

#### Russia expansionism causes nuclear war

Blank 9 (Dr. Stephen, Research Professor of National Security Affairs at the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, March, “Russia And Arms Control: Are There Opportunities For The Obama Administration?,” http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub908.pdf)

Proliferators or nuclear states like China and Russia can then deter regional or intercontinental attacks either by denial or by threat of retaliation.168 Given a multipolar world structure with little ideological rivalry among major powers, it is unlikely that they will go to war with each other. Rather, like Russia, they will strive for exclusive hegemony in their own “sphere of influence” and use nuclear instruments towards that end. However, wars may well break out between major powers and weaker “peripheral” states or between peripheral and semiperipheral states given their lack of domestic legitimacy, the absence of the means of crisis prevention, the visible absence of crisis management mechanisms, and their strategic calculation that asymmetric wars might give them the victory or respite they need.169 Simultaneously,¶ The states of periphery and semiperiphery have far more opportunities for political maneuvering. Since war remains a political option, these states may find it convenient to exercise their military power as a means for achieving political objectives. Thus international crises may increase in number. This has two important implications for the use of WMD. First, they may be used deliberately to offer a decisive victory (or in Russia’s case, to achieve “intra-war escalation control”—author170) to the striker, or for defensive purposes when imbalances in military capabilities are significant; and second, crises increase the possibilities of inadvertent or accidental wars involving WMD.171¶ Obviously nuclear proliferators or states that are expanding their nuclear arsenals like Russia can exercise a great influence upon world politics if they chose to defy the prevailing consensus and use their weapons not as defensive weapons, as has been commonly thought, but as offensive weapons to threaten other states and deter nuclear powers. Their decision to go either for cooperative security and strengthened international military-political norms of action, or for individual national “egotism” will critically affect world politics. For, as Roberts observes,¶ But if they drift away from those efforts [to bring about more cooperative security], the consequences could be profound. At the very least, the effective functioning of inherited mechanisms of world order, such as the special responsibility of the “great powers” in the management of the interstate system, especially problems of armed aggression, under the aegis of collective security, could be significantly impaired. Armed with the ability to defeat an intervention, or impose substantial costs in blood or money on an intervening force or the populaces of the nations marshaling that force, the newly empowered tier could bring an end to collective security operations, undermine the credibility of alliance commitments by the great powers, [undermine guarantees of extended deterrence by them to threatened nations and states] extend alliances of their own, and perhaps make wars of aggression on their neighbors or their own people.172

#### Only US heg can solve Iran prolif---talks have gone nowhere

Chabin 11/24 (Michelle, writer for USA Today, “Israel calls Iran nuclear deal a 'historic mistake'”, USA Today, 11/24/13, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/11/24/iran-nuclear-deal-israel-reactions/3690161/>)

JERUSALEM — The Israeli government called the deal reached with Iran over its nuclear program a "historic mistake," saying it only slows a nuclear program that will still be capable of producing a bomb. Speaking to his Cabinet on Sunday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the agreement endangered Israel, adding the nation is not bound by the international community's nuclear deal and reserves the right to defend itself. "What was reached last night in Geneva is not a historic agreement, it is a historic mistake," Netanyahu said. "Today the world became a much more dangerous place because the most dangerous regime in the world made a significant step in obtaining the most dangerous weapons in the world." "We're worried about the agreement but our job is to keep up the warnings," said Yair Lapid, Israel's Minister of Finance and part of Netanyahu's coalition government. "We're not comfortable but this warning needs to be done. We have six months until there is (hopefully) a better agreement. Voicing what he called Israel's right to self-defense, he said, "I want to clarify that Israel will not let Iran develop nuclear military capability." "We may be the only child in the room saying the king has no clothes but that's what we must do." An official in the Prime Minister's office said the agreement "gives Iran exactly what it wants: a significant easing of sanctions and allows Iran to keep the most significant parts of its nuclear program. The agreement allows Iran to continue enriching uranium and leaves it the centrifuges that enables it create (fissile) material to create nuclear weapons. Likewise, the agreement doesn't lead to dismantling the Arak reactor. The economic pressure on Iran would have led to a much better agreement that would have dismantled Iran's nuclear capability." The White House said the interim deal limits Iran's existing stockpiles of enriched uranium, which can be turned into the fissile core of nuclear arms. The accord curbs the number and capabilities of the centrifuges used to enrich and limits Iran's ability to "produce weapons-grade plutonium" from a reactor in the advanced stages of construction.

#### Iran prolif causes nuclear war

Jeffrey Goldberg 12, Bloomberg View columnist and a national correspondent for the Atlantic, January 23, 2012, “How Iran Could Trigger Accidental Armageddon,” online: http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-01-24/how-iran-may-trigger-accidental-armageddon-commentary-by-jeffrey-goldberg.html

The experts who study this depressing issue seem to agree that a Middle East in which Iran has four or five nuclear weapons would be dangerously unstable and prone to warp-speed escalation.¶ Here’s one possible scenario for the not-so-distant future: Hezbollah, Iran’s Lebanese proxy, launches a cross-border attack into Israel, or kills a sizable number of Israeli civilians with conventional rockets. Israel responds by invading southern Lebanon, and promises, as it has in the past, to destroy Hezbollah. Iran, coming to the defense of its proxy, warns Israel to cease hostilities, and leaves open the question of what it will do if Israel refuses to heed its demand.¶ Dennis Ross, who until recently served as President Barack Obama’s Iran point man on the National Security Council, notes Hezbollah’s political importance to Tehran. “The only place to which the Iranian government successfully exported the revolution is to Hezbollah in Lebanon,” Ross told me. “If it looks as if the Israelis are going to destroy Hezbollah, you can see Iran threatening Israel, and they begin to change the readiness of their forces. This could set in motion a chain of events that would be like ‘Guns of August’ on steroids.”¶ Imagine that Israel detects a mobilization of Iran’s rocket force or the sudden movement of mobile missile launchers. Does Israel assume the Iranians are bluffing, or that they are not? And would Israel have time to figure this out? Or imagine the opposite: Might Iran, which will have no second-strike capability for many years -- that is, no reserve of nuclear weapons to respond with in an exchange -- feel compelled to attack Israel first, knowing that it has no second chance?¶ Bruce Blair, the co-founder of the nuclear disarmament group Global Zero and an expert on nuclear strategy, told me that in a sudden crisis Iran and Israel might each abandon traditional peacetime safeguards, making an accidental exchange more likely.¶ “A confrontation that brings the two nuclear-armed states to a boiling point would likely lead them to raise the launch- readiness of their forces -- mating warheads to delivery vehicles and preparing to fire on short notice,” he said. “Missiles put on hair-trigger alert also obviously increase the danger of their launch and release on false warning of attack -- false indications that the other side has initiated an attack.”¶ Then comes the problem of misinterpreted data, Blair said. “Intelligence failures in the midst of a nuclear crisis could readily lead to a false impression that the other side has decided to attack, and induce the other side to launch a preemptive strike.”¶ ‘Cognitive Bias’¶ Blair notes that in a crisis it isn’t irrational to expect an attack, and this expectation makes it more likely that a leader will read the worst into incomplete intelligence. “This predisposition is a cognitive bias that increases the danger that one side will jump the gun on the basis of incorrect information,” he said.¶ Ross told me that Iran’s relative proximity to Israel and the total absence of ties between the two countries -- the thought of Iran agreeing to maintain a hot line with a country whose existence it doesn’t recognize is far-fetched -- make the situation even more hazardous. “This is not the Cold War,” he said. “In this situation we don’t have any communications channels. Iran and Israel have zero communications. And even in the Cold War we nearly had a nuclear war. We were much closer than we realized.”¶ The answer to this predicament is to deny Iran nuclear weapons, but not through an attack on its nuclear facilities, at least not now. “The liabilities of preemptive attack on Iran’s nuclear program vastly outweigh the benefits,” Blair said. “But certainly Iran’s program must be stopped before it reaches fruition with a nuclear weapons delivery capability.”

#### Indo-Pak tensions are increasing

WP 11/23 (Concerns grow in Pakistan and India over border violence -- <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/concerns-grow-in-pakistan-and-india-over-border-violence/2013/11/23/633519fc-4d15-11e3-bf60-c1ca136ae14a_story.html>)

“I have sent my family to relatives and keep my door locked,” said Mohammad Iqbal, 55. “When I am sure peace is restored, I will bring them back.”¶ Recent attacks involving Indian and Pakistani troops have been the worst border violence since a 2003 cease-fire. Now, with snow falling on the mountainous border, fighting has subsided and displaced residents are trickling home.¶ But analysts fear the calm will be relatively short-lived. While few expect another war, the flare-ups illustrate the simmering tensions that may only increase as the two countries jostle for influence in Afghanistan while U.S. troops withdraw.¶ “This is the new normal,” said Stephen P. Cohen, a senior fellow and South Asia analyst at the Brookings Institution. “This is going to be just like the Middle East, but only with two countries with nuclear weapons.”¶ The fighting this fall, which included artillery and mortar fire, claimed civilian and military lives on both sides of the border. Ominously, it took place not only in Kashmir, which has been a source of tension for decades, but also farther south on the outskirts of Sialkot, an industrial area [known for producing](http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052748703465204575208213597446370) quality soccer balls.¶ Since predominantly Muslim Pakistan was separated from mostly Hindu India in 1947, the countries have fought two wars over Kashmir, which is divided between them but has a majority Muslim population.¶ Each side has blamed the other for the recent fighting.¶ Pakistanis speculate that the Indian government is becoming more aggressive toward its neighbor, in part to gain support ahead of national elections. Meanwhile, Indians accuse Pakistan of failing to rein in Islamist militants seeking an independent Kashmir. Some of the militant groups are widely suspected of having ties to the Pakistani military and intelligence services.¶ The conflict started in January, when Pakistan accused Indian forces of killing a Pakistani soldier on the disputed border in Kashmir, known as the Line of Control. India then claimed Pakistani soldiers or militants crossed the border and killed three of its soldiers.¶ In August, the feud took a dangerous turn when five Indian soldiers were slain in Kashmir. Pakistan denied responsibility but shelling between the two sides escalated.¶ Last month, Pakistan’s military accused India of firing 4,000 mortar shells and 59,000 machine-gun rounds during a two-day period that coincided with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s meeting with President Obama in Washington. One of those shells killed the rickshaw driver in Tahir Joian.¶ “We were forced to retaliate,” said Brig. Mateem Ahmed Khan, a senior commander for Pakistan’s border force near Sialkot. He accused India of stoking the tension to undermine Sharif’s visit to Washington. “It was a rain of fire coming down on our villages and posts,” he said.¶ With Pakistan restricting Western reporters’ access to the border, it is difficult to verify the claims of its military. In Tahir Joian, chunks of concrete were missing from walls and a hole was visible in a thatched roof, but there did not appear to be widespread damage.

#### Indo-Pak war escalates quickly to extinction---no checks

Greg Chaffin 11, Research Assistant at Foreign Policy in Focus, July 8, 2011, “Reorienting U.S. Security Strategy in South Asia,” online: http://www.fpif.org/articles/reorienting\_us\_security\_strategy\_in\_south\_asia

The greatest threat to regional security (although curiously not at the top of most lists of U.S. regional concerns) is the possibility that increased India-Pakistan tension will erupt into all-out war that could quickly escalate into a nuclear exchange. Indeed, in just the past two decades, the two neighbors have come perilously close to war on several occasions. India and Pakistan remain the most likely belligerents in the world to engage in nuclear war. ¶ Due to an Indian preponderance of conventional forces, Pakistan would have a strong incentive to use its nuclear arsenal very early on before a routing of its military installations and weaker conventional forces. In the event of conflict, Pakistan’s only chance of survival would be the early use of its nuclear arsenal to inflict unacceptable damage to Indian military and (much more likely) civilian targets. By raising the stakes to unacceptable levels, Pakistan would hope that India would step away from the brink. However, it is equally likely that India would respond in kind, with escalation ensuing. Neither state possesses tactical nuclear weapons, but both possess scores of city-sized bombs like those used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. ¶ Furthermore, as more damage was inflicted (or as the result of a decapitating strike), command and control elements would be disabled, leaving individual commanders to respond in an environment increasingly clouded by the fog of war and decreasing the likelihood that either government (what would be left of them) would be able to guarantee that their forces would follow a negotiated settlement or phased reduction in hostilities. As a result any such conflict would likely continue to escalate until one side incurred an unacceptable or wholly debilitating level of injury or exhausted its nuclear arsenal. ¶ A nuclear conflict in the subcontinent would have disastrous effects on the world as a whole. In a January 2010 paper published in Scientific American, climatology professors Alan Robock and Owen Brian Toon forecast the global repercussions of a regional nuclear war. Their results are strikingly similar to those of studies conducted in 1980 that conclude that a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union would result in a catastrophic and prolonged nuclear winter, which could very well place the survival of the human race in jeopardy. In their study, Robock and Toon use computer models to simulate the effect of a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan in which each were to use roughly half their existing arsenals (50 apiece). Since Indian and Pakistani nuclear devices are strategic rather than tactical, the likely targets would be major population centers. Owing to the population densities of urban centers in both nations, the number of direct casualties could climb as high as 20 million. ¶ The fallout of such an exchange would not merely be limited to the immediate area. First, the detonation of a large number of nuclear devices would propel as much as seven million metric tons of ash, soot, smoke, and debris as high as the lower stratosphere. Owing to their small size (less than a tenth of a micron) and a lack of precipitation at this altitude, ash particles would remain aloft for as long as a decade, during which time the world would remain perpetually overcast. Furthermore, these particles would soak up heat from the sun, generating intense heat in the upper atmosphere that would severely damage the earth’s ozone layer. The inability of sunlight to penetrate through the smoke and dust would lead to global cooling by as much as 2.3 degrees Fahrenheit. This shift in global temperature would lead to more drought, worldwide food shortages, and widespread political upheaval.¶ Although the likelihood of this doomsday scenario remains relatively low, the consequences are dire enough to warrant greater U.S. and international attention. Furthermore, due to the ongoing conflict over Kashmir and the deep animus held between India and Pakistan, it might not take much to set them off. Indeed, following the successful U.S. raid on bin Laden’s compound, several members of India’s security apparatus along with conservative politicians have argued that India should emulate the SEAL Team Six raid and launch their own cross-border incursions to nab or kill anti-Indian terrorists, either preemptively or after the fact. Such provocative action could very well lead to all-out war between the two that could quickly escalate.

#### Chinese influence in Latin America causes Taiwan war

Fergusson 12 Robbie, Researcher at Royal Society for the Arts, Featured Contributor at International Business Times, Former Conference & Research Assistant at Security Watch, Former Researcher at University College London, Master of Science, China in the International Arena, The University of Glasgow, “The Chinese Challenge to the Monroe Doctrine,” http://www.e-ir.info/2012/07/23/does-chinese-growth-in-latin-america-threaten-american-interests/

Taiwan – domestic, or foreign policy?¶ China’s goals in the region amount to more than the capture of natural resources. Although the People’s Republic of China considers resolution of the Taiwan issue to be a domestic issue, it is with some irony that one of China’s main foreign policy goals is to isolate Taipei internationally. The PRC and the ROC compete directly for international recognition among all the states in the world. . Nowhere is this more evident than in Latin America, where 12 of the 23 nations that still have official diplomatic relations with the ROC reside.¶ The historical background¶ Following the mainland Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War in 1949, the nationalist Kuomintang retreated to the island of Formosa (Taiwan) where it continued to claim to be the legitimate government of all of China. In June 1950 the United States intervened by placing its 7th fleet in the Taiwan straits to stop a conclusive military resolution to the civil war and slowly the battlefield became primarily political, concerned with legitimacy.¶ When the United Nations was formed in 1945, the Republic of China (ROC) became one of the five permanent members of the Security Council. This gave the ROC a de facto advantage over the PRC in attaining recognition from other nation states; particularly as the diplomatic clout of the hegemonic United States supported its position as the true representative of the Chinese people, until the rapprochement of the 1970s, when the Nixon administration wished to improve ties with the de facto rulers of China in order to exploit the Sino-Soviet split. UN Resolution 2758 granted the ’China seat’ to the PRC at the expense of the ROC who were in effect exiled from the organization, and the famous 1972 visit of President Nixon to China further added legitimacy to the communist regime. All this resulted in a thawing of world opinion, and gradually as the durability and permanence of the PRC regime became ingrained, countries began switching their diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing.¶ The economics of international recognition¶ In the Americas, the PRC had international recognition and longstanding support from ideological allies such as Cuba. However, the ROC has maintained more diplomatic support in the Americas than any other region, mainly due to the small nature of the states involved and the importance of Taiwanese aid to their economies. Li notes that “from the late 1980s to the early 1990s, roughly 10 percent of Taiwan’s direct foreign investment (FDI) went to Latin America and the Caribbean,” [51] highlighting the concerted effort made in the region. Economic solidarity is increasingly important to the formation of the Taiwan-Latin America relationship, for two reasons. The first is that for Latin American states, the decision of which China to support is less ideological and political than it ever has been; which makes the decision a straight up economic zero-sum choice. The second is that Latin America is home to natural resources which are of great significance to the hungry growing economies of the PRC and the ROC regardless of international recognition.¶ However, while the decision is not political for Latin American countries, for Taiwan, every country which switches its recognition to the PRC damages its legitimacy as a nation state in the international arena. The Table below shows the designation of diplomatic recognition in the region in 2008.¶ Countries Recognising the PRC (China)Countries Recognising the ROC (Taiwan)Central AmericaMexico, Costa RicaEl Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, PanamaCaribbeanAntigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad & TobagoBelize, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the GrenadinesSouth AmericaArgentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, VenezuelaParaguay¶ On the other hand, for the PRC, every state which withdraws its support for the ROC takes it one step closer to being in a position where it can resolve the ‘Taiwan issue’ unilaterally. Subsequently, undermining Taiwan is of the utmost importance to China, and it has taken to ‘outbidding’ Taiwan in offers of foreign aid, a strategy made possible by the decline in aid from the defunct Soviet Union, and the West, which is pre occupied with terrorism and the Middle East. Li notes that “the region’s leaders have turned to Asia for help to promote trade and financial assistance, and consequently played the PRC and Taiwan against each other.” [53] Despite its smaller size, Taiwan has fared remarkably well in this bidding war; focusing its aid investments on infrastructure such as stadiums in St Kitts & Nevis for the Cricket World Cup in 2007.¶ However, even Taiwan‘s economy can be put under strain by the seemingly relentless stream of foreign aid which has brought only debateable and mild gains to the Taiwanese cause. This has contributed to the PRC picking off the few remaining supporters of the ROC – take for example, the Dominican case.¶ In early 2004, Commonwealth of Dominica asked Taipei for a $58 million aid, which is unrelated to public welfare. The Caribbean nation had relied on Taiwan to develop its agriculture-based economy since 1983. Diplomatic relationship was soon broken after Taipei turned down the request. [54]¶ This incident showcased the fact that in economic terms, the PRC is winning the battle for Latin America.¶ Political strategies of the PRC¶ In political terms too; the PRC is in an advantageous position, thanks in part again to its position within the UN. While it can be argued that China “provides incentives but does not threaten harm to induce countries to defect from recognizing Taiwan,” [55] the reality is that the use of force and direct harm are not the only means available to an economic entity as powerful as China. It refuses to maintain official relations with any state that recognises the ROC; an action which can be quite prohibitive to the country being able to take advantage of the growing Chinese market. Although Domínguez suggests that the PRC “has not been punitive toward those states that still recognize the Republic of China (Taiwan),” [56] the legitimacy of this claim has to be brought into question – for example “in June 1996, China fought the extension of the UN mission in Haiti, to punish the Caribbean nation for its appeal for UN acceptance of Taiwan.” [57] This incident showed that China is prepared to use its global clout to play spoiler and apply indirect pressure on countries to adopt its position. Similarly, China’s experience with one-party rule has taught it the importance of party-to-party relations in addition to state-to-state relations, further cementing the PRC by establishing a relationship based on goodwill and common understanding. Indeed by the start of 1998 “the CCP had established relations with almost all major political parties in the countries that were Taiwan’s diplomatic allies in Latin America,” [58] further isolating the ROC.¶ The effect on American interests¶ Were the ROC to be deserted by its remaining allies in Latin America, the USA would be disadvantaged in attempting to maintain the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. A Taiwan that was not recognised by any state from the Americas, or Europe (with the exception of the Vatican) would not be seen as a genuine sovereign entity whose defence would be more important than the upkeep of good relations between China and the West. As China’s economic and political position in the world improves vis-à-vis both America and Taiwan, so might its ambitions. The U.S.A might find itself in a position where it could no longer withstand the diplomatic pressure to allow the PRC to conclude a settlement on Taiwan, perhaps by force.

#### Taiwan crisis is uniquely likely---draws in the US

Mazza 13 Michael, research fellow in foreign and defense policy at the American Enterprise Institute, 1/3/13, “Four Surprises That Could Rock Asia in 2013,” http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/01/03/four\_surprises\_that\_could\_rock\_asia\_in\_2012?page=full

Since President Ma Ying-jeou came to power in 2008, Taipei and Beijing have improved ties and deepened their economic integration: cross-strait trade reached $127.6 billion in 2011, an increase of more than 13 percent from 2010. Some national security experts misinterpret this trend, thinking that growing economic interdependence will overwhelm factors pushing the two sides apart, and that interdependence will provide Beijing with leverage it can use to compel unification. But while Taiwan's businesspeople enjoy closer ties with China, the average Taiwanese voter continues to move toward independence. Over the last 20 years, the portion of citizens of Taiwan identifying as "Taiwanese" has increased from 17.6 percent of those polled in 1992 to a whopping 53.7 percent today; those identifying as "Chinese" has declined over the same period from 25.5 percent to just 3.1 percent today. Support for independence has nearly doubled over the last two decades, from 11.1 percent to 19.6 percent. Support for immediate or eventual unification, meanwhile, has more than halved, from 20 percent in 1992 to 9.8 percent in 2012.¶ Economic integration is apparently failing to halt what Beijing sees as a troubling trend. With a cross-strait trade agreement and a slew of other, easier deals already on the books, Beijing now expects Ma to discuss political issues. But Ma doesn't have the domestic political support to pursue political talks -- in March 2012, two months after his reelection, 45 percent of those polled said the pace of cross-strait exchanges was "just right," but the share of respondents answering "too fast" had increased to 32.6 percent, from 25.7 percent before the election. Any Chinese shift toward a more strident Taiwan policy could portend a new crisis in the Taiwan Strait sooner than many expect, as a lack of progress on these issues may buttress hawks in the new Xi Jinping administration. And America would surely be dragged in: Even low-level coercive measures against Taiwan -- a top 10 U.S. trading partner and security ally -- could throw U.S.-China relations into a tailspin.

#### Taiwan escalates and goes nuclear

Lowther 13 William, Taipei Times, citing a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, 3/16/13, “Taiwan could spark nuclear war: report,” <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2013/03/16/2003557211>

Taiwan is the most likely potential crisis that could trigger a nuclear war between China and the US, a new academic report concludes.¶ “Taiwan remains the single most plausible and dangerous source of tension and conflict between the US and China,” says the 42-page report by the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).¶ Prepared by the CSIS’ Project on Nuclear Issues and resulting from a year-long study, the report emphasizes that Beijing continues to be set on a policy to prevent Taiwan’s independence, while at the same time the US maintains the capability to come to Taiwan’s defense.¶ “Although tensions across the Taiwan Strait have subsided since both Taipei and Beijing embraced a policy of engagement in 2008, the situation remains combustible, complicated by rapidly diverging cross-strait military capabilities and persistent political disagreements,” the report says.¶ In a footnote, it quotes senior fellow at the US Council on Foreign Relations Richard Betts describing Taiwan as “the main potential flashpoint for the US in East Asia.”¶ The report also quotes Betts as saying that neither Beijing nor Washington can fully control developments that might ignite a Taiwan crisis.¶ “This is a classic recipe for surprise, miscalculation and uncontrolled escalation,” Betts wrote in a separate study of his own.¶ The CSIS study says: “For the foreseeable future Taiwan is the contingency in which nuclear weapons would most likely become a major factor, because the fate of the island is intertwined both with the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party and the reliability of US defense commitments in the Asia-Pacific region.”¶ Titled Nuclear Weapons and US-China Relations, the study says disputes in the East and South China seas appear unlikely to lead to major conflict between China and the US, but they do “provide kindling” for potential conflict between the two nations because the disputes implicate a number of important regional interests, including the interests of treaty allies of the US.¶ The danger posed by flashpoints such as Taiwan, the Korean Peninsula and maritime demarcation disputes is magnified by the potential for mistakes, the study says.¶ “Although Beijing and Washington have agreed to a range of crisis management mechanisms, such as the Military Maritime Consultative Agreement and the establishment of a direct hotline between the Pentagon and the Ministry of Defense, the bases for miscommunication and misunderstanding remain and draw on deep historical reservoirs of suspicion,” the report says.¶ For example, it says, it is unclear whether either side understands what kinds of actions would result in a military or even nuclear response by the other party.¶ To make things worse, “neither side seems to believe the other’s declared policies and intentions, suggesting that escalation management, already a very uncertain endeavor, could be especially difficult in any conflict,” it says.¶ Although conflict “mercifully” seems unlikely at this point, the report concludes that “it cannot be ruled out and may become increasingly likely if we are unwise or unlucky.”¶ The report says: “With both sides possessing and looking set to retain formidable nuclear weapons arsenals, such a conflict would be tremendously dangerous and quite possibly devastating.”

#### U.S. hegemony de-escalates all conflicts---any alternative causes destabilizing crises that culminate in nuclear war

Brooks, Ikenberry and Wohlforth ‘13

Stephen Brooks, Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College, John Ikenberry, Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University and Global Eminence Scholar at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, John Wohlforth, Daniel Webster Professor of Government at Dartmouth College, Jan/Feb 2013, Foreign Affairs, Lean Forward, EBSCO

Of course, even if it is true that the costs of deep engagement fall far below what advocates of retrenchment claim, they would not be worth bearing unless they yielded greater benefits. In fact, they do. The most obvious benefit of the current strategy is that it reduces the risk of a dangerous conflict. The United States' security commitments deter states with aspirations to regional hegemony from contemplating expansion and dissuade U.S. partners from trying to solve security problems on their own in ways that would end up threatening other states. Skeptics discount this benefit by arguing that U.S. security guarantees aren't necessary to prevent dangerous rivalries from erupting. They maintain that the high costs of territorial conquest and the many tools countries can use to signal their benign intentions are enough to prevent conflict. In other words, major powers could peacefully manage regional multipolarity without the American pacifier. But that outlook is too sanguine. If Washington got out of East Asia, Japan and South Korea would likely expand their military capabilities and go nuclear, which could provoke a destabilizing reaction from China. It's worth noting that during the Cold War, both South Korea and Taiwan tried to obtain nuclear weapons; the only thing that stopped them was the United States, which used its security commitments to restrain their nuclear temptations. Similarly, were the United States to leave the Middle East, the countries currently backed by Washington--notably, Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia--might act in ways that would intensify the region's security dilemmas. There would even be reason to worry about Europe. Although it's hard to imagine the return of great-power military competition in a post-American Europe, it's not difficult to foresee governments there refusing to pay the budgetary costs of higher military outlays and the political costs of increasing EU defense cooperation. The result might be a continent incapable of securing itself from threats on its periphery, unable to join foreign interventions on which U.S. leaders might want European help, and vulnerable to the influence of outside rising powers. Given how easily a U.S. withdrawal from key regions could lead to dangerous competition, advocates of retrenchment tend to put forth another argument: that such rivalries wouldn't actually hurt the United States. To be sure, few doubt that the United States could survive the return of conflict among powers in Asia or the Middle East--but at what cost? Were states in one or both of these regions to start competing against one another, they would likely boost their military budgets, arm client states, and perhaps even start regional proxy wars, all of which should concern the United States, in part because its lead in military capabilities would narrow. Greater regional insecurity could also produce cascades of nuclear proliferation as powers such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan built nuclear forces of their own. Those countries' regional competitors might then also seek nuclear arsenals. Although nuclear deterrence can promote stability between two states with the kinds of nuclear forces that the Soviet Union and the United States possessed, things get shakier when there are multiple nuclear rivals with less robust arsenals. As the number of nuclear powers increases, the probability of illicit transfers, irrational decisions, accidents, and unforeseen crises goes up. The case for abandoning the United States' global role misses the underlying security logic of the current approach. By reassuring allies and actively managing regional relations, Washington dampens competition in the world s key areas, thereby preventing the emergence of a hothouse in which countries would grow new military capabilities. For proof that this strategy is working, one need look no further than the defense budgets of the current great powers: on average, since 1991 they have kept their military expenditures as A percentage of GDP to historic lows, and they have not attempted to match the United States' top-end military capabilities. Moreover, all of the world's most modern militaries are U.S. allies, and the United States' military lead over its potential rivals .is by many measures growing. On top of all this, the current grand strategy acts as a hedge against the emergence regional hegemons. Some supporters of retrenchment argue that the U.S. military should keep its forces over the horizon and pass the buck to local powers to do the dangerous work of counterbalancing rising regional powers. Washington, they contend, should deploy forces abroad only when a truly credible contender for regional hegemony arises, as in the cases of Germany and Japan during World War II and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Yet there is already a potential contender for regional hegemony--China--and to balance it, the United States will need to maintain its key alliances in Asia and the military capacity to intervene there. The implication is that the United States should get out of Afghanistan and Iraq, reduce its military presence in Europe, and pivot to Asia. Yet that is exactly what the Obama administration is doing. MILITARY DOMINANCE, ECONOMIC PREEMINENCE Preoccupied with security issues, critics of the current grand strategy miss one of its most important benefits: sustaining an open global economy and a favorable place for the United States within it. To be sure, the sheer size of its output would guarantee the United States a major role in the global economy whatever grand strategy it adopted. Yet the country's military dominance undergirds its economic leadership. In addition to protecting the world economy from instability, its military commitments and naval superiority help secure the sea-lanes and other shipping corridors that allow trade to flow freely and cheaply. Were the United States to pull back from the world, the task of securing the global commons would get much harder. Washington would have less leverage with which it could convince countries to cooperate on economic matters and less access to the military bases throughout the world needed to keep the seas open. A global role also lets the United States structure the world economy in ways that serve its particular economic interests. During the Cold War, Washington used its overseas security commitments to get allies to embrace the economic policies it preferred--convincing West Germany in the 1960s, for example, to take costly steps to support the U.S. dollar as a reserve currency. U.S. defense agreements work the same way today. For example, when negotiating the 2011 free-trade agreement with South Korea, U.S. officials took advantage of Seoul's desire to use the agreement as a means of tightening its security relations with Washington. As one diplomat explained to us privately, "We asked for changes in labor and environment clauses, in auto clauses, and the Koreans took it all." Why? Because they feared a failed agreement would be "a setback to the political and security relationship." More broadly, the United States wields its security leverage to shape the overall structure of the global economy. Much of what the United States wants from the economic order is more of the same: for instance, it likes the current structure of the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund and prefers that free trade continue. Washington wins when U.S. allies favor this status quo, and one reason they are inclined to support the existing system is because they value their military alliances. Japan, to name one example, has shown interest in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Obama administration's most important free-trade initiative in the region, less because its economic interests compel it to do so than because Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda believes that his support will strengthen Japan's security ties with the United States. The United States' geopolitical dominance also helps keep the U.S. dollar in place as the world's reserve currency, which confers enormous benefits on the country, such as a greater ability to borrow money. This is perhaps clearest with Europe: the EU'S dependence on the United States for its security precludes the EU from having the kind of political leverage to support the euro that the United States has with the dollar. As with other aspects of the global economy, the United States does not provide its leadership for free: it extracts disproportionate gains. Shirking that responsibility would place those benefits at risk. CREATING COOPERATION What goes for the global economy goes for other forms of international cooperation. Here, too, American leadership benefits many countries but disproportionately helps the United States. In order to counter transnational threats, such as terrorism, piracy, organized crime, climate change, and pandemics, states have to work together and take collective action. But cooperation does not come about effortlessly, especially when national interests diverge. The United States' military efforts to promote stability and its broader leadership make it easier for Washington to launch joint initiatives and shape them in ways that reflect U.S. interests. After all, cooperation is hard to come by in regions where chaos reigns, and it flourishes where leaders can anticipate lasting stability. U.S. alliances are about security first, but they also provide the political framework and channels of communication for cooperation on nonmilitary issues. NATO, for example, has spawned new institutions, such as the Atlantic Council, a think tank, that make it easier for Americans and Europeans to talk to one another and do business. Likewise, consultations with allies in East Asia spill over into other policy issues; for example, when American diplomats travel to Seoul to manage the military alliance, they also end up discussing the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Thanks to conduits such as this, the United States can use bargaining chips in one issue area to make progress in others. The benefits of these communication channels are especially pronounced when it comes to fighting the kinds of threats that require new forms of cooperation, such as terrorism and pandemics. With its alliance system in place, the United States is in a stronger position than it would otherwise be to advance cooperation and share burdens. For example, the intelligence-sharing network within NATO, which was originally designed to gather information on the Soviet Union, has been adapted to deal with terrorism. Similarly, after a tsunami in the Indian Ocean devastated surrounding countries in 2004, Washington had a much easier time orchestrating a fast humanitarian response with Australia, India, and Japan, since their militaries were already comfortable working with one another. The operation did wonders for the United States' image in the region. The United States' global role also has the more direct effect of facilitating the bargains among governments that get cooperation going in the first place. As the scholar Joseph Nye has written, "The American military role in deterring threats to allies, or of assuring access to a crucial resource such as oil in the Persian Gulf, means that the provision of protective force can be used in bargaining situations. Sometimes the linkage may be direct; more often it is a factor not mentioned openly but present in the back of statesmen's minds." THE DEVIL WE KNOW Should America come home? For many prominent scholars of international relations, the answer is yes--a view that seems even wiser in the wake of the disaster in Iraq and the Great Recession. Yet their arguments simply don't hold up. There is little evidence that the United States would save much money switching to a smaller global posture. Nor is the current strategy self-defeating: it has not provoked the formation of counterbalancing coalitions or caused the country to spend itself into economic decline. Nor will it condemn the United States to foolhardy wars in the future. What the strategy does do is help prevent the outbreak of conflict in the world's most important regions, keep the global economy humming, and make international cooperation easier. Charting a different course would threaten all these benefits. This is not to say that the United States' current foreign policy can't be adapted to new circumstances and challenges. Washington does not need to retain every commitment at all costs, and there is nothing wrong with rejiggering its strategy in response to new opportunities or setbacks. That is what the Nixon administration did by winding down the Vietnam War and increasing the United States' reliance on regional partners to contain Soviet power, and it is what the Obama administration has been doing after the Iraq war by pivoting to Asia. These episodes of rebalancing belie the argument that a powerful and internationally engaged America cannot tailor its policies to a changing world. A grand strategy of actively managing global security and promoting the liberal economic order has served the United States exceptionally well for the past six decades, and there is no reason to give it up now. The country's globe-spanning posture is the devil we know, and a world with a disengaged America is the devil we don't know. Were American leaders to choose retrenchment, they would in essence be running a massive experiment to test how the world would work without an engaged and liberal leading power. The results could well be disastrous.

#### US decline causes preemptive lash-out, collapses global trade and makes global problems such as warming, water scarcity and disease inevitable

Beckley ‘12

Michael, Assistant professor of political science at Tufts, research fellow in the International Security Program at Harvard Kennedy School's. Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, “The Unipolar Era: Why American Power Persists and China’s Rise Is Limited,” PhD dissertation, AM

One danger is that declinism could prompt trade conflicts and immigration restrictions. The results of this study suggest that the United States benefits immensely from the free flow of goods, services, and people around the globe; this is what allows American corporations to specialize in high-­‐value activities, exploit innovations created elsewhere, and lure the brightest minds to the United States, all while reducing the price of goods for U.S. consumers. Characterizing China’s export expansion as a loss for the United States is not just bad economics; it blazes a trail for jingoistic and protectionist policies. It would be tragically ironic if Americans reacted to false prophecies of decline by cutting themselves off from a potentially vital source of American power. Another danger is that declinism may impair foreign policy decision-­‐making. If top government officials come to believe that China is overtaking the United States, they are likely to react in one of two ways, both of which are potentially disastrous. The first is that policymakers may imagine the United States faces a closing “window of opportunity” and should take action “while it still enjoys preponderance and not wait until the diffusion of power has already made international politics more competitive and unpredictable.”315 This belief may spur positive action, but it also invites parochial thinking, reckless behavior, and preventive war.316 As Robert Gilpin and others have shown, “hegemonic struggles have most frequently been triggered by fears of ultimate decline and the perceived erosion of power.”317 By fanning such fears, declinists may inadvertently promote the type of violent overreaction that they seek to prevent. The other potential reaction is retrenchment – the divestment of all foreign policy obligations save those linked to vital interests, defined in a narrow and national manner. Advocates of retrenchment assume, or hope, that the world will sort itself out on its own; that whatever replaces American hegemony, whether it be a return to balance-­‐of-­‐power politics or a transition to a post-­‐power paradise, will naturally maintain international order and prosperity. But order and prosperity are unnatural. They can never be presumed. When achieved, they are the result of determined action by powerful actors and, in particular, by the most powerful actor, which is, and will be for some time, the United States. Arms buildups, insecure sea-­‐lanes, and closed markets are only the most obvious risks of U.S. retrenchment. Less obvious are transnational problems, such as global warming, water scarcity, and disease, which may fester without a leader to rally collective action.

#### Perception is key---if the US perceives decline in heg they violently lash-out causing hegemonic transition wars

Goldstein ‘7 (Avery, Professor of Global Politics and International Relations @ University of Pennsylvania, “Power transitions, institutions, and China's rise in East Asia: Theoretical expectations and evidence,” Journal of Strategic Studies, Volume 30, Issue 4 & 5 August)

Two closely related, though distinct, theoretical arguments focus explicitly on the consequences for international politics of a shift in power between a dominant state and a rising power. In War and Change in World Politics, Robert Gilpin suggested that peace prevails when a dominant state’s capabilities enable it to ‘govern’ an international order that it has shaped. Over time, however, as economic and technological diffusion proceeds during eras of peace and development, other states are empowered. Moreover, the burdens of international governance drain and distract the reigning hegemon, and challengers eventually emerge who seek to rewrite the rules of governance. As the power advantage of the erstwhile hegemon ebbs, it may become desperate enough to resort to the ultima ratio of international politics, force, to forestall the increasingly urgent demands of a rising challenger. Or as the power of the challenger rises, it may be tempted to press its case with threats to use force. It is the rise and fall of the great powers that creates the circumstances under which major wars, what Gilpin labels ‘hegemonic wars’, break out.13 Gilpin’s argument logically encourages pessimism about the implications of a rising China. It leads to the expectation that international trade, investment, and technology transfer will result in a steady diffusion of American economic power, benefiting the rapidly developing states of the world, including China. As the US simultaneously scurries to put out the many brushfires that threaten its far-flung global interests (i.e., the classic problem of overextension), it will be unable to devote sufficient resources to maintain or restore its former advantage over emerging competitors like China. While the erosion of the once clear American advantage plays itself out, the US will find it ever more difficult to preserve the order in Asia that it created during its era of preponderance. The expectation is an increase in the likelihood for the use of force – either by a Chinese challenger able to field a stronger military in support of its demands for greater influence over international arrangements in Asia, or by a besieged American hegemon desperate to head off further decline. Among the trends that alarm those who would look at Asia through the lens of Gilpin’s theory are China’s expanding share of world trade and wealth (much of it resulting from the gains made possible by the international economic order a dominant US established); its acquisition of technology in key sectors that have both civilian and military applications (e.g., information, communications, and electronics linked with the ‘revolution in military affairs’); and an expanding military burden for the US (as it copes with the challenges of its global war on terrorism and especially its struggle in Iraq) that limits the resources it can devote to preserving its interests in East Asia.14 Although similar to Gilpin’s work insofar as it emphasizes the importance of shifts in the capabilities of a dominant state and a rising challenger, the power-transition theory A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler present in The War Ledger focuses more closely on the allegedly dangerous phenomenon of ‘crossover’– the point at which a dissatisfied challenger is about to overtake the established leading state.15 In such cases, when the power gap narrows, the dominant state becomes increasingly desperate to forestall, and the challenger becomes increasingly determined to realize the transition to a new international order whose contours it will define. Though suggesting why a rising China may ultimately present grave dangers for international peace when its capabilities make it a peer competitor of America, Organski and Kugler’s power-transition theory is less clear about the dangers while a potential challenger still lags far behind and faces a difficult struggle to catch up. This clarification is important in thinking about the theory’s relevance to interpreting China’s rise because a broad consensus prevails among analysts that Chinese military capabilities are at a minimum two decades from putting it in a league with the US in Asia.16 Their theory, then, points with alarm to trends in China’s growing wealth and power relative to the United States, but especially looks ahead to what it sees as the period of maximum danger – that time when a dissatisfied China could be in a position to overtake the US on dimensions believed crucial for assessing power. Reports beginning in the mid-1990s that offered extrapolations suggesting China’s growth would give it the world’s largest gross domestic product (GDP aggregate, not per capita) sometime in the first few decades of the twentieth century fed these sorts of concerns about a potentially dangerous challenge to American leadership in Asia.17 The huge gap between Chinese and American military capabilities (especially in terms of technological sophistication) has so far discouraged prediction of comparably disquieting trends on this dimension, but inklings of similar concerns may be reflected in occasionally alarmist reports about purchases of advanced Russian air and naval equipment, as well as concern that Chinese espionage may have undermined the American advantage in nuclear and missile technology, and speculation about the potential military purposes of China’s manned space program.18 Moreover, because a dominant state may react to the prospect of a crossover and believe that it is wiser to embrace the logic of preventive war and act early to delay a transition while the task is more manageable, Organski and Kugler’s powertransition theory also provides grounds for concern about the period prior to the possible crossover.19

#### Best studies validate hegemonic stability theory---it is the proximate cause of peace

Owen ‘11

John M. Owen Professor of Politics at University of Virginia PhD from Harvard "DON’T DISCOUNT HEGEMONY" Feb 11 [www.cato-unbound.org/2011/02/11/john-owen/dont-discount-hegemony/](http://www.cato-unbound.org/2011/02/11/john-owen/dont-discount-hegemony/)

Andrew Mack and his colleagues at the Human Security Report Project are to be congratulated. Not only do they present a study with a striking conclusion, driven by data, free of theoretical or ideological bias, but they also do something quite unfashionable: they bear good news. Social scientists really are not supposed to do that. Our job is, if not to be Malthusians, then at least to point out disturbing trends, looming catastrophes, and the imbecility and mendacity of policy makers. And then it is to say why, if people listen to us, things will get better. We do this as if our careers depended upon it, and perhaps they do; for if all is going to be well, what need then for us? Our colleagues at Simon Fraser University are brave indeed. That may sound like a setup, but it is not. I shall challenge neither the data nor the general conclusion that violent conflict around the world has been decreasing in fits and starts since the Second World War. When it comes to violent conflict among and within countries, things have been getting better. (The trends have not been linear—Figure 1.1 actually shows that the frequency of interstate wars peaked in the 1980s—but the 65-year movement is clear.) Instead I shall accept that Mack et al. are correct on the macro-trends, and focus on their explanations they advance for these remarkable trends. With apologies to any readers of this forum who recoil from academic debates, this might get mildly theoretical and even more mildly methodological. Concerning international wars, one version of the “nuclear-peace” theory is not in fact laid to rest by the data. It is certainly true that nuclear-armed states have been involved in many wars. They have even been attacked (think of Israel), which falsifies the simple claim of “assured destruction”—that any nuclear country A will deter any kind of attack by any country B because B fears a retaliatory nuclear strike from A. But the most important “nuclear-peace” claim has been about mutually assured destruction, which obtains between two robustly nuclear-armed states. The claim is that (1) rational states having second-strike capabilities—enough deliverable nuclear weaponry to survive a nuclear first strike by an enemy—will have an overwhelming incentive not to attack one another; and (2) we can safely assume that nuclear-armed states are rational. It follows that states with a second-strike capability will not fight one another. Their colossal atomic arsenals neither kept the United States at peace with North Vietnam during the Cold War nor the Soviet Union at peace with Afghanistan. But the argument remains strong that those arsenals did help keep the United States and Soviet Union at peace with each other. Why non-nuclear states are not deterred from fighting nuclear states is an important and open question. But in a time when calls to ban the Bomb are being heard from more and more quarters, we must be clear about precisely what the broad trends toward peace can and cannot tell us. They may tell us nothing about why we have had no World War III, and little about the wisdom of banning the Bomb now. Regarding the downward trend in international war, Professor Mack is friendlier to more palatable theories such as the “democratic peace” (democracies do not fight one another, and the proportion of democracies has increased, hence less war); the interdependence or “commercial peace” (states with extensive economic ties find it irrational to fight one another, and interdependence has increased, hence less war); and the notion that people around the world are more anti-war than their forebears were. Concerning the downward trend in civil wars, he favors theories of economic growth (where commerce is enriching enough people, violence is less appealing—a logic similar to that of the “commercial peace” thesis that applies among nations) and the end of the Cold War (which end reduced superpower support for rival rebel factions in so many Third-World countries). These are all plausible mechanisms for peace. What is more, none of them excludes any other; all could be working toward the same end. That would be somewhat puzzling, however. Is the world just lucky these days? How is it that an array of peace-inducing factors happens to be working coincidentally in our time, when such a magical array was absent in the past? The answer may be that one or more of these mechanisms reinforces some of the others, or perhaps some of them are mutually reinforcing. Some scholars, for example, have been focusing on whether economic growth might support democracy and vice versa, and whether both might support international cooperation, including to end civil wars. We would still need to explain how this charmed circle of causes got started, however. And here let me raise another factor, perhaps even less appealing than the “nuclear peace” thesis, at least outside of the United States. That factor is what international relations scholars call hegemony—specifically American hegemony. A theory that many regard as discredited, but that refuses to go away, is called hegemonic stability theory. The theory emerged in the 1970s in the realm of international political economy. It asserts that for the global economy to remain open—for countries to keep barriers to trade and investment low—one powerful country must take the lead. Depending on the theorist we consult, “taking the lead” entails paying for global public goods (keeping the sea lanes open, providing liquidity to the international economy), coercion (threatening to raise trade barriers or withdraw military protection from countries that cheat on the rules), or both. The theory is skeptical that international cooperation in economic matters can emerge or endure absent a hegemon. The distastefulness of such claims is self-evident: they imply that it is good for everyone the world over if one country has more wealth and power than others. More precisely, they imply that it has been good for the world that the United States has been so predominant. There is no obvious reason why hegemonic stability theory could not apply to other areas of international cooperation, including in security affairs, human rights, international law, peacekeeping (UN or otherwise), and so on. What I want to suggest here—suggest, not test—is that American hegemony might just be a deep cause of the steady decline of political deaths in the world. How could that be? After all, the report states that United States is the third most war-prone country since 1945. Many of the deaths depicted in Figure 10.4 were in wars that involved the United States (the Vietnam War being the leading one). Notwithstanding politicians’ claims to the contrary, a candid look at U.S. foreign policy reveals that the country is as ruthlessly self-interested as any other great power in history. The answer is that U.S. hegemony might just be a deeper cause of the proximate causes outlined by Professor Mack. Consider economic growth and openness to foreign trade and investment, which (so say some theories) render violence irrational. American power and policies may be responsible for these in two related ways. First, at least since the 1940s Washington has prodded other countries to embrace the market capitalism that entails economic openness and produces sustainable economic growth. The United States promotes capitalism for selfish reasons, of course: its own domestic system depends upon growth, which in turn depends upon the efficiency gains from economic interaction with foreign countries, and the more the better. During the Cold War most of its allies accepted some degree of market-driven growth. Second, the U.S.-led western victory in the Cold War damaged the credibility of alternative paths to development—communism and import-substituting industrialization being the two leading ones—and left market capitalism the best model. The end of the Cold War also involved an end to the billions of rubles in Soviet material support for regimes that tried to make these alternative models work. (It also, as Professor Mack notes, eliminated the superpowers’ incentives to feed civil violence in the Third World.) What we call globalization is caused in part by the emergence of the United States as the global hegemon. The same case can be made, with somewhat more difficulty, concerning the spread of democracy. Washington has supported democracy only under certain conditions—the chief one being the absence of a popular anti-American movement in the target state—but those conditions have become much more widespread following the collapse of communism. Thus in the 1980s the Reagan administration—the most anti-communist government America ever had—began to dump America’s old dictator friends, starting in the Philippines. Today Islamists tend to be anti-American, and so the Obama administration is skittish about democracy in Egypt and other authoritarian Muslim countries. But general U.S. material and moral support for liberal democracy remains strong.

#### Lack of international credibility makes great power war inevitable

Fettweis, 2004 (Christopher, Professor at the U.S. Army War College, December 2004, “Resolute Eagle or Paper Tiger? Credibility, Reputation and the War on Terror,” online: http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p67147\_index.html)

The credibility of a state forms the basis of its reputation, which is little more than an impression of fundamental national character that serves as a guide for others trying to anticipate future actions.12 The loss of credibility can lead to reputations for weakness, fecklessness, and irresolution, which, the thinking goes, emboldens enemies and discouragesthe loyalty ofallies. Credibility can be damaged in many ways, depending on the situation and the observer, but perhaps the surest is to fail to rise to a challenge or to pursue a goal with sufficient resolve. By doing so, a state may earn a reputation for irresolution, which can encourage more aggressive actions by revisionist powers.13 Threats made by a state without credibility may not be believed, inspiring the aggressor to press his advantage, which may lead to a challenge to an interest that is truly vital making a major war unavoidable. Thus the credibility imperative is also intimately related to the post-war American obsession with “appeasement,” which is of course a code word for a show of weakness that inadvertently encourages an aggressor.

## Solvency

#### Contention 2 is Solvency:

#### US is committed to normalization with Venezuela, but talks have stalled

RT 13 (Russia Times, “Venezuela ends Rapproachment Talks with Washington over US Meddling”, 7/21/13, <http://rt.com/news/venezuela-ends-dialogue-us-relations-352/>)

Caracas brought talks with the US to an abrupt end over statements made by Samantha Power, the nominee for UN ambassador. Venezuela blasted Washington for backing Power’s “meddling agenda” after she criticized human rights in the country.¶ The Venezuelan Foreign Ministry released a statement on Friday announcing an end to rapprochement negotiations between Washington and Caracas in Guatemala. ¶ “The Bolivarian Republican of Venezuela considers the diplomatic processes initiated in Guatemala over,” the Foreign Ministry said. They took issue with the statements of the US candidate for ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power, who expressed “concern” over Caracas’ management of human right issues on Wednesday before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee. ¶ She added that if she were elected, she would fight against repression in Cuba and in Venezuela. Venezuela responded with ire, harshly contesting any attempt by the US to interfere in its internal policies. ¶ "Power says she'll fight repression in Venezuela? What repression? There is repression in the United States, where they kill African-Americans with impunity, and where they hunt the youngster Edward Snowden just for telling the truth," said Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro following Power's comments. ¶ “The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela will never accept meddling in its internal affairs. We reject the fact that a nominee for the post of UN ambassador has interference in Venezuela on her agenda,” said Elias Jaua, the Venezuelan minister of foreign affairs. ¶ The statement went on to say that Caracas wished to build “good relations with the US” based on mutual respect for sovereignty and self-determination. However, Power’s statements contradict the stance outlined by US Foreign Minister John Kerry. ¶ “[Venezuela] has fully demonstrated that it has a solid base in its constitution that guarantees the preservation of the practice and respect for Human Rights,” said Jaua. Furthermore, he said the world continually expresses concern about US rights abuses, referencing Washington’s failure to close Guantanamo and the practice of drone attacks.

#### Venezuela is committed – the ball is in the US court

EU 13(El Univerisal, Venezuelan Newspaper, “Venezuela willing to have friendly relations with the United States”, July 25th, 2013, http://english.eluniversal.com/nacional-y-politica/130725/venezuela-willing-to-have-friendly-relations-with-the-united-states)

Venezuelan Chargé d'Affaires to the United States Calixto Ortega stated on Thursday that a bilateral rapprochement launched in June to restore relations between the US and Venezuela has been "suspended," **but stressed that Nicolás Maduro's Administration is willing to have "friendly" bilateral relations with Washington**. The Venezuelan Government discontinued talks with the US last week upon a statement issued by the US ambassador nominee to the United Nations, Samantha Power. From Caracas, Ortega explained that **Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and Foreign Minister Elías Jaua "have made it clear" that they are willing to establish "friendly relations on the basis of mutual respect between the administrations of (Barack) Obama and Nicolás Maduro as two sovereign States."** Back on Tuesday, President Maduro pointed out that restoration of bilateral dialogue would depend on Washington's "rectification."

#### Renewed US cooperation with Venezuela solves US international credibility – Obama’s crucial

Boudin 9 (Chesa, Rhodes Scholar with degrees from Yale and Oxford Universities. Currently attending Yale Law School, he is coauthor of The Venezuelan Revolution: 100 Questions—100 Answers and coeditor of Letters from Young Activists, Why Obama Should Meet With Hugo Chavez, <http://upsidedownworld.org/main/venezuela-archives-35/1671-why-obama-should-meet-with-hugo-chavez>, 1/18/9)

Finally, there is a fourth point that should appeal to Chávez's harshest critics. A bilateral meeting would be the most significant thing a US President could do to temper his power. Chávez, like his friend Fidel Castro before him, benefits from the specter of a hostile US. Rhetoric about US imperialism and interventionism appeals to Venezuelans' pride in their sovereignty, and unifies Chávez's base against a perceived enemy; it also distracts them from real problems in their country and political process. The Bush Administration's disgraceful complicity with the plot to overthrow Chávez's democratic government in 2002, and its subsequent funneling of money and political support to an isolated, fragmented opposition in Venezuela played right into Chávez's hands. If Obama demonstrated that the US government is not Venezuela's enemy, he would accomplish far more than the millions of dollars the Bush Administration has invested in destabilizing Venezuela's government. Venezuela, like all democracies, benefits from free and open public debate but the political process is derailed, civil society distracted by the threat—real or exaggerated—of US intervention. Obama has the political capital and the credibility to singlehandedly restore the world's faith in the goodwill of the US; Venezuela is a perfect place to start. To be sure, an Obama offer to meet with Chávez, a twice-elected president widely portrayed in the US as undemocratic and anti-American, carries certain risks and the right-wing is bound to attack Obama for his efforts. But one of Obama's gifts as a politician is taking the high road, even in the face of counterparts who refuse to do the same; here, too, whether with Chávez's fiery rhetoric or the right-wing media's assault, he would surely come out on top. Moreover Chávez has already indicated a desire to work with Obama, issuing a congratulatory press release after the election, extraditing two Colombian drug traffickers to the US days later, and now continuing a generous charity program even as Venezuela suffers from the global economic slowdown. All are signs reminiscent of the Chávez of Mets games and stock market gavels: he wants to play ball. Conservatives may see Obama offering to meet with Chávez as a sign of weakness but it should be perceived as a sign of confidence and strength just as when President Nixon visited China in 1972, or when President Reagan met with Gorbachev in 1985 in the midst of the Cold War. In fact, numerous American politicians from both parties have met with Chávez over the years, often with tangible results; the Citgo charity program that last week Chávez announced he would continue, for example, emerged from meetings with Representative Delahunt (D-MA) and other congressmen.

#### Economic engagement solves both international and regional credibility

Griffin 13(John A. Griffin III ’16, Harvard Crimson editorial writer, “Engage with Venezuela”, April 3rd, 2013, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2013/4/3/Harvard-Venezuela-Chavez-death/)

Diplomatically, positive engagement with Venezuela would be a major step toward building American credibility in the world at large, especially in Latin America. Chávez (along with his friends the Castros in Cuba) was able to bolster regional support for his regime by pointing out the United States’ attempts to forcibly intervene in Venezuelan politics. Soon, a number of populist governments in Latin America had rallied around Chávez and his anti-American policies. In 2004, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and three Caribbean nations joined with Venezuela and Cuba to form the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America, an organization in direct opposition to the Free Trade Area in the Americas proposed (but never realized) by the Bush administration. Chávez galvanized these nations—many of whom have experienced American interventionist tactics—by vilifying America as a common, imperial enemy. Unfortunately for the United States, its general strategy regarding Venezuela has often strengthened Chávez’s position. Every time Washington chastises Venezuela for opposing American interests or attempts to bring sanctions against the Latin American country, the leader in Caracas (whether it be Chávez or Maduro) **simply gains more evidence toward his claim that Washington is a neo-colonialist meddler**. This weakens the United States’ diplomatic position, **while simultaneously strengthening Venezuela’s**. If **Washington** wants Latin America to stop its current trend of electing leftist, Chavista governments, **its first step should be to adopt a less astringent tone in dealing with Venezuela.** Caracas will be unable to paint Washington as an aggressor, and Washington will in turn gain a better image in Latin America. Beyond leading to more amicable, **cooperative relationships with Latin American nations, engagement with Venezuela would also be economically advisable**. With the world’s largest oil reserves, countless other valuable resources, and stunning natural beauty to attract scores of tourists, Venezuela has quite a bit to offer economically. Even now, America can see the possible benefits of economic engagement with Caracas by looking at one of the few extant cases of such cooperation: Each year, thousands of needy Americans are able to keep their homes heated because of the cooperation between Venezuela and a Boston-area oil company.

#### US legitimacy and authority are crucial – only way to effectively leverage hard power

Finnemore 9 – (Martha Finnemore, professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University, January 2009, “Legitimacy, Hypocrisy, and the Social Structure of Unipolarity: Why Being a Unipole Isn’t All It’s Cracked Up to Be,” World Politics, Volume 61, Number 1)

Legitimacy is, by its nature, a social and relational phenomenon. One’s ¶ position or power cannot be legitimate in a vacuum. The concept only ¶ has meaning in a particular social context. Actors, even unipoles, cannot create legitimacy unilaterally. Legitimacy can only be given by ¶ others. It is conferred either by peers, as when great powers accept or ¶ reject the actions of another power, or by those upon whom power is ¶ exercised. Reasons to confer legitimacy have varied throughout history. ¶ Tradition, blood, and claims of divine right have all provided reasons to ¶ confer legitimacy, although in contemporary politics conformity with ¶ international norms and law is more inﬂuential in determining which ¶ actors and actions will be accepted as legitimate.9¶ Recognizing the legitimacy of power does not mean these others ¶ necessarily like the powerful or their policies, but it implies at least tacit ¶ acceptance of the social structure in which power is exercised. One may ¶ not like the inequalities of global capitalism but still believe that markets are the only realistic or likely way to organize successful economic ¶ growth. One may not like the P5 vetoes of the Security Council but still ¶ understand that the United Nations cannot exist without this concession to power asymmetries. We can see the importance of legitimacy by ¶ thinking about its absence. Active rejection of social structures and the ¶ withdrawal of recognition of their legitimacy **create a crisis.** In domestic politics, regimes suffering legitimacy crises face resistance, whether ¶ passive or active and armed. Internationally, systems suffering legitimacy crises tend to be violent and noncooperative. Post-Reformation ¶ Europe might be an example of such a system. Without at least tacit ¶ acceptance of power’s legitimacy, the wheels of international social life ¶ get derailed. Material force alone remains to impose order, and order ¶ creation or maintenance by that means is difﬁcult, even under unipolarity. Successful and stable orders require the grease of some legitimation ¶ structure to persist and prosper.10¶ The social and relational character of legitimacy thus strongly colors ¶ the nature of any unipolar order and the kinds of orders a unipole can ¶ construct. Yes, unipoles can impose their will, but only to an extent. ¶ The willingness of others to recognize the legitimacy of a unipole’s ¶ actions and defer to its wishes or judgment shapes the character of the ¶ order that will emerge. Unipolar power without any underlying legitimacy will have a very particular character. The unipole’s policies will ¶ meet with resistance, either active or passive, at every turn. Cooperation will be induced only through material quid pro quo payoffs. Trust ¶ will be thin to nonexistent. This is obviously an expensive system to run ¶ and few unipoles have tried to do so.¶ More often unipoles attempt to articulate some set of values and ¶ shared interests that induce acquiescence or support from others, thereby legitimating their power and policies. In part this invocation of values may be strategic; acceptance by or overt support from others makes¶ exercise of power by the unipole cheaper and more effective. Smart ¶ leaders know how to “sell” their policies. Wrapping policies in shared ¶ values or interests smoothes the path to policy success by reassuring ¶ skeptics.11 Rhetoric about shared interests in prosperity and economic ¶ growth accompanies efforts to push free trade deals on unwilling partners and publics. Rhetoric about shared love of human rights and democracy accompanies pushes for political reforms in other states.¶ In their examination of debates leading up to the 2003 Iraq war ¶ in this issue of World Politics, Jack Snyder, Robert Shapiro, and Yaeli ¶ Bloch-Elkon provide an example of unipolar attempts to create legitimacy through strategic use of rhetoric. They show how “evocative and ¶ evasive rhetoric” allowed proponents of the war to imply links between ¶ the 9/11 attacks, weapons of mass destruction, and Saddam Hussein’s ¶ regime. Potentially unpopular or controversial policies were rationalized by situating them in a larger strategic vision built on more widely ¶ held values, as when the authors of the 2002 National Security Strategy ¶ memorandum wove together the global war on terror, the promotion of ¶ American democratic values abroad, and the struggle against authoritarian regimes to create a justiﬁcation for preventive war.12 Indeed, as ¶ Ronald Krebs and Patrick Jackson argue, rhetorical “sales pitches” of ¶ this kind can be highly coercive. Examining the same case (the selling ¶ of the Iraq war), Krebs and Jennifer Lobasz show how the administration’s “war-on-terror” discourse, which cast the U.S. as a blameless ¶ victim (attacked for “who we are” rather than anything we did), was ¶ designed in such a way as to leave opponents with very few arguments ¶ they could use to rally effective opposition in Congress.13¶ Usually this articulation of values is not simply a strategic ploy. Decision makers and publics in the unipole actually hold these values and ¶ believe their own rhetoric to some signiﬁcant degree. Unipole states, ¶ like all states, are social creatures. They are composed of domestic societies that cohere around some set of national beliefs. Their leaders are¶ products of those societies and often share those beliefs. Even where ¶ leaders may be skeptical, they likely became leaders by virtue of their ¶ abilities to rally publics around shared goals and to construct foreign ¶ and domestic policies that reﬂect domestic values. Even authoritarian ¶ (and certainly totalitarian) regimes articulate shared goals and function ¶ only because of the web of social ties that knit people together. Certainly ¶ all recent and contemporary strong states that could be candidates for ¶ unipoles—the U.S., China, Russia, Germany, and Britain—do.14¶ Thus unipole states, like all states, ﬁnd naked self-aggrandizement ¶ or even the prescriptions of Machiavellian virtú difﬁcult to pursue.15¶ Unipoles and the people who lead them pursue a variety of goals derived from many different values. Even “national interest” as most ¶ people and states conceive of it involves some broader vision of social ¶ good beyond mere self-aggrandizement. Americans like to see democracy spread around the world in part for instrumental reasons—they ¶ believe a world of democracies is a safer, more prosperous world for ¶ Americans—and also for normative ones—they believe in the virtues ¶ of democracy for all. Likewise, Americans like to see markets open ¶ in part for instrumental reasons—they believe a world of markets will ¶ make Americans richer—and also for normative ones—they believe ¶ that markets are the ticket out of poverty.¶ Much of unipolar politics is thus likely to revolve around the degree ¶ to which policies promoting the unipole’s goals are accepted or resisted ¶ by others. Other states and foreign publics may need to be persuaded, ¶ but often inﬂuential domestic constituencies must also be brought on ¶ board. Channels for such persuasion are many and varied, as is evident ¶ from past U.S. diplomatic efforts to sell its policies under bipolarity. ¶ The shift from laissez-faire to what John Ruggie terms the “embedded ¶ liberal compromise” as the basis for the U.S.-led economic order after ¶ WWII required extensive diplomatic effort to persuade other states ¶ and New York’s ﬁnancial elite to go along. The tools of inﬂuence used ¶ to accomplish this were sometimes material but also intellectual and ¶ ideological. It was the “shared social purposes” of these economic arrangements that gave them legitimacy among both state and societal ¶ actors cross-nationally.16¶ A unipole’s policies are thus circumscribed on two fronts. The policies must reﬂect values held at home, making them legitimate domestically. At the same time, in order to induce acquiescence or support ¶ from abroad, they must appeal to the leaders and publics of other states. ¶ Constructing policies across these two spheres—domestic and international—may be more or less difﬁcult, depending on circumstances, ¶ but the range of choices satisfying both constituencies is unlikely to be ¶ large. Widespread disaffection on either front is likely to create signiﬁ-¶ cant legitimacy costs to leaders, either as electoral or stability threats ¶ domestically or as decreased cooperation and increased resistance internationally.¶ Creating legitimacy for its policies is thus essential for the unipole ¶ but it is also difﬁcult, dangerous, and prone to unforeseen consequences. Domestically, the need to cement winning coalitions in place has ¶ polarized U.S. politics, creating incentives to exploit wedge issues and ¶ ideological narratives. As Snyder, Shapiro, and Bloch-Elkon describe, ¶ neoconservatives, particularly after 9/11, used these tools to great effect ¶ to generate support for the Bush administration’s policies. Such ideologically-driven persuasion efforts entail risks, however. Constructing ¶ coherent ideological narratives often involves sidelining inconvenient ¶ facts, what Snyder and his coauthors call “fact bulldozing.” This is more ¶ than just highlighting some facts at the expense of others. It may (or ¶ may not) begin with that aim, but it can also involve changing the facts ¶ people believe to be true, as when large numbers of people came to ¶ believe that weapons of mass destruction were indeed found in Iraq. ¶ Thus, to the degree that these persuasion efforts are successful, if their ¶ ideology does not allow them to entertain contrary facts, policymakers ¶ and publics may make decisions based on bad information. This kind ¶ of self-delusion would seem unlikely to result in smart policy. To the ¶ extent that ideological narratives become entrenched, these delusions ¶ may extend to future generations of policymakers and make them victims of blowback. Even if successors come to terms with the facts, they ¶ may be entrapped by the powerful legitimating rhetoric constructed by ¶ their predecessors.17¶ Internationally, this need to construct legitimate policies also creates ¶ important opportunities for opponents and potential challengers to a¶ unipole. As Stephen Walt notes in this issue, opportunities for conventional material balancing are limited under our current unipolar situation and, by deﬁnition, one would expect this to be so in most, if not all, ¶ unipolar systems. What is a challenger to do? With material balancing ¶ options limited, one obvious opening for rival states is to undermine ¶ the legitimacy of unipolar power. A creative rival who cannot match or ¶ balance a unipole’s military or economic strength can easily ﬁnd strategies to undercut the credibility and integrity of the unipole and to ¶ concoct alternative values or political visions that other states may ﬁnd ¶ more attractive. Thus, even as a unipole struggles to construct political programs that will attract both domestic and international support ¶ with an ideology or values that have wide appeal, others may be trying ¶ to paint those same programs as self-aggrandizing or selﬁsh.¶ Attacks on legitimacy are important “weapons of the weak.”18 Even ¶ actors with limited or no material capability can mount damaging attacks on the credibility, reputation, and legitimacy of the powerful. The ¶ tools to mount such attacks are not hard to come by in contemporary ¶ politics. Information and the ability to disseminate it strategically are ¶ the most potent weapons for delegitimating power in all kinds of situations, domestic and international. Even non-state actors like nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and activist networks whose material ¶ capabilities are negligible in the terms used in this article have been ¶ able to challenge the legitimacy of policies of powerful states and the ¶ legitimacy of the states themselves. The International Campaign to ¶ Ban Landmines (ICBL) is one prominent example. Civil society groups ¶ and like-minded states were able to attract signatures from more than ¶ 120 governments to ban these devices in 1997 despite opposition from ¶ the unipole (U.S.) government. The fact that the ICBL received the ¶ Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts is suggestive of its success at delegitimating unipole policies on this issue. If legitimacy were irrelevant, ¶ the U.S. would have ignored this challenge; it did not. The Pentagon ¶ has begun phasing out these weapons and replacing them with newer, ¶ more expensive devices meant to conform to the treaty requirements. ¶ Indeed, that the U.S. began touting the superiority of its new mine ¶ policy (promulgated in February 2004) over the ICBL’s Ottawa treaty ¶ requirements highlights the power of this transnational civil society ¶ network to set standards for legitimate behavior in this area.19 Similar ¶ cases of NGO pressure on environmental protection (including climate ¶ change), human rights, weapons taboos, and democratization amply ¶ suggest that this ability to change what is “legitimate” is a common and ¶ consequential way to challenge unipoles.20 The fact that these challenges are mounted on two fronts—international pressure from foreign ¶ governments, international organizations, and NGO activists on the one ¶ hand, and domestic pressure from the unipole’s own citizens who support the activists’ views on the other—makes these challenges doubly ¶ difﬁcult to manage.¶ State actors, too, can use these weapons to attack the unipole’s policies and do so regularly. Among states, attempts to delegitimate the ¶ policies of others are a staple of foreign policy-making and may be ¶ employed more often in states that have fewer material capabilities ¶ with which to achieve their goals against a unipole. France may be unable to balance effectively against U.S. material power in contemporary ¶ politics, but it can (and has) raised questions about U.S. leadership and ¶ the legitimacy of U.S. policies, especially U.S. inclinations toward unilateralism. Exploiting multilateralism’s legitimacy as a form of action, ¶ French attempts since the late 1990s to label the U.S. a “hyperpower” ¶ and to promote a more multilateral, even multipolar, vision of world ¶ politics are clearly designed to constrain the U.S. by undermining the ¶ legitimacy of any U.S. action that does not receive widespread international support and meet international standards for “multilateralism.”21¶ Countering such attacks on legitimacy is neither easy nor costless. It ¶ requires constant management of the transnational conversation sur-¶ rounding the unipole’s behavior and continuing demonstrations of the ¶ unipole’s commitment to the values or vision that legitimate its power. ¶ To simply dismiss or ignore these attacks is dangerous; it smacks of ¶ contempt. It says to others, “You are not even worth my time and attention.” A unipole need not cater to the wishes of the less powerful ¶ to avoid conveying contempt. It can argue, justify, and respectfully disagree—but all of these take time, attention, and diplomacy. Dismissal ¶ is very different than disagreement, however. Peers disagree and argue; ¶ subordinates and servants are dismissed. By treating the less powerful ¶ with contempt the unipole communicates that it does not care about ¶ their views and, ultimately, does not care about the legitimacy of its own ¶ power. To dismiss or ignore the views of the less capable is a form of selfdelegitimation. Contempt is thus a self-defeating strategy for unipoles; ¶ by thumbing its metaphorical nose at others, the unipole undercuts the ¶ legitimacy needed to create a wide range of policy outcomes.22¶ Social control is never absolute and material power alone cannot create it. Effective and long-lasting social control requires some amount ¶ of recognition, deference, and, preferably, acceptance on the part of ¶ those over whom power is exercised. Other parties, not the unipole, ¶ thus hold important keys to the establishment of effective and stable ¶ order under unipolarity. Paradoxically, then, preponderant power can ¶ only be converted into social control if it is diffused. To exercise power ¶ to maximum effect, unipoles must give up some of that power to secure ¶ legitimacy for their policies.