#### US is still the leader – has advantages in all domains

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"America Still Leads Across the Board." For now. As things stand, America has the world's largest economy, the world's leading universities, and many of its biggest companies. The U.S. military is also incomparably more powerful than any rival. The United States spends almost as much on its military as the rest of the world put together. And let's also add in America's intangible assets. The country's combination of entrepreneurial flair and technological prowess has allowed it to lead the technological revolution. Talented immigrants still flock to U.S. shores. And now that Barack Obama is in the White House, the country's soft power has received a big boost. For all his troubles, polls show Obama is still the most charismatic leader in the world; Hu Jintao doesn't even come close. America also boasts the global allure of its creative industries (Hollywood and all that), its values, the increasing universality of the English language, and the attractiveness of the American Dream.

#### China can’t challenge the US.

Drezner 11(Daniel Drezner, a Political Science professor at the University of Chicago. The End Of Power?, Foreign Policy. 2/8/11, NP, <http://drezner.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/02/08/the_end_of_power> DM)

On the other hand, neither U.S. deterrent power nor other countries' compellence power has changed all that much, even in the economic realm.  The rest of the G-20 can scream as loud as they want, but  quantitative easing is going to continue.  China has tried to find ways to use its newly found financial muscle to force changes in the international system, to little avail.  To be sure, Russia, China and others can compel countries on their immediate periphery, but even a glance at the 2008 Russian-Georgian war suggests that even modest efforts like these are expensive and messy.  So... we live in a world in which more actors have vetoes over systemic change but no actor has the ability to truly compel change.  This leads to lots of talk about "[G-zero worlds](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67339/ian-bremmer-and-nouriel-roubini/a-g-zero-world)" and so forth.  Just to be provocative, however, I wonder if what's truly changed is the extinction of compellence power as we know it.  The primary, ne plus ultr  tools of compellence require a willingness to kill, jail or starve a lot of people.  Recent flare-ups like Iran in 2009 and Egypt right now suggests that such actions are possible at the domestic level, but pretty damn costly; even authoritarian countries flinch at using brute force on a domestic population.  Cross-border efforts are even more expensive in terms of both material and reputational costs.  This isn't the end of power, but it might be the end of one particular dimension of power.

## **Econ**

#### **Prefer out evidence – theirs worships growths abilities to hide social ills.**

Speth ‘8

James, dean of the [Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yale_School_of_Forestry_and_Environmental_Studies) at [Yale University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yale_University), [New Haven, Connecticut](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Haven,_Connecticut). Currently he serves the school as the Carl W. Knobloch, Jr. Dean and Sara Shallenberger Brown Professor in the Practice of Environmental Policy. The Bridge at the Edge of the World. P. 47-48

Promoting growth—achieving ever-greater economic wealth and prosperity—may be the most widely shared and robust cause in the world today. Economic growth has been called “the secular religion of the advancing industrial societies.”2 Leading macroeconomists declare it the summum bonum of their craft. Consumption spurs growth, and to keep consumers motivated, advertising expenditures globally have expanded even faster than the world economy. The Economist editorialized in 2006 “in praise of America’s fearless consumers of new ideas and products.”3 And when Americans’ zeal to consume slackens, U.S. consumers are implored to go shopping, even by the president, as George W. Bush did after 9/11 and again just before Christmas in 2006. Looking ahead to 2007, Business Week assured its readers that they could “count on [American] consumers to keep spending.”4 That proved a good prediction. By June 2007, the Financial Times could write that a “sharp rise in consumer spending heralds [a] strong rebound in U.S. growth.”5 When one wants to kill a proposal for government action, the most effective argument is that it will hurt the economy, exactly what President Bush said when he rejected the international climate treaty’s Kyoto Protocol early in his administration. It is not enough just to grow. Economies are judged by how rapidly they grow. To read the harsh criticism in the business press, one would think that Japan had recently experienced a prolonged depression or at least recession. In fact, between 1990 and 2005 Japan grew at 1.3 percent a year—not the 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent expected in the United States and Europe, but still not a downturn. Japan is, in fact, an interesting case of prolonged slow growth, suggesting that such a thing is possible.6 Understanding growth and how to keep it up is what modern-day macroeconomics is all about. Paul Samuelson and William Nordhaus are explicit about this in their justly famous text Macroeconomics. “Above all,” they write, “macroeconomics is concerned with economic growth. . . . The major macroeconomic goals are a high level and rapid growth of output, low unemployment, and stable prices. . . . Two issues have dominated macroeconomics since its birth: the need to reduce the instability of the market economy . . . and the desire to increase a nation’s rate of growth of output and consumption.”7 In a remarkable passage of his environmental history of the twentieth century, Something New under the Sun, historian J. R. McNeill writes that the “growth fetish” solidified its hold on imaginations and institutions in the twentieth century: “Communism aspired to become the universal creed of the twentieth century, but a more flexible and seductive religion succeeded where communism failed: the quest for economic growth. Capitalists, nationalists—indeed almost everyone, communists included—worshiped at this same altar because economic growth disguised a multitude of sins. Indonesians and Japanese tolerated endless corruption as long as economic growth lasted. Russians and eastern Europeans put up with clumsy surveillance states. Americans and Brazilians accepted vast social inequalities. Social, moral, and ecological ills were sustained in the interest of economic growth; indeed, adherents to the faith proposed that only more growth could resolve such ills. Economic growth became the indispensable ideology of the state nearly everywhere. “The growth fetish, while on balance quite useful in a world with empty land, shoals of undisturbed fish, vast forests, and a robust ozone shield, helped create a more crowded and stressed one. Despite the disappearance of ecological buffers and mounting real costs, ideological lock-in reigned in both capitalist and communist circles. . . . The overarching priority of economic growth was easily the most important idea of the twentieth century

#### Recessions reduce emissions.

Simms et al. ‘10

Andrew Simms, policy director of New Economics Foundation, UK think tank, and head of NEF's Climate Change Programme, Dr. Victoria Johnson, researcher for the climate change and energy programme at NEF, MSc with distinction in Climate Change from the University of East Anglia and PhD in Atmospheric Physics at Imperial College, London and Peter Chowla, Policy and Advocacy Officer at the Bretton Woods Project. “Growth isn’t possible”. New Economics Foundation, January 25,2010. http://www.neweconomics.org/sites/neweconomics.org/files/Growth\_Isnt\_Possible.pdf

In the Stern Review, historical precedents of reductions in carbon emissions were examined. Their analysis found that annual reductions of greater than 1 per cent have ‘been associated only with economic recession or upheaval’.215 Stern points to the collapse of the former Soviet Union’s economy, which brought about annual emission reductions of over 5 per cent for a decade. While France’s 40-fold increase in nuclear capacity in just 25 years and the UK’s ‘dash for gas’ in the 1990s both corresponded, respectively, with annual CO2 and greenhouse gas emission reductions of only 1 per cent.

#### Movements now- space has been opened for theoretical criticism of neoliberalism, engaging now is key to exploit critical mass for social change

Harvey 10/27

(Ryan, writer, an organizer with the Civilian-Soldier Alliance, “Globalization” Is Coming Home: Protests Spread as Financial Institutions Target Global North”, Thursday 27 October 2011, http://www.truth-out.org/world-finally-fighting-infection-neoliberalism/1320164620?q=globalization-coming-home-protests-spread-financial-institutions-target-global-north/1319721791)

At some point recently, we entered a “movement moment”, a period of time where long-term strategic campaigns merge with spontaneous, organic social upheaval and manifest in the streets with rebellious joy. Such moments can bring about radical, revolutionary changes in short periods of time, as displayed in the Arab Spring and now, perhaps, in the Global North’s emerging winter. Major protests are gripping some of the most powerful countries in the world, namely the United States, England, and Italy; an ongoing uprising is taking place in Greece; some of the largest demonstrations since the 1973 military coup have taken in Chile; and long-established dictatorships have fallen or are about to fall all over northern Africa and the Middle East. In the United States, a sense of grassroots democratic engagement is spreading across the country to the surprise of many long-engaged community organizers and radicals, and conversations questioning the moral and theoretical basis of financial capitalism have become quite regular among ordinary people. Late in the third week of October, amid the largest protests since the fall of the military junta in 1974 in which a massive crowd attempted to storm Parliament, the Greek government finalized austerity measures laid out for the “Troika”, the name given to the joint power structure of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Union, and the European Currency Unit. In Brussels over the October 21st weekend at a now-extended emergency meeting focused on how to save financial capitalism in light of the Greek debt crisis, the European Union announced a new round of bail-outs for many of Europe’s big banks, citing national governments as one of the main sources of revenue. When the Irish state struck a similar agreement with the Troika last year, they looted the pension funds of public employees across Ireland. As the EU met in Brussels, 2,000 people filled Dublin’s Dame Street in front of the Central Bank of Ireland and the IMF’s office to join the “Occupy Dame Street” encampment. But contrary to many corporate media-statements suggesting otherwise, what has unified people across the world is not just solidarity with the protests on Wall Street or with the Arab Spring. While there is certainly an undeniable lineage between these movements, what has caused such upheavel is a shared situation; many of these countries are facing economic conditions that a critical mass of the people has collectively deemed unacceptable.

#### Increased protectionism is false – the collapse in 2008 proves.

Naim in ‘10

Moises Naim, Editor in Chief of Foreign Policy Magazine. Foreign Policy. “It Didn't Happen”. January/February 2010. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/01/04/it\_didnt\_happen?page=full

Protectionism will surge. It didn't. Trade flows did drop dramatically in late 2008 and early 2009, but they started to grow again in the second half of 2009 as economies recovered. Pascal Lamy, director-general of the World Trade Organization, had warned that the global financial crisis was bound to lead to surges in protectionism as governments sought to blame foreigners for their problems. "That is exactly what happened in the 1930s when [protectionism] was the virus that spread the crisis all over the place," he said in October 2008, echoing a widely held sentiment among trade experts. And it is true that many governments dabbled in protectionism, including not only the U.S. Congress's much-derided "Buy American" provision, but also measures such as increased tariffs or import restrictions imposed in 17 of the G-20 countries. Yet one year later, a report from the European Union concluded that "a widespread and systemic escalation of protectionism has been prevented." The protectionist temptation is always there, and a meaningful increase in trade barriers cannot be ruled out. But it has not happened yet

#### You impacts assume diversionary theory – it has been empirically disproven – domestic unrest due to economic decline makes it less likely leaders can engage in interstate conflict.

Boehmer in ‘7

Charles Boehmer, Associate Professor, Dept. of Political Science @ University of Texas at El Paso. “The Effects of Economic Crisis, Domestic Discord, and State Efficacy on the Decision to Initiate Interstate Conflict”. Politics and Policy. Volume 35, Issue 4, Pages 774-809. Wiley InterScience. December 7, 2007.

I have theorized in this study that economic growth should be positively related to militarized interstate conflicts while at the same time it should reduce the risk of domestic regime changes. I also expected that domestic conflict would reduce the risk of interstate conflict. The research design used here specifically allows for a comparison of the relative probabilities of both interstate conflict and regime changes. I find only partial support for both my theory and the conclusions often made in studies of diversionary conflict that lower rates of economic growth should lead to interstate conflict, although in cases where this occurs, this is in fact followed by some form of regime change, suggesting that diversion was not successful or the only tactic politically necessary. In fact, the alternative theory presented here was supported in regard to the most severe interstate conflicts. Higher levels of economic growth are positively related to the onset of deadly interstate conflicts. However, the results concerning domestic conflict are interesting and both support and contradict my theory. Indeed, domestic conflict increases the threat of both regime changes and interstate conflict, but only to a point. The effects of protest and rebellion are generally nonlinear where only the middle levels contribute to interstate conflict. The highest levels of protest and rebellion actually reduce the risk of interstate conflict. This suggests that state leaders may attempt diversion as long as protest and rebellion are not so severe, although beyond some middle-range threshold leaders shy away from especially the most severe interstate conflicts. One post hoc rationale could be that leaders are insulated from domestic opponents to some degree and are not constrained until domestic conflict reaches a certain threshold. An alternative explanation, and one also suggested by the results here, is that the risk of regime change rises much more quickly with higher levels of protest and rebellion, but especially the former, relative to the opportunity to initiate a foreign conflict. Probabilistically, the opportunity to divert decreases as the chance to be toppled or institutionally altering the government increases first. While the results show that some leaders initiate interstate conflicts and then undergo regime change, a likely outcome for those facing high levels of domestic conflict is that they are removed before they can pull the trigger on a "gambling-for-resurrection" strategy. The results also show that this would be a very, very rare behavior on the part of democratic leaders, given the results of the democracy variable and the low probabilities of the events measured. Of the 755 country-years where a militarized interstate conflict was initiated, 79 of these foreign conflicts (11 percent) were related somehow to regime change. This means that some attempts to divert (if they were so) failed, while others following MIDs may be completely unrelated to diversionary behavior or possibility even a penalty for it. Moreover, these MID initiations likely include many conflicts which most would agree were not diversionary, such as U.S. interventions into Bosnia or Afghanistan, which is the common problem associated with this theory. This means that the risk of regime change for states under duress is probably even higher than the results show, which would be the times leaders would most prefer to divert. In summary, this study shows circumstantial evidence that supports certain aspects of diversionary conflict theory. At least some domestic conflict appears to increase the risk of interstate conflict. Yet, the results here present a more complex picture than other studies in that diversionary strategies (1) appear to occur less often than regime change, or (2) regime change occurs anyway after a foreign conflict has been initiated. Lower economic growth and domestic conflict both seem to lead to desperate situations where interstate conflicts are initiated, but again seem unsuccessful. Diversionary attempts appear quite rare and desperate in nature. Still, the results here show a more complex picture that partly contradicts aspects of diversionary theory. First, the odds are actually higher that states with domestic problems will be a target of foreign aggression than they would be an aggressor. This finding suggests predatory behavior on the part of other states. Moreover, leaders facing domestic problems associated with domestic conflict and poor economic growth avoid foreign conflicts that entail the loss of life. Instead, states are more likely to become involved in such violent disputes when economic growth is high and state leaders and their regimes appear secure, meaning they face manageable levels of internal protest and rebellion.

### 2NC AT Lashout

#### Peaceful transition – in context of Obama

Quinn 11 – Professor of Political Science and Int’l Studies

Adam, “The art of declining politely: Obama’s prudent presidency and the waning of American power,” International Affairs, Volume 87, Issue 4, Wiley Online

As noted in the opening passages of this article, the narratives of America’s decline and Obama’s restraint are distinct but also crucially connected. Facing this incipient period of decline, America’s leaders may walk one of two paths. Either the nation can come to terms with the reality of the process that is under way and seek to finesse it in the smoothest way possible. Or it can ‘rage against the dying of the light’, refusing to accept the waning of its primacy. President Obama’s approach, defined by restraint and awareness of limits, makes him ideologically and temperamentally well suited to the former course in a way that, to cite one example, his predecessor was not. He is, in short, a good president to inaugurate an era of managed decline. Those who vocally demand that the President act more boldly are not merely criticizing him; in suggesting that he is ‘weak’ and that a ‘tougher’ policy is needed, they implicitly suppose that the resources will be available to support such a course. In doing so they set their faces against the reality of the coming American decline. 97 If the United States can embrace the spirit of managed decline, then this will clear the way for a judicious retrenchment, trimming ambitions in line with the fact that the nation can no longer act on the global stage with the wide latitude once afforded by its superior power. As part of such a project, it can, as those who seek to qualify the decline thesis have suggested, use the significant resources still at its disposal to smooth the edges of its loss of relative power, preserving influence to the maximum extent possible through whatever legacy of norms and institutions is bequeathed by its primacy. The alternative course involves the initiation or escalation of conflictual scenarios for which the United States increasingly lacks the resources to cater: provocation of a military conclusion to the impasse with Iran; deliberate escalation of strategic rivalry with China in East Asia; commitment to continuing the campaign in Afghanistan for another decade; a costly effort to consistently apply principles of military interventionism, regime change and democracy promotion in response to events in North Africa. President Obama does not by any means represent a radical break with the traditions of American foreign policy in the modern era. Examination of his major foreign policy pronouncements reveals that he remains within the mainstream of the American discourse on foreign policy. In his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech in December 2009 he made it clear, not for the first time, that he is no pacifist, spelling out his view that ‘the instruments of war do have a role to play in preserving the peace’, and that ‘the United States of America has helped underwrite global security for more than six decades with the blood of our citizens and the strength of our arms’. 98 In his Cairo speech in June the same year, even as he sought distance from his predecessor with the proclamation that ‘no system of government can or should be imposed by one nation on any other’, he also endorsed with only slight qualification the liberal universalist view of civil liberties as transcendent human rights. ‘I … have an unyielding belief that all people yearn for certain things,’ he declared. ‘The ability to speak your mind and have a say in how you are governed; confidence in the rule of law and the equal administration of justice; government that is transparent and doesn’t steal from the people; the freedom to live as you choose. These are not just American ideas.’ 99 His Westminster speech repeated these sentiments. Evidently this is not a president who wishes to break signally with the mainstream, either by advocating a radical shrinking of America’s military strength as a good in itself or by disavowing liberal universalist global visions, as some genuine dissidents from the prevailing foreign policy discourse would wish. 100 No doubt sensibly, given the likely political reaction at home, it is inconceivable that he would explicitly declare his strategy to be one of managed American decline. Nevertheless, this is a president who, within the confines of the mainstream, embraces caution and restraint to the greatest extent that one could hope for without an epochal paradigm shift in the intellectual framework of American foreign policy-making. 101 In contemplating the diminished and diminishing weight of the United States upon the scales of global power, it is important not to conflate the question of what will be with that of what we might prefer. It may well be, as critics of the decline thesis sometimes observe, that the prospect of increased global power for a state such as China should not, on reflection, fill any westerner with glee, whatever reservations one may have held regarding US primacy. It is also important not to be unduly deterministic in projecting the consequences of American decline. It may be a process that unfolds gradually and peacefully, resulting in a new order that functions with peace and stability even in the absence of American primacy. Alternatively, it may result in conflict, if the United States clashes with rising powers as it refuses to relinquish the prerogatives of the hegemon, or continues to be drawn into wars with middle powers or on the periphery in spite of its shrinking capacity to afford them. Which outcome occurs will depend on more than the choices of America alone. But the likelihood that the United States can preserve its prosperity and influence and see its hegemony leave a positive legacy rather than go down thrashing its limbs about destructively will be greatly increased if it has political leaders disposed to minimize conflict and consider American power a scarce resource—in short, leaders who can master the art of declining politely. At present it seems it is fortunate enough to have a president who fits the bill.