Module 3

**What is selective engagement?**

AKA off shore balancing like isolationism, is aware of limits in American power, but

Goal is to prevent great power war

Those advocating selective engagement acknowledge and embrace America’s global position as a super power

Comfortable with alliances and international commitments like NATO

Skeptical of nation building projects and intervention in local conflicts, unless…risk great power war(WW2), hesitant with smaller powers

Balancing behavior - foreign policy efforts to prevent the concentration of power(pol milt and econ) means in any one state, balance

**Historical Examples of Selective Engagement**

Presidents:

Eisenhower – sought to alter the nature og the American milt commitment to euro in 1950s

-push more responsibility for def of euro on Europeans to make cold war sustainable at home

-Pull back ground troops, rely on allies

-increase reliance on nuclear weapons(wanted to move them to west germany), was not overriding containment

-worried about isolationist at home thought could increase risk of war with soviets, by lower military spending

George H W Bush – resisted calls to seize on the weaknesses of Gorbachev in 1990 and 1991, he supported him instead domestically through diplomacy

-worked with nato to manage unification of Germany in 1990, Russia was weary of good Germany, which bush responded by saying NATO will control Germany,

-classical realist

Clinton -expanded NATO to former Warsaw countries(Poland Lithuania), contributed to contemporary deterioration in Russia relations

Bush Jr. – was originally like his daddy until 911

**Discussion of Mearsheimer and Walt Reading**

Mearsheimer and Walt said that US should pursue a grand strategy of offshore balancing

Critique of liberal hegemony, Syria, Iraq.

Interests: preserve American Hegemony(leadership) in Western hemisphere; block regional, strategic, and economic hegemons in Europe, east Asia, and the Persian Gulf, focus on China

Troop Pullback: conservation of military and economic resources

Press allies for burden sharing

Remain offshore as long as possible

This GS is nested within international relations associated with realism or balance of power theory

Realism: their version of it focuses on balance of power and prudence(caution)

Need to anticipate balancing efforts(or opposition) of others to concentration of power (like that of the US), 2003 invasion of Iraq

**Offshore balancing and selective engagement**: both draw on realism, SE focus on great power war (similar grand strategy family), OSB prevent the rise of a great power regionally dominant (China), both reject the need to promote democracy and free trade (as opposed to liberal internationalism).

Willingness to deploy troops in forward positions like Germany, Korea(OSB)

Disagree over extended troop deployments

**What is Liberal Internationalism(Obama speech, Woodrow wilson)**

Establishing a liberal international order

Use of military power and international institutions to pursue a liberal international order

Threats and interests are seen as global and expansive, which is why they see value in multinational organizations

Logic:

American threats abroad are global

Security is collective and achieved through multilateral organizations and alliances

Security is best achieved in a world based on western (liberal) values: free markets, democratic regimes, protecting human rights, freedom of press

American intervention (with military and economic power) used to establish an American-led liberal international order

Critique: It can be too expensive and perceived as imperialism.

Wilson and liberal internationalism:

Champions-

Collective security system through league of nations

Conflated National self-determination (anti-imperialism),Democracy: Differences- NSD focused on empowering peoples living under imperial rule to determine their fate

free trade

Open navigation of the sea (for trade, challenges British naval hegemony)

Problems:

How to enforce the system? Voluntary

Couldn’t secure domestic support though Congress

**Primacy and the George W. Bush Administration**

Focuses on establishing and maintaining American Hegemony or its Pol, econ, milt leadership in the world.

Goal is to use unilateral means to establish American hegemony over all rivals

Log:

-American interests abroad are global

-Security is achieved unilaterally through preponderant American power (unlike liberal nationalism and selective engagement)

- Reliance on military power

Critique: Primacy can lead to overreach and isolation, expensive

George W. Bush

Clear willingness to use military force to promote fp goals(Iraq, Afghanistan)

Skepticism of international institutions (Bolton)

Democracy promotion

Preserve military dominance over peers (post 9/11)

Shock of 9/11 changed him to this from off shore balancer

Neoconservatism:

-moralism associated with neoconservatism not necessary for primacy

-primacy about dominance not values to which dominance might be used to promote

What is neoconservatism?

An ideology: set of ideas about how society functions and how government should regulate social, economic, and political spheres of life

Associated with Republican Party, particularly after social upheaval of 1960s

Skeptical of social engineering via government policy (0bamcare, Great Society)

Foreign policy and neoconservatism

Frustration with realists in Republican party on foreign policy (Nixon and Kissinger); prevent alliance with conservatives until Reagan’s staunch anti-communism and escalation of cold war (“evil empire”); although frustrated with his willingness to negotiate with Gorbachev in second term

Emerging alliance with Evangelical wing of the Republican Party during and after Reagan:

-frustration with rising secularism and decline of personal responsibility (anti cultural relativism or permissive cultural norms)

-support of Christian Right for Israel

Influenced by Wohlstetter during Cold War

-Nuclear balance delicate, not stable; push arms races, feared Russia would secure “first strike capability”(surprise attack on our nukes)

Big supporters of Raegan and his characterization of soviet union ad evil empire; rollback (not containment)

* Frustration in 1985-86

Post 1991: embrace vision of American primacy that fuses American power with pursuit of liberal ideals

-us American power to promote liberalism/democracy around the world

-US should pursue moral foreign policy, supported Clinton interventions in Haiti, Bosnia

**Krepinevich and Thornberry Reading on Primacy**

Call for Primacy

Focus on expanding military power of US

National interests: prevent regional hegemon; and control global commons (sea lanes, skies, space and cyber world)

US military power eroding, Chinese expansion, Russia/Ukraine, not concerned about ISIS as much

Important Steps: military modernization and domestic fiscal reform

Comparison with Mearsheimer and Walt (M and W want to decrease military spending, pull back from foreign military engagements, whether America needs to go into global commons)