### NATO Not Key

#### NATO isn’t key to heg

Roach 2018

[Christopher. Attorney, commentator in The Federalist, the Washington Legal Foundation, the Marine Corps Gazette, and the Orlando Sentinel. "What Good Is NATO?" American Greatness. 7-16-2018. https://amgreatness.com/2018/07/16/what-good-is-nato/]

NATO’s weakness stems not only from dubious grand strategy, but also from its limited practical value. Consider the Libyan Campaign. No longer Europe’s hour, NATO’s member states aligned with one another to persuade the U.S. to join a dubious campaigns, where highfalutin rhetoric of human rights masked realpolitik concerns for things like oil. The NATO tail ended up wagging the American dog, and the U.S. military had to make up for key NATO deficiencies in logistics, electronic warfare, surveillance, and airpower. In the end, the NATO allies worked together and toppled Qaddafi, but the place fell apart, jihadis exploited the ungoverned space, a U.S. ambassador was killed, and the campaign did little to contribute to U.S. or European security interests. A paragon of the managerial class, Hillary Clinton summed it up with her callous retort: “What difference at this point does it make?” Libya is not the exception. In Bosnia and Kosovo, NATO’s European members repeatedly have shown very meager power projection capabilities. In Afghanistan, where many of our NATO allies assisted our campaign after the 9/11 attacks under NATO’s Article 5, individual NATO participants often operated under wildly different rules of engagement, limiting the effectiveness of various nations’ contingents. While there are common standards across NATO, ties of history and friendship, as well as a common Western culture, it’s not so clear that these factors have ever overcome the divergent abilities of NATO members when called to action. In short, as it has expanded its membership and its mission, NATO has become less effective. And, to the extent it is effective at all, the United States has always had to do most of the work.

### AI/Tech Not Key

#### U.S. tech leadership is high and resilient.

Levanon 2020

[Gad. Forbes manufacturing contributor. “Reports Of US Decline Are Greatly Exaggerated.” 08/27/20. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gadlevanon/2020/08/27/reports-of-us-decline-are-greatly-exaggerated/?sh=6253227b26f8>]

Despite what many suspect is an eroding US global standing, 2020 may be remembered as the year when the US became even more globally dominant economically. Why? The tech sector’s share of the US economy is much larger than in most countries. And the pandemic-driven recession has greatly accelerated the shift to online activity and digital transformation by businesses and consumers, which would otherwise have taken years. That lead to faster growth in the global demand for technology. In addition, the US is especially dominant in the tech industries that are likely to grow the fastest in the coming years. Stock prices certainly support this story. The S&P 500 is already above pre-pandemic highs despite the deepest recession in 80 years, and most of the stock prices’ strength comes from tech sector. The companies that have seen the strongest gains since the pandemic focus on online shopping and payments, cloud computing services, cyber security, business related software, social media, online advertisement, and on-demand entertainment content. Stock prices are volatile and so are a treacherous guide for predicting the future, but there is a plausible explanation for the large tech gains – and why they might last. [Chart omitted] There are several objective and subjective reasons for why the US is so successful in technology compared with other countries. It has: 1The best universities, which attract many of the best students from all over the world – most of whom tend to stay in the US after completing their studies 2A large inflow of experienced talent from other countries 3 Unrivaled access to venture capital 4 Fluency in English, the global language in both business-dealing and content 5 An economy big enough to make achieving scale relatively easy 6 Silicon Valley, the home and heart of the tech revolution 7 A culture that welcomes innovation and disruption and strongly encourages entrepreneurial behavior Given these factors, US tech leadership should continue. What about the competition? One factor helping the US stand out is the weakness of the European tech sector. The market cap of the largest European tech company, SAP SAP -0.3%, is about one-tenth of Apple AAPL +1.6%’s. In other sophisticated industries like pharmaceuticals, motor vehicles and aircraft, European companies are strong competitors to their US counterparts. Europe’s relative technology weakness is perhaps as unusual as the US strength in the sector, and is only reinforced by the fact that US technology companies are already big players in European economies. Most of the top tech companies from East Asia – places like Japan, Taiwan and South Korea – are in hardware and semiconductors manufacturing. They are serious competitors in these areas, but these technology sectors are not growing as quickly. No discussion of the future of technology is complete without China. The Chinese internet companies are huge and growing rapidly, but their ability to expand beyond China and its periphery is questionable. In almost all sophisticated industries, Chinese companies are not yet major players in Western economies. Also, recent events suggest that Western countries will be more cautious in dealing with China, perhaps limiting its expansion. The latest developments with Huawei and TikTok are good examples. In addition, US companies are slowly moving their supply chain elsewhere, further weakening China. So, the technology sector will perform well in the next several years, benefiting countries that are strong in that area. The US, more than any other country, has a large and successful tech sector that seems to be especially concentrated in the fastest-growing tech industries. What does this mean for the US economy overall? First, it is important to mention that the boost the US is getting from its tech sector has been larger than what most other advanced economies have gotten for quite a while, and is one of the reasons the US has been growing faster than them in recent years. But now, this trend is likely to accelerate. Here is some back of the envelope math for the difference between the technology sector’s contribution to GDP growth in the US versus a typical advanced economy: Suppose in the US the tech sector is 12 percent of GDP and is growing at 10 percent a year. In another typical advanced economy the tech sector is 7 percent of GDP and is growing at 5 percent a year. That means that the annual contribution to GDP from the tech sector is 1.2 percent for the US versus 0.35 percent for the other country. That is 0.85 percent faster growth for the US every year. The net effect may be smaller because some of the growth in tech companies come at the expanse of companies from other sectors. But when the average annual GDP growth rate is 1.5-2 percent in advanced economies, even a 0.5 percent a year difference is meaningful. The gains from the rapid growth in technology would disproportionately go to tech companies’ owners and workers. As most of these are high earners, this trend is likely to increase income inequality. But some of the gains will spread more widely. After all, owners and workers, and the companies themselves, spend a large share of their income in the communities they live and operate in. It will also increase geographic inequalities. Not surprisingly, within the US, areas close to Silicon Valley benefited the most from the technology demand-surge. Between 2013-2018, among the 382 metro areas in the US, San Jose and San Francisco metro areas had the fastest growth in personal income per-capita. During that time, personal income per-capita in the San Jose Metro area rose by 48 percent, more than twice as fast as the national rate (22 percent). The surrounding metro areas, Napa, Santa Rosa-Petaluma, Santa Cruz-Watsonville, Stockton, Vallejo, were all ranked in the top 40. Seattle, another technology Hub, is ranked 13. All of these data points add up to an enduring strength. Despite concerns about US’s standing in the world, its tech sector may keep it at the forefront of the global economy in the foreseeable future.

#### No AI arms race.

Drezner 2019

[Daniel W. Drezner, international politics professor at Tufts University. “What if AI is just BS?”, Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/05/01/what-if-ai-is-just-bs/]

The hard-working staff here at Spoiler Alerts has been attending way too many conferences in the past half-year or so. Big conferences with thousands of political scientists. Small conferences with just a few political scientists. Posh conferences with lots of management consultant types and I am the academic brought in for the sake of intellectual diversity. There has been one constant running through all of them: people who want to sound savvy keep talking about artificial intelligence as the New New Thing. This is what you read in the popular press as well. There are lots of ways that AI could affect the social fabric: there is the potential of lost jobs, or at least a radical reorientation of what jobs would look like. There are the unexpected effects of artificial intelligence, which I believe the sci-fi genre has tackled with a great deal of enthusiasm. And for my bailiwick of international relations, there is a lot of talk about an AI “arms race” that could alter the balance of power in the future. Are these people correct? I am legitimately unsure, but I confess to wariness about claims of technological game-changers. All too often, I hear colleagues reference AI the way that they would reference “globalization” or “Big Data” — terms so amorphous that there is no consensus about the definition. On that question and many others, I strongly recommend perusing Michael Horowitz’s essay in the Texas National Security Review, which makes some very useful distinctions. Horowitz points out that AI is more of a continuum than a precise technology. He also acknowledges that the future of AI is far from clear. He writes, “even experts disagree about whether artificial general intelligence of the type that could outpace human capabilities will emerge in the short to medium term or whether it is still hundreds of years away. AI experts also disagree about the overall trajectory of advances in AI.” For Horowitz, one of the key questions is whether the engine of innovation comes from the private sector (because of AI’s utility as a general purpose technology) or the defense sector (because of AI’s utility for the military). I have some skin in this game, because I wrote something about technological change and international relations for the centennial anniversary of the journal International Relations that was just published. My interest is more in whether AI is a technology that gets standardized pretty quickly, or whether it requires massive fixed costs to develop properly. If it is the former, then industrial policies do not matter much, because the technology will diffuse rapidly. First-mover advantages might matter in terms of standard-setting but not much else. If it is the latter, however, then industrial policy could matter a great deal, with all sorts of unpleasant international implications. Another problem that AI exemplifies is the ways in which old metaphors are applied to news technologies — sometimes inaccurately. In the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Heather Roff has an interesting essay on this very question, in which she notes, “It would help matters if artificial intelligence discussions were framed in an ‘AI +’ framework, because in many cases, AI is merely a tool included in a system involving other functions or capabilities. The news media should stop framing the global artificial intelligence competition as an ‘arms race.’ This misrepresents the competition going on among countries.” I am old enough to remember all the times that a new technology was declared to be the New New Thing. In the late 1980s, it was high-definition television. In the 2000s, it was nanotechnology or biotechnology. AI is the big thing now, unless it is 5G. None of this means that AI is not a significant technology. But it does mean that very often the people proclaiming that are selling you something.

### No Heg Impact

#### Liberal order is resilient – no collapse.

Mousseau 2019

[Michael James Mousseau, Political Science Professor at the Univeristy of Central Florida, focuses on the link between economics and conflict, PhD at Binghamton University. The End of War: How a Robust Marketplace and Liberal Hegemony Are Leading to Perpetual World Peace, 44(1), Summer 2019, ProjectMUSE]

Reports of the demise of the liberal order, however, are greatly exaggerated. First, Hungary and Poland are newly contractualist states. The sociological nature of economic norms theory means that contractualist values should be more firmly rooted in older contractualist societies than in newer ones. This is corroborated with the natural experiment of Germany: in 1962 West Germany embraced contractualism (see table 1), but it was only after 1991 that East [End Page 191] Germany could have become contractualist, when massive investments from the Federal Republic caused incomes in the marketplace to become higher than incomes obtainable from status relationships. Today, Germany's populist movement is concentrated in the eastern part of the country and is largely nonexistent in the western part,83 which corroborates the expectation that some newly contractualist societies retain some of their status values even after a generation of robust opportunity in the marketplace. Deeper changes in values may not occur until generational cohorts initially socialized into status or axial economies have passed on. Second, the electorates in most of the thirty-five contractualist states listed in table 1 in 2010 have not experienced substantial increases in populist sentiment. Italy's Five Star movement is often called populist but largely because of its anti-immigrant stance. Although an embrace of immigrants would seem consistent with contractualist values, opposition to large numbers of immigrants is arguably a rational response to what is essentially a huge external shock that has intensified in recent years. Britons voted to leave the European Union, but largely because they believed they were being treated unfairly in it. The rejection of unfair terms of trade, whether perceived correctly or not, is consistent with contractualist values. Third, the strength of institutions far exceeds that of any one person, including the president of the United States. Liberal values and institutions are rooted in contractualist economic norms and will not disappear simply because some leaders choose not to abide by them. For instance, although Trump may want the United States to withdraw from the North Atlantic alliance, this is not a view shared by Congress and the American people. Even members of Trump's administration have often restrained him in ways consistent with contractualist values and institutions.84 In economic norms theory, the only way the United States' contractualist values could shift to status or axial values would be through radical economic change. As mentioned above, economics is ultimately at the mercy of politics, as an influential coalition of rent-seekers could potentially collapse a contractualist economy by failing to sustain the highly inclusive marketplace or uphold the state's credibility in enforcing of contracts. In recent years, the U.S. economy has begun tilting toward rent-seekers, given the growing role of private money in electoral campaigns and the increasing sophistication of rent-seekers [End Page 192] in masking their activities though the manipulation of public opinion, including through their concentrated ownership of media outlets. Such rentierism could precipitate a change in U.S. values if it results in a retraction of the market substantial enough that newer generations began to obtain higher wages in newfound status networks than in the marketplace. In this way, the Trump phenomenon may reflect a pathology in U.S. governing institutions; but at least so far, it arguably has not extended to the American people. Most of Trump's supporters seem to be drawn to him not for his expressions of status values, but for his pledges to fight a "rigged" system and create well-paying jobs. Whether or not Trump means what he says, many of his supporters saw a vote for him as an act of protest against the increasing corruption occurring in the United States, a clear contractualist expression.85 Although a collapse of the U.S. economy and transition to an axial or a status economy is always possible, the feedback loop of popular insistence on economic growth and a highly inclusive marketplace makes this unlikely. Aside from an external shock (such as nuclear war or climate devastation), such a transition could happen only if the rentiers somehow manage to remain in power long enough to institutionalize a permanently underemployed underclass. Fourth, even if the U.S. economy were to collapse and the United States became an axial or a status power, the combined economic might of all the other contractualist countries in the world is nearly twice that of the United States. The soft power of the United States in world politics lies not in its power to persuade, but in it being the largest of the contractualist states, and in its willingness to provide the public good of global security since the collapse of the pound sterling in late 1946. If the United States withdrew from its leadership role, the remaining contractualist powers would fill the vacuum. None of them has an economy relatively large enough to enable it to act as a natural leader and principal provider of global security, but it is the temperament of these states that they can easily form an international organization to coordinate and act on their shared security interests, even if some may choose to free ride. Fifth, current events need to be viewed within a larger context. Fernand Braudel pinpoints the rise of the modern world economy as starting around the year 1450 in northwestern Europe.86 The first contractualist economy emerged more than two centuries ago. Since then, contractualist states have [End Page 193] confronted numerous shocks and threats to their systems, including the American Civil War, the Great Depression, two world wars, and the Cold War. The present populist mini-wave and pathologies in U.S. democracy are mere trifling episodes in a larger historical frame.

#### No heg impact

Fettweis 2017

[Christopher, Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University, 5/8/17, “Unipolarity, Hegemony, and the New Peace,” vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 423-451]

Even the most ardent supporters of the hegemonic-stability explanation do not contend that US inﬂuence extends equally to all corners of the globe. The United States has concentrated its policing in what George Kennan used to call “strong points,” or the most important parts of the world: Western Europe, the Paciﬁc Rim, and Persian Gulf.64 By doing so, Washington may well have contributed more to great power peace than the overall global decline in warfare. If the former phenomenon contributed to the latter, by essentially providing a behavioral model for weaker states to emulate, then perhaps this lends some support to the hegemonic-stability case.65 During the Cold War, the United States played referee to a few intra-West squabbles, especially between Greece and Turkey, and provided Hobbesian reassurance to Germany’s nervous neighbors. Other, equally plausible explanations exist for stability in the ﬁrst world, including the presence of a common enemy, democracy, economic interdependence, general war aversion, etc. The looming presence of the leviathan is certainly among these plausible explanations, but only inside the US sphere of inﬂuence. Bipolarity was bad for the nonaligned world, where Soviet and Western intervention routinely exacerbated local conﬂicts. Unipolarity has generally been much better, but whether or not this was due to US action is again unclear. Overall US interest in the affairs of the Global South has dropped markedly since the end of the Cold War, as has the level of violence in almost all regions. There is less US intervention in the political and military affairs of Latin America compared to any time in the twentieth century, for instance, and also less conﬂict. Warfare in Africa is at an all-time low, as is relative US interest outside of counterterrorism and security assistance.66 Regional peace and stability exist where there is US active intervention, as well as where there is not. No direct relationship seems to exist across regions. If intervention can be considered a function of direct and indirect activity, of both political and military action, a regional picture might look like what is outlined in Table 1. These assessments of conﬂict are by necessity relative, because there has not been a “high” level of conﬂict in any region outside the Middle East during the period of the New Peace. Putting aside for the moment that important caveat, some points become clear. The great powers of the world are clustered in the upper right quadrant, where US intervention has been high, but conﬂict levels low. US intervention is imperfectly correlated with stability, however. Indeed, it is conceivable that the relatively high level of US interest and activity has made the security situation in the Persian Gulf and broader Middle East worse. In recent years, substantial hard power investments (Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq), moderate intervention (Libya), and reliance on diplomacy (Syria) have been equally ineffective in stabilizing states torn by conﬂict. While it is possible that the region is essentially unpaciﬁable and no amount of police work would bring peace to its people, it remains hard to make the case that the US presence has improved matters. In this “strong point,” at least, US hegemony has failed to bring peace. In much of the rest of the world, the United States has not been especially eager to enforce any particular rules. Even rather incontrovertible evidence of genocide has not been enough to inspire action. Washington’s intervention choices have at best been erratic; Libya and Kosovo brought about action, but much more blood ﬂowed uninterrupted in Rwanda, Darfur, Congo, Sri Lanka, and Syria. The US record of peacemaking is not exactly a long uninterrupted string of successes. During the turn-of-the-century conventional war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a high-level US delegation containing former and future National Security Advisors (Anthony Lake and Susan Rice) made a half-dozen trips to the region, but was unable to prevent either the outbreak or recurrence of the conﬂict. Lake and his team shuttled back and forth between the capitals with some frequency, and President Clinton made repeated phone calls to the leaders of the respective countries, offering to hold peace talks in the United States, all to no avail.67 The war ended in late 2000 when Ethiopia essentially won, and it controls the disputed territory to this day. The Horn of Africa is hardly the only region where states are free to ﬁght one another today without fear of serious US involvement. Since they are choosing not to do so with increasing frequency, something else is probably affecting their calculations. Stability exists even in those places where the potential for intervention by the sheriff is minimal. Hegemonic stability can only take credit for inﬂuencing those decisions that would have ended in war without the presence, whether physical or psychological, of the United States. It seems hard to make the case that the relative peace that has descended on so many regions is primarily due to the kind of heavy hand of the neoconservative leviathan, or its lighter, more liberal cousin. Something else appears to be at work.

### A2 Pursuit Inevitable

#### Pursuit of heg isn’t inevitable – grand strategy moderates based on relative US power

Kitchen 20 (Nicholas, Department of Politics, University of Surrey, Guildford, United Kingdom, “Why American Grand Strategy Has Changed: International Constraint, Generational Shift, and the Return of Realism”, Global Affairs, Vol. 6) DB

From this review of the strategic postures of the last four US administrations, it’s striking the extent to which each defined itself in contrast to what had come before: if the post-Cold War period really was characterised by continuity, this certainly wasn’t the image incoming administrations had of themselves. Rather, they not only sought, but succeeded, in changing course: we can see significant variation in both second order adjustments to the instruments used to pursue US interests, and also third order shifts in terms of how US interests ought to be constituted. The first two post-Cold War administrations differed in how they understood the goal of primacy, and enacted second-order changes in the means by which the United States pursued it. But the last decade has seen an even more fundamental rethinking in terms of the logics of American foreign policy. Ben Rhodes’ characterisation of the foreign policy establishment as ‘the Blob’ points to the Obama administration’s claim to have recast American grand strategy in ways that explicitly rejected what consensus there was between liberal internationalist democrats and republican neoconservatives. That consensus revolved around the idea that American leadership was indispensable in the world, that hegemonic management should be activist, and that the continued flourishing of the United States at home required liberal democratic governance and open markets abroad. The questioning of this consensus reveals divergent ideas about both how the world works and what policies are most likely to succeed, but also more fundamentally about what it means for the United States to be powerful (Quinn & Kitchen, 2018). Whilst employing very different ideas about the question of what constitutes American power, both Obama and Trump’s foreign policies might be cast as declinist, in that they seek to respond to an international system that is less permissive of the direct application of American power (Kennedy, 1992, pp. 239-240). Obama’s response to perceived decline might be characterised as politeness (Quinn, 2011). Reaffirming commitments to multilateral institutions, reinvigorating alliance partnerships, and above all, seeking to steer clear of policy choices that might further hasten decline – the administration-endorsed bumper stick was “don’t do stupid shit” (Rothkopf, 2014) – were all designed to slow the pace at which the United States’ unipolar position was inevitably eroding, and to extract greater returns from structural power (Kitchen & Cox, 2019). Trump’s response to perceived decline is the opposite, not least because in his dystopic rhetoric Trump used decline as a political strategy, as Oz Hassan highlights in this issue. In a thoughtful reflection on Kennedy’s Rise and Fall thesis in 1991, the Australian historian Neville Meaney wrote that “no treatment of American decline is adequate which does not face up to the problem of American nationalism and its impact on American social psychology.” (Meaney, 1991) It is not simply the nationalist and reactionary character of Trump’s rhetorical response to decline: his mercantilism, alliance backsliding, and focus on great power relations over institution-building has echoes of Nixon’s foreign policy in a former period of economic malaise and status anxiety (Cha & Seo, 2018). Indeed, the United States’ strategic approach during the course of the last decade has echoes of American grand strategy in times when American power was less obviously dominant. Through the nineteenth and early twentieth century, before Washington’s post-war ascension to the position of ‘leader of the free world’, American foreign policy was steeped in realism: geographically focused, cautious, and suspicious of grand designs. In this sense, the Cold War period is an outlier, characterised by ideologically fuelled global ambition. Now that the generation of foreign policy establishment that experienced the Cold War is fading away, replaced by a younger coterie animated by the damage caused by American adventurism in the post-Cold War period, the cognitive frameworks of US foreign policy have changed. For all Trump’s particular capriciousness, a sense of realism is returning to the heart of American grand strategy.