# AFF Answers

## 2AC – Militarization Good

#### Militarization is key to Russia deterrence

**Sherr 17** (Sherr, James. “Policy Implications.” *The Militarization of Russian Policy*, German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2017, pp. 15–17. *JSTOR*, [http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19014.9. Accessed 20 Jul. 2022](http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19014.9.%20Accessed%2020%20Jul.%202022)) // OA

Since February 2014, NATO Allies have become increasingly aware of Russia’s determination to disrupt the cohesion of the West as we have come to define it. However, doubts persist about the degree of strategic thinking that motivates its policy. The picture we have presented not only outlines a strategic framework. It delineates, even by Russian standards, an unusual degree of integration between the political objectives of the state and the expansion of its military power. That expansion is not a Brownian motion. It is a coherent and purpose-driven activity designed to challenge Western dominance of an international order that Russia’s state leadership perceives as harmful to its interests and intrinsically vulnerable. For understandable reasons, many in the West are also addressing the critical question of how our own policy tools might be used to change Russian mindsets and perceptions. But the underlying challenge, much as Putin has aggravated it, is not Russian perceptions, but its interests. And, where European security is concerned, Moscow’s interests can be expected to diverge from ours in significant respects even if Putin is replaced by a successor with different priorities. The more immediate challenge is to change Western mindsets rather than Russian ones. Our homo economicus, business school metrics do not explain very much about Putin’s Russia. State mobilization might impose serious diseconomies on an already overburdened resource base. But as long as it continues, it continues and produces consequences that NATO needs to confront and counter. Those who believe that compromise, vigorous dialogue, or neorealist grand bargains will resolve our differences have been neither watching nor listening. Dialogue will never be more effective than the policy underpinning it. Angela Merkel’s exhaustive discussions with Vladimir Putin have provided useful reinforcement to a moderately tough policy. John Kerry’s indefatigable dialogue with Sergey Lavrov over Syria only amplified weakness. The Kremlin is willing to match us in talking as well as fighting. Its curt and pre-emptive rejection of a grand bargain with the United States at the start of the Trump administration is telling in itself. Russia expects material changes to the structure of international relations and is determined to press its perceived advantages until concessions are forced upon us. The only way to diminish the threats Russia poses is to diminish these advantages. Once that imperative is accepted, we will find that the news is not all that bad. Time does not favor Russia. True enough, Russia has defied repeated Western forecasts about the unsustainability of its economic model. Low oil prices and Western sanctions have brought its proverbial coping mechanisms and organizational ingenuity to the fore. Nevertheless, Russia’s economy is in decline, its technological base is stagnant, and the mobilization reflex merely postpones the day when its structural problems are either addressed or wreak vengeance. Thus, the West has good grounds for strategic patience. However, time is not a strategic actor. It has to be used. For strategic patience to bear fruit, there must be a strategy as well as patience. Deterrence is only a strategy if it addresses the threat to be deterred. As serious students of Russian strategy have noted, war with Russia means war with all of Russia. Yet the war Russia is preparing to fight has limited objectives: to shatter the cohesion of NATO, destroy its forces in the operational theater, and force it to concede defeat at the earliest possible moment. Without confidence in these outcomes, Russia will not go to war. The aim of NATO’s deterrence must be to convince Russia that any war against NATO means war with all of NATO, wherever its forces are based. **To this end, the priority for Western military establishments is not to outmatch the Russians where they are naturally strong, but to invest in the antidotes to these strengths**. The Alliance confronted a similar challenge at the height of the Brezhnev era. Its “dual track” decision of 1979 forced the Soviets to contend with mobile, high-readiness, theaterbased nuclear systems that could have been used to devastating effect at the outset of conflict. Coupled with the exploitation of then revolutionary “smart” non-nuclear U.S. Army weapons and war-fighting concepts (AirLand Battle), the West effectively threatened to annul ten years of Soviet investment in a “strategic offensive operation” against NATO. NATO undertook this task in the teeth of unprecedented internal opposition to its policy (focused on the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) and an intense Soviet active measures campaign in Europe. The result of the new NATO policy was not an apocalyptic confrontation, but a change of course for the USSR and a process of mutual de-escalation of military threats and political tensions in Europe. Today’s conditions are in one respect more promising than those that confronted NATO 35 to 40 years ago. Gerasimov’s anxiety, “the destruction of military forces and key state assets in several hours,” derives from “prompt global strike” and shorter range non-nuclear systems against which Russia might only be able to threaten nuclear retaliation. Strategically, they have the potential to threaten assets critical to war-waging and state management without producing nuclear devastation. Operationally, they might cut several of Russia’s pathways to escalation dominance that presently exist. From a Russian perspective, this new generation of weapons is destabilizing**; from a Western perspective, the opposite**. Investment in these systems will not absolve NATO of the need to maintain a coherent nuclear posture. But when combined with other means of enhancing the West’s robustness and resilience, it will constrain Russia’s ability to fight war on its terms. If it cannot do so, it is most unlikely to fight at all. The observation of Finland’s leading expert on Russian military policy is worth citing: In the Georgian and Ukrainian crises and Syrian air operations, Russia has demonstrated its high readiness for limited military operations to secure and promote its national interests in situations when, according to its estimation, success is easily gained and risk of unfavourable escalation is low.36 In these respects, Vladimir Putin is a good steward of Russian tradition. Only two conditions have provoked Russia during his tenure: weaknesses (Ukraine in conditions of state collapse and Syria after a geopolitical vacuum had been created by the United States) and bluff (NATO’s ill-judged 2008 promise that Georgia and Ukraine “will become members of NATO”). No example can be found of Russia attacking a stronger opponent that understood its own strength. **A strong opponent afraid of its own strength is only asking for trouble**. The simple and most basic object of deterrence is to persuade would-be opponents that force is not the solution to their problems. **But it is not simple to achieve**. In 1987 the Soviet Union concluded that  “the application of military means to resolve any dispute is inadmissible under current conditions.”37 It is not beyond our means to bring Russia to the same conclusion

## 2ac – Small States

#### NATO and the US have a vested interest in protecting and incorporating smaller states

James Jay, 8-10-2018, "Why Small States Matter to Big Powers," National Interest, https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-small-states-matter-big-powers-28362//CDMoney

Nobody is bigger than the United States of America. No big power more appreciates small powers. No small state will find a better friend than the United States. In an era of great power competition, “small” matters a good deal. Little nations are not sand to be ground between the great wheels of major powers. They are made up of people, not pawns. Citizens in small states have the same hopes, aspirations and natural rights as those in world powers. These people have every reason to expect and demand a life of freedom, peace and prosperity. Further, it is in the interests of bigger states to help small states flourish. Great powers, if wise, will support the best hopes of smaller states. There are three reasons why the United States, in particular, ought to take small states seriously. Sonovia 1. Geography Matters. In geopolitics—as in real estate—a critical consideration is “location, location, location.” To a major power, a country’s greatest asset might be its map coordinates rather than the size of its arsenal or bank account. Geography matters when it comes to economic integration, transportation, energy distribution and physical security. Even in a digitized world, the freedom to move people, goods, and services across physical space is a valuable commodity. Recognizing the importance of connecting dots on the ground is not an argument for hardened spheres of control (such as during the Cold War) or carving up the world (like seventeenth-century mercantilists). On the other hand, there is a case to be made for building bridges between like-minded nations that want to live together with surety in commerce and share peaceful borders. Thus, a small state in the right place can be very important to a big power. Iceland is a case in point. Even though it has no armed forces, the island’s location makes the nation a lynchpin in transatlantic security. That’s the reason Iceland was included as one of twelve founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Without question, Iceland’s strategic location is of far greater importance to U.S. security than the state’s size and resources would suggest. Washington should be working hard to make that bilateral relationship even stronger. Part of the reason NATO continues to keep the membership door open is because there are nations still not included whose accession would enhance collective security due to their location. These include Macedonia, Georgia, Ukraine and Kosovo. And there are states in other regions where stronger bilateral relations would greatly serve U.S. interests. Closer ties with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, for example, would further U.S. efforts to sustain a free and open Indo-Pacific. In the Middle East, few states are smaller than Jordan. Yet, a peaceful, prosperous Jordan is a keystone for regional stability, and regional stability is a vital interest of the United States—as important to this administration as it should have been to the last one. Similarly, Tunisia is an important state for extending an umbrella of regional stability in the greater Middle East to North Africa. 2. Freedom Matters. Like-minded nations make better partners. One of the reasons NATO works is because the alliance is a partnership of free nation-states. The foundational rationale of the transatlantic alliance is that free states have the right to associate for the purpose of collective security. To close NATO’s open door would undermine what NATO stands for: the right of free peoples to choose their future.

#### **If not already, aff increases coordination and quality of life for smaller states**

James Jay, 8-10-2018, "Why Small States Matter to Big Powers," National Interest, https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-small-states-matter-big-powers-28362//CDMoney

Building Bridges to Small Nations The United States has an inherent advantage over adversarial powers in partnering with small nations. China and Russia don’t have allies. They have underlings. No country wants to be a suburb of Beijing or Moscow. America, however, has to up its game. Here is a ten-step process to get the job done. Step 1. Set the Right Objectives for Friends. In reducing vulnerabilities of friends, allies and strategic partners to adversarial influences, American objectives should be framed less in driving particular political outcomes or agendas (e.g., promoting marriage equality) than in achieving good stable governance, strong institutions and a reduction in corruption. This will make our partners more resilient and self-confident. Step 2. Avoid Us-or-Them-ism. The goal of a small-state strategy is not to exclude adversarial competitors. For example, America can’t ask countries not to do business with China. After all, the United States does business with China. The goal is not to get countries to takes sides but to engage and help them act consistent with their own interests—eschewing, for instance, economic engagement detrimental to national security or that undermines the rule of law and good governance. Step 2. Promote Economic Freedom. China and Russia can buy influence because, in poor nations with weak governance, a little money goes a long far. The best way to make these states more resistant to malicious influence is to help them become wealthier and better governed. This is best accomplished by promoting economic freedom. Step 3. Enter Free Trade Agreements (FTA). Trade agreements fundamentally have to be about liberalizing trade and making markets freer. That said, prioritizing agreements with states where the United States is seeking friendship, and common cause makes sense. America, for example, ought to have an FTA with Tunisia. Step 4. Be There. In many small, like-minded nations, all the United States has to do to win friends is, simply, to be there. Too much American engagement rests on foreign assistance and not enough on building human-to-human relationships and a more robust presence by the U.S. private sector.

## Author Indicts

#### Balko is biased!

McMichael 16 (Christopher, PhD in Politics from Rhodes University, research include organized crime, Libertarian Marxism, and Fascism, “Pacification and Police: A critique of the Police Militarization Thesis,” November 29 2016, https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569)

 Strikingly, and little commented on by liberal or leftist outlets, some of the most vocal proponents of the ‘militarization’ thesis (at least within the context of the United States) have been from the Libertarian Right. An article published by the Foundation for Economic Education (FEE) portrays the disturbing arrival of a ‘new breed of cop’ with a ‘military mentality’ ([Greenhunt 2008](https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569)), while an essay in the journal of the Independent Institute claims that a long standing separation between the domestic police and military functions of the US government has been irrevocably breached ([Hall and Coyne 2013](https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569): 501). By far the most influential advocate of the militarization doctrine is Radley Balko, a former writer and analyst for libertarian institutions Reason Magazine and the Cato Institute, the latter of which has intimate ties with the powerful Koch Brothers, who have also increasingly become concerned with police reform. Balko, currently of the Huffington Post, is a prolific and outspoken journalist, who has written countless media articles and policy reports and two books on the subject: Overkill: The Rise of Paramilitary Police Raids in America ([Balko 2006](https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569)) and the more recent Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America’s Police Forces ([Balko 2013a](https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569)). [Balko (2006)](https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569) maintains that domestic law enforcement has become dangerously invasive: ‘Americans have long maintained that a man’s home is his castle and that he has the right to defend it from unlawful intruders. Unfortunately, that right may be disappearing’ (p. iv). His main contention is that such tactics have encouraged a dangerous blurring between the police and military, in which the police work of protecting public safety is confused with the military work of seeking and destroying enemies ([Balko 2006](https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569): 15). Despite Balko’s work focusing primarily on the United States, it has transcended its North American trappings, with his work referenced in a report prepared by the South African government, which called for the ‘demilitarization’ of the national police force ([National Development Plan 2012](https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569): 392). Although his work is often cited in progressive or radical publications, Balko’s politics are squarely on the right: getting his start with Fox News, and then working long stints for Republican Party aligned think tanks, calling for the privatization of social welfare and prisons and, of course, defending the public influence of the Koch Brothers ([Ames & Levine 2013](https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0309816816678569)).

## AT 1033 is militarized

#### 1033 is largely not militarized

Mendenhall 21 ( Michael, “Consideratons For Acquiring Excess Military Equipment by Police Leaders”, PhD from Western Michigan Administration on Publican Administration and Philosophy, Published by Western Michigan University, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2599062490?parentSessionId=CYdTyFk9fAuCK3M32D8nUg2Hel7MeXMgGlOk3ZD92vY%3D&pq-origsite=primo&accountid=14667>)

It is important to note that according to the Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO, 2020), 5% of the excess property that law enforcement agencies receive are small arms (handguns), and less than 1% are tactical vehicles. Some of the weapons and tactical vehicles that can be acquired include: MRAPs (Mine Resistant Vehicles), other armored vehicles, night vision (sights, binoculars, goggles and lights), aircraft (planes and helicopters), machine guns (5.56mm and 7.62mm rifles) and or magazines with no ammunition. The vast majority of property acquired through the program includes clothing, office supplies, tools, and rescue equipment and is thus not militarized (LESO, 2020).

## AT Democracy Impact

#### Case solves the impact to the K – NATO can promote democratic reform

\*NOTE: This card could be cross-applied to the perm – warrants of card do say how gov is key to democracy (2nd paragraph )

Poast and Chincilla 20 (Paul and Alexandra; associate professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago; Rosenwald Fellow in US Foreign Policy and International Security and Niehaus Postdoctoral Fellow at Dartmouth College & Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Chicago, Assistance professor at Texas A&M’s Bush School of Government and Public service, “Good for democracy? Evidence from the 2004 NATO Expansion”, April 30 2020, <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6.pdf>)

In what way should one expect NATO to enhance democratic development? After all, as highlighted above, democracy is a core principle of the institution. Much of the existing work on NATO and democratic development points to several avenues of possible influence: socialization, guidance from NATO about how to create and implement reforms, NATO pressure to implement reforms, and legitimizing new democracies by helping them provide the public good of security through NATO membership. It is important to note that each of these mechanisms for how NATO could prompt reform should begin operating before full NATO membership is achieved. Once prospective members are given a promise of membership in the form of the MAP, they will be brought into close contact with NATO members and therefore exposed to the socialization mechanism. If domestic reform is a necessary condition for NATO membership, prospective members participating in the MAP should begin reforming so that they can reap the benefits of membership. Finally, if democratic reforms made to gain NATO membership persist, NATO membership should also be associated with higher levels of democracy in new member states. Below we discuss each of these means for NATO influence proposed in the literature.

First, NATO may have a subtle impact on future member states by socializing military and civilian leaders from states seeking membership to respect democratic norms. Democracy is dependent not only on the formal institutions of a country, but also on whether elites are willing to abide by democratic constraints on their power rather than undermine or dismantle them. The example of Poland’s recent democratic backsliding despite the former presence of formal democratic institutions illustrates this point. Even when democratic reforms preceded NATO involvement, NATO could still have a democratizing influence by socializing military and civilian elites to respect democratic reforms—particularly civilian control of the military. NATO created the conditions for regular, institutionalized interaction between elites from partner states and longtime member states within the institutional framework of the alliance and the Partnership for Peace (PfP), making socialization possible. NATO taught military officers and civilian defense policymakers who had served most of their professional lives under a communist system about the norms of a democracy and their role in it (Gheciu [2005b](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR24)). This socialization logic outlined by Alexandra Gheciu and others is not in conflict with our argument, as we measure changes in democratic institutions rather than changes in elite attitudes. However, recent democratic backsliding in some NATO countries indicates that either the right elites were not socialized by NATO or the main effect of NATO socialization was teaching elites to value civilian control of the military and continued engagement with NATO.

Elite socialization began well before NATO membership, with collective briefings, individualized MAPs for each prospective member state, NATO-led workshops, military advisers from NATO member states, and professional education programs (Gheciu [2005b](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR24)). NATO used these cooperative activities to teach the goals and norms of the alliance and assess the commitment of PfP countries to them (Gheciu [2005a](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR23)). Joint military exercises, in addition to augmenting the capability aggregation of the alliance, allowed military elites from NATO states and prospective member states to interact. Military education programs—such as the NATO Defence College and programs through partner states such as the year-long International Fellows program at the US National Defense University—played a similar role in building military capability while creating space for socialization through military-to-military interactions.

Second, even when countries intended to make democratic reforms on their own initiative, they often lacked institutional knowledge about how to reform. NATO stepped in to provide assistance and advice to prospective members regarding how to enact democratic reforms. Democracy advising was provided through the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and the associated Rose-Roth seminars. According to Trine Flockhart ([2004](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR18)), the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and Rose-Roth seminars brought together parliamentarians from NATO and partner states to ‘familiarize legislators with key security issues and debates, to promote the development of appropriate civil–military relations, and to facilitate the sharing of expertise and experience in parliamentary practice and procedures.’ These seminars also played a ‘very important social function’ as policymakers from NATO and partner countries built professional networks with one another (Flockhart [2004](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR18)). Civilian defense policymakers and military officers from NATO partner countries were also able to participate in the NATO-adjacent George C. Marshall Center, which has over 13,300 alumni. Courses at the Marshall Center include discussion of international law, democracy, rule of law, and human rights alongside more traditional security topics (Marshall Center [2019](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR22)).

Third, NATO provided pressure for specific reforms through direct communication with a country’s NATO liaisons and naming and shaming countries slacking on reforms. For example, a US Congressional Research Service report released in 1995 raised concerns that Poland was not ready for NATO membership. The report stated: ‘Initiation into NATO nevertheless may hinge even more on publication of a democratic Constitution and the legal basis for civilian control. Meanwhile, the Minister of Defense and many senior officers who set policy and shape opinions have become mired in political wrangling over control of the armed forces’ (quoted in Epstein [2005](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR15), 254–285). As Rachel Epstein notes, this report was widely publicized in the Polish media with the effect of shaming Polish officials into complying, given that NATO membership was by this time an established national foreign policy goal. When the chief of the Polish General Staff, General Tadeusz Wilecki, opposed increased civilian control of the military, an unflattering New York Times article put sufficient pressure on Polish president Aleksander Kwasniewski that he removed Wilecki (Epstein [2006](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR16), 280–281).

By utilizing naming and shaming tactics and building alliances with pro-reform domestic politicians, NATO successfully shepherded a select group of partner states through enacting civilian control of the military and more internationalized defense policies (Epstein [2005](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR15)). Although Poland joined NATO in the 1999 wave of enlargement, one could argue that the logic of pressure for reforms was still relevant for the countries that joined NATO in 2004. The smaller reforms of hiring personnel supportive of democratic norms and building political coalitions in support of democracy that Epstein highlights are consistent with what we find in our quantitative analysis. Some states that rapidly enacted democratic reforms after transition to democracy in the early 1990s made small improvements under NATO tutelage, even though their average democracy scores after reaching NATO applicant status and membership remained similar to what they had been before. Other NATO-induced changes, such as the firing of Wilecki in Poland, may have been crucial for continued progress even though our quantitative data do not measure them. NATO’s value, then, may be in encouraging states already democratizing to persist in maintaining democracy despite challenges from domestic elites. However, any democratizing effect of NATO would be concentrated on the premembership period, as democracy is in practice not a condition for remaining a NATO member.

Finally, NATO can assist in providing the public good of security, which can be critical for the legitimacy of some new democracies. Poast and Urpelainen ([2018](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR49)) argue that leaders in transitional democracies use, and often must create, international organizations to consolidate democratic rule and improve their ability to distribute public goods to the populations under their rule. Public goods are broadly defined as policies that benefit large constituencies in society. Examples of public goods include internal and external security (Loader and Walker [2007](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR40); Bueno de Mesquita et al. [1999](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR6)), public infrastructure that increases investment (Henisz [2002](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR29)), free and fair elections (Donno [2010](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR14)), reduction of corruption (Banerjee [1997](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR2)), and environmental protection (VanDeveer and Dabelko [2001](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR55)). Providing such goods is critical to the survival of leaders in democratizing states. But because autocratic developing countries have little need or capacity to improve the provision of public goods (Bueno de Mesquita et al. [2003](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR7); Wintrobe [1998](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR59)), democratization leaves leaders in newly democratic regimes with a unique challenge; they face high expectations for public good provision, yet their administrative apparatus has little experience providing public goods (Haggard and Kaufman [1997](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR28)). Therefore, newly democratic governments can benefit from outside expertise on public goods provision, namely that offered by international organizations (IOs). IOs can assist democratizing states in the provision of public goods. IOs provide a venue through which members can pool limited resources or coordinate on policy reforms even with limited institutional capacity. IOs assist in highly technical tasks, including advising on governance capacity, monitoring elections, and facilitating learning about democratic institutions. IOs can help governments of transitional democracies govern effectively and acquire the resources to supply public goods to the newly expanded electorate.

The credibility of the Baltic states’ democratic institutions and democratic process were tied to providing the public good of security through establishing and maintaining effective sovereignty. This meant that preventing interference from Russia was critical to the survival of Baltic democracy. Historically, the Baltics were classic buffer states that had been repeatedly occupied and/or annexed by the major European powers over the centuries (Fazal [2007](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR17); Snyder [2010](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR53)). But the governments of the Baltic states could not provide security from their own resources. Indeed, the security forces of these states were nonexistent. Kasekamp and Veebel ([2007](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR34), 13) point out that ‘unlike the Warsaw Pact countries, the Baltic states had no military establishment or diplomatic service of their own during the Cold War. These had to be built from scratch in the 1990s.’ Zalkans ([1999](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR60), 2), the former Latvian national security adviser, remarked in 1999 that, upon gaining independence, the Latvian military had no military threat analysis, defense concept, defense plan, or knowledge of budgetary processes or force planning. Former Lithuanian defense minister Linas Linkevičius labeled the status of the Lithuanian military ‘a mess,’ while Danish defense minister Hans Haekkerup observed that the Baltic states’ officers would need substantial retraining, as their only professional soldiers had been Soviet trained (Ito [2013](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR31), 241–242). Furthermore, a 1993 report by the International Institute for Strategic Studies noted that progress in establishing forces would be slow because of a lack of financial resources and necessary expertise, a general reluctance to volunteer for service, and the various exemptions from conscript service (Rudzīte-Stejskala [2013](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR51), 171). NATO Commander of Allied forces in Northern Europe Sir Garry Johnson remarked that the Baltic states ‘started from zero’ (quoted in Ito [2013](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR31), 242).

Security, in the view of the Baltic states, could only be acquired by foreign help, and this left just one option: the Western democracies. In fact, the Baltic states never considered alternatives to seeking membership in Western institutions, namely NATO. For example, Raivo Vare, the Estonian state minister, asserted: ‘The only real possibility is NATO’ (quoted in Lepik [2004](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR38), 164). NATO’s PfP initiative was a useful first step in fulfilling the needs of the Baltic states. PfP, approved by the existing NATO members at the autumn 1993 NATO summit, allowed NATO to engage in peacekeeping operations with Central and Eastern European countries. By the mid-1990s the USA, sensing the need to craft a policy regarding the Baltic states, devised the Baltic Action Plan (BAP), a three-track process for integrating the Baltic states into the West: expand US-Baltic cooperation, expand US-Nordic cooperation to assist the Baltics, and expand US involvement in mediating Baltic-Russian differences. This was followed by the creation of the MAP. When the first Eastern European states (the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) officially entered NATO in 1999, the other NATO hopefuls embarked on the MAP. The MAP was a series of workshops in which NATO staff offered advice, assistance, and support for countries wishing to join NATO, and only a subgroup of PfP members were invited to take part in the MAP. Indeed, whereas PfP included countries as unlikely to join NATO as Russia (because of historical animosity toward NATO) and Uzbekistan (because of geographic location), embarking on the MAP meant that a country was now on a path to membership. As one senior NATO adviser remarked, participating in the MAP meant that ‘there was an open door and it just seemed to make sense to provide sensible advice’ (quoted in Rudzīte-Stejskala [2013](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-020-00236-6#ref-CR51), 178–180). Critically for democratic development, this advising included technical assistance in reforming civil–military relations and supreme command of the military. In the specific case of the Baltic states, setting out on a formal path to NATO membership also accorded their democratic regimes legitimacy by enabling them to provide for the external security of their states. In other words, NATO offered a security umbrella necessary for democratic development to endure

## Deterrence Theory Good

### General

#### Deterrence theory already considers possibilities of failure but still gives the logical conclusion that the aff is most likely to succeed – critique of the theory only provides examples of instances where the theory failed, but fails to take down the logics of the theory – it’s a hasty generalization

Achen and Snidal 89 (Christopher H. and Duncan, professor of politics at Princeton University, professor of international relations at Oxford University, “Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies,” 1989, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/world-politics/article/abs/rational-deterrence-theory-and-comparative-case-studies/05B3C8641D5EF6F9A36067EEA0210CCE#:~:text=Several%20recent%20books%20have%20argued%20that%20comparative%20case,This%20paper%20shows%20that%20such%20contentions%20are%20unwarranted.)

Conversely, if a deterrable initiator believes that it would very likely not be in the defender's interest to retaliate, or that the defender lacks the means or the will to do so, the initiator will attack. Thus, under conventional rational-choice assumptions, when the attacker is deterrable, successful deterrence turns on the defender's credibility. If the latter can convince the attacker that he has the political and military ability to fight, and that the prize (or his reputation for fighting when challenged) is worth more to him than the cost of the war, then, and only then, will a deterrable initiator be deterred.24 This simple model is less brittle than sometimes thought. Its propositions are contingent: if the expected punishment exceeds the gain, then opponents will be deterred. Thus, for example, the model implies that some conceivable punishment would deter, but not that any particular one will, nor even any feasible one. Put more strongly, the model implies that deterrence will fail for sufficiently determined attackers. Not all conceivable opponents are deterrable.25 Critics of rational deterrence sometimes write as if failures of deterrence were equivalent to failures of deterrence theory. Levy, for example, notes, "this is an ad hoc hypothesis which cannot technically be derived from any formal theory of deterrence."26 The truth is that the theory actually predicts some breakdowns. When deterrence fails because the retaliatory threat is absent, incredible, or less valuable than the prize, the theory has forecast perfectly. Rational deterrence theory implies that deterrence will not always be successful. Rational deterrence is very much an ideal-type explanation. No sensible person pretends that it summarizes typical deterrence decision making well, or that it exhausts what is to be said about any one historical case. Yet it has dominated discussion in all traditions of deterrence research, including historical investigations. For example, George and Smoke criticize rational deterrence for its assumption that a government is a rational actor and can be treated as if it were a single person.2 ? Yet the same authors summarize their case-study evidence as follows: In almost every historical case examined, we found evidence that the initi- ator tried to satisfy himself before acting that the risks of the particular op- tion he chose could be calculated and, perhaps more importantly, con- trolled by him so as to give his choice of action the character of a rationally calculated, acceptable risk.28 The rational unitary-actor model is not easily evaded. The power of rational deterrence theory is conceptual, not mathematical. It derives from the underlying logical cohesion and consistency with a set of simple first principles, not from the particular language in which it is expressed. In consequence, the model has been astonishingly fecund; both for theory and for policy. Its surprising implications, now familiar from the literature, include "the rationality of irrationality," the dangers of total disarmament, and the value of aiming for strategic equivalence between the superpowers.29 Perhaps most importantly, it was rational deterrence theory that sensitized policy makers to the negative aspect of defensive systems such as civil defense, the ABM, and SDI, which make first strikes less dangerous. The point is strongly counterintuitive; indeed, Aleksey Kosygin told Lyndon Johnson at Glassboro that he didn't understand it.30 But this surprising conclusion is a clear implication of rational deterrence theory. Contrary to George and Smoke's view, rational deterrence theory has proved itself in practical policy applications. No other theoretical perspective has had nearly the impact on American foreign policy, certainly not the conclusions of the case-study literature. Far from being an abstract, deductivistic theory developed in a policy vacuum, rational deterrence theory has repeatedly taken inspiration from the most pressing policy questions of the day, from decisions of bomber-basing in the 1950s to SDI in the 1980s. It has set the terms of the debate, and has often influenced the outcome. One may choose to applaud or decry its impact, but one cannot deny that the theory of rational deterrence, like any good theory, has been of immense practical importance.

### AT Empirical Ev

#### Their empirical examples are only generalizations NOT reasons why deterrence theory in this instance fail – that a misuse of their case studies

Achen and Snidal 89 (Christopher H. and Duncan, professor of politics at Princeton University, professor of international relations at Oxford University, “Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies,” 1989, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/world-politics/article/abs/rational-deterrence-theory-and-comparative-case-studies/05B3C8641D5EF6F9A36067EEA0210CCE#:~:text=Several%20recent%20books%20have%20argued%20that%20comparative%20case,This%20paper%20shows%20that%20such%20contentions%20are%20unwarranted.)

Analysts who employ case studies of deterrence have done well at producing lists of variables that influence deterrence success, along with certain empirical generalizations about how different types of crises unfold. But they have produced no impressive general propositions to compare with those of rational deterrence. Case-study generalizations are not a substitute for theorizing; empirical laws should not be mistaken for theoretical propositions. More than anything else, the hallmark of good theory is a fecundity that logically entails novel,sometimes surprising, insights and predictions. Inductive "theory" lacks this fecundity because it contains too few logical constraints. Categories can be multiplied to fit all cases. "Surprises" emerge not from the generalization, but from the case. Hence, we often cannot tell a consequential finding from an artifact; and when we succeed, the next case makes us begin all over again. By contrast, deductive theoretical propositions are of interest precisely because they interconnect with one another and prevent arbitrary multiplication of explanatory categories. The investigator is forced to be coherent. Multiple case studies are also no substitute for statistical testing of theoretical propositions; contingent empirical generalizations should not be confused with confirmed statistical regularities. Here again, the informal procedures of case-study analysis provide too few constraints on the imagination of the analyst. In consequence, empirical evidence from case studies is rarely strong enough to falsify a theory. In the case-study literature on deterrence, these weaknesses have appeared, first, in selection bias—the tendency to oversample deterrence failures—and, second, in the uncritical use of decision makers' own reconstructions of their thinking. Each of these virtually guarantees a negative evaluation of rational deterrence theory, no matter how well it actually performs. Only statistical analysis, with its formal criteria for inference, is likely in practice to provide honest tests of theories. Case studies are an important complement to both theory-building and statistical investigations, for precisely the reason Russett and George indicate: they allow a close examination of historical sequences in the search for causal processes.79 The analyst is able to identify plausible causal varw Russett (fn. 53); George (fn. 6). RATIONAL DETERRENCE: ACHEN & SNIDAL 169 iables, a task essential to theory construction and testing. Comparison of historical cases to theoretical predictions provides a sense of whether the theoretical story is compelling, and yields indispensable prior knowledge for more formal tests of explanatory adequacy. The method also generates novel empirical generalizations, which pose puzzles and challenges for theory to explain. In all these ways, case studies provide guidance in the revision and reformulation of analytic theory to account for a broader range of phenomena. Indeed, analytic theory cannot do without case studies. Because they are simultaneously sensitive to data and theory, case studies are more useful for these purposes than any other methodological tool. Too often, however, their findings have been interpreted as bodies of theory and tests of explanatory power. It is to these misuses that our criticisms have been directed.

## AT Verification Procedure Fail in Deterrence Theory

#### That’s descriptivist fallacy – deterrence theory doesn’t have to prove that the decision maker’s mental choices perfectly align, just that the consequences are aligned with the theory

Achen and Snidal 89 (Christopher H. and Duncan, professor of politics at Princeton University, professor of international relations at Oxford University, “Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies,” 1989, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/world-politics/article/abs/rational-deterrence-theory-and-comparative-case-studies/05B3C8641D5EF6F9A36067EEA0210CCE#:~:text=Several%20recent%20books%20have%20argued%20that%20comparative%20case,This%20paper%20shows%20that%20such%20contentions%20are%20unwarranted.)

There is a second objection to the empirical testing of rational deterrence in comparative case studies—namely, that the verification procedure fails to engage the rational deterrence theory of how states behave. In particular, rational deterrence is implicitly misconstrued as a theory of how decision makers think. Case study analysts have often expressed the opinion that, if decision makers do not really carry out the appropriate mental calculations, rational deterrence theory does not apply. This argument is the "descriptivist fallacy." As a glance at any appropriate text will show, the axioms and conclusions of utility theory refer only to choices. Mental calculations are never mentioned: the theory makes no reference to them. Indeed, a major reason for the various axiomatizations of expected-utility theory is to show that decision makers need not calculate. If they simply respond to incentives in certain natural ways, their behavior will be describable by utility functions.65 Rapoport puts it this way: Now, in being asked to choose between the two [lottery] tickets, the man is not asked to calculate anything. He is asked simply to choose between the two. It is from his choices that the theoretician will construct the man's util- ity scale on which all the outcomes will be assigned numbers (utilities).66 To our knowledge, no one who does rational-choice theorizing disputes this point, but it seems not to be widely understood. Rational deterrence theory does contain some minimal psychological content: for example, the initiator must realize that the defender exists and threatens to defend. But rational deterrence is agnostic about the actual calculations decision makers undertake. It holds that they will act as if they solved certain mathematical problems, whether or not they actually solve them. Just as Steffi Graf plays tennis as if she did rapid computations in Newtonian physics (and in game theory, too—at least against Navratilova), so rational deterrence theory predicts that decision makers will decide whether to go to war as if they did expected-utility calculations. But they need not actually perform them.67 To avoid misunderstandings, we want to point out that our point here has nothing to do with Friedman's famous argument that the truth of assumptions need not matter.68 Friedman maintained that a theory might sometimes work well for certain purposes, even though its assumptions were known to be false. We have our doubts; but whatever its merits, this line of reasoning has no bearing on our argument. Our point is that even if decision makers do not actually calculate, or if they rationalize their actions after the fact with foolish calculations, the assumptions of rational choice theory may yet remain true. Understanding what rational deterrence demands of decision makers is important because it sharply limits what counts against the theory. A proper understanding of the theory eliminates most of the arguments in the historical deterrence literature that are supposed to overturn it. Consider, for example, the fact that many decision makers do not seem to think in terms of probabilities at all. This point is made by Steinbruner with respect to Kennedy's remark that he faced certain impeachment if he did nothing about the Cuban missiles;69 Stein has made it in connection with Anwar Sadat's forecasts of various foreign policy consequences, for Egypt in the early 1970s.70 Both authors maintain that, because each decision maker failed to discuss probabilities in situations where rational deterrence theory implies he should, rational deterrence is inaccurate in describing what happened. Related arguments have been advanced by Jervis and by Betts.7 ' These conclusions do not follow. Let us repeat that rational deterrence theory deals with choices, not mental calculations. It makes no predictions about what decision makers say influenced them, only about what actually did so. The distinction is particularly important in the case of postdecision reconstructions. As diplomatic historians have long been aware, the historical record often differs sharply from decision makers' memories, even memories about their own thoughts at the time.72 Since the critics of deterrence wish to adduce evidence that is not only dubious but apparently irrelevant to the theory under discussion, they bear the burden of proof. They must show that no plausible psychological mechanisms could have introduced a gap between the reality and the reconstruction, and they must demonstrate that what decision makers say influenced them is identical with what actually happened. Neither Stein nor Steinbruner have made such a case. Indeed, several plausible psychological mechanisms would render their evidence irrelevant—mechanisms of the sort that they and others have often put forward as key factors in international decision making. Suppose, then, that decision makers actually behave according to rational-choice theory. Indeed, no matter what he said, it is hard to believe that Kennedy's Cubanmissile decisions were unaffected by the difference between a.possibility of impeachment, a livelihood of impeachment, and a certainty of impeachment. But suppose that, like the rest of us, Kennedy subsequently bolstered his decision by thinking and saying that any other choice would have brought on unpleasant political consequences with certainty. If so, he would speak in the apparently nonrational language that he actually used, but his behavior would be predicted perfectly by rationality assumptions. Obvious competing interpretations like this one have not been excluded by the critics of rational deterrence. It is not easy to do so. Indeed, no matter how detailed the historical records, disagreements break out routinely over interpretations of decision makers' thoughts and intentions.73 The degree of uncertainty in historical interpretations of motive and intention is often substantial, and conclusions deriving from such interpretations must be discounted appropriately. Yet case-study analysts usually provide no assessment of the reliability of their historical judgments. In particular, without a detailed showing that the questionable memories of decision makers represent the historical process accurately, no amount of evidence about their apparent calculation errors is relevant to the issue of whether rational deterrence theory predicts decision making.^ In the absence of such a showing, rational deterrence theory stands unrebutted.75 It is not our central point here to set out one particular list of inferential slips by case-study analysts. After all, one can imagine case studies that select cases in a nonprejudicial fashion, and that take proper account of the fallibility in assessments of decision makers' intentions. Well-designed case-study tests may not be decisive, but they can be highly enlightening and strongly persuasive.?6 They are certainly an indispensable first step before proceeding to statistical methods—a point quantitative researchers have too often ignored at their peril. In principle, case studies are capable of doing everything statistical analysis can do; they may simply replace symbols with words and replicate the random samples, precise definitions, and rigorous inferences of statistical methods. But in practice, inferential rigor is not the best tool for what case studies should accomplish, and the comparative method works best when it enforces no such discipline. As Jack Snyder notes, "The best analysts in the [case study] field have always used a rough-and-ready version of the scientific method," which they have identified, not with the powerful counterintuitive logic of the real McCoy, but rather with the substantially tamer "self-conscious, systematic application of commonsense rules of inference."77 When the purposes of comparative case studies are properly understood, informality is the right choice. Creativity is enhanced when historical cases can be chosen at liberty and analyzed in accord with the investigator's intuitions. The great many degrees of freedom in these studies are inordinately helpful in finding useful variables and producing empirical generalizations. Like all good things, however, this free play for unaided common sense has a price. Used in isolation from scientific methods, it creates inevitable inferential errors and makes decisive theory verification well-nigh impossible. In case studies of rational deterrence, the consequences have been both predictable and devastating for the credibility of their conclusions

## AT: Root Case – War

#### War is caused by leadership succession, democracy necessary to curtail

Chares **Lipson**, 20**13**. Leadership Succession as a Cause of War: The Structural Advantage of Democracies. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 112–38, doi:10.1515/9781400850723.112.

The last chapter dealt  with all four  sources of the  democratic contracting advantage: transparency, audience costs, constitutionalism, and continuity of regimes. This chapter continues the examination of regime continuity, focusing on leadership succession. **Succession crises are a frequent source of wars**. **Democracies are systematically better at averting** them and, hence, at averting the **wars** that stem from them. Because democracies have solved the succession problem internally, they avoid its most dangerous consequences externally. My main point, however, is not simply that succession crises produce wars. They obviously do. My aim is to show how they block the path to peace, mainly by creating vast uncertainties and obstructing long-term bargains that could prevent war.

## Perm

#### The aff uses *perfect deterrence theory,* that can enable demilitarization AND strengthening security.

Chong Woo 20 – KIM CHONG WOO, Author and Attorney at Kim & Chang, 2020 (“Implications of Perfect Deterrence Theory for South Korea” *Asan Institute for Policy Studies,* September 1st, Available online at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep26115.3?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents>, accessed 07/22/22

Perfect Deterrence Theory has been developed as an alternative to classical deterrence theory. We have become interested in the theory as it seems to be aesthetically more appealing than classical deterrence theory. It provides another way of looking at deterrence but, this time, without its internal structure plagued by logical inconsistency. As Frank Zagare & Kilgour, the creators of Perfect Deterrence Theory, explain in their co-authored book ‘Perfect Deterrence,’3 classical deterrence theory suffers from what is known as the paradox of mutual deterrence. Classical deterrence e theory hinges on the fact that the status quo is reinforced as the cost of conflict becomes higher. However, logic dictates that the status quo is not a rational choice when both States (A & B) prefer capitulation to conflict when challenged. The status quo is not a Nash equilibrium7 in the standard 2 x 2 game of Chicken in which there are four outcomes (i.e., A wins, B wins, status quo and conflict). The game of Chicken was a tool favored by classical deterrence theorists as it captured essential aspects of deterrence during the age of nuclear confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, as it was then. In this game, conflict is understandably assumed to be the worst choice and, hence, the contradiction ensues. The proponents of classical deterrence theory are yet to provide a satisfactory resolution to this logical inconsistency although various attempts have been made.8 Perfect Deterrence Theory was also developed to overcome the empirical deficiencies of classical deterrence theory. Zagare & Kilgour point out that the ‘power imbalance’ is a poor indicator for measuring the likelihood of war as there have been many instances of war fought between two states with roughly equal power, World War II between Britain and Germany for one. There is little empirical support for associating the power imbalance with the likelihood of war. It is a prerequisite that a good theory must stand up reasonably well to empirical evidence. Overall, Perfect Deterrence Theory’s predictions are more in agreement with empirical findings. Here are some distinguishing features of Perfect Deterrence Theory. As explained, in classical deterrence theory, the cost of conflict plays a ‘central’ role in deterring an adversary. Hence, it makes a perfect sense for a state to stock up on more powerful weapons to deter the adversary. These weapons will unleash more destructive power, thereby significantly raising the cost of conflict which, in turn, reduces the possibility of conflict.9 Any adversary would think twice before challenging to upset the status quo. However, as Zagare & Kilgour point out, this model of deterrence is deficient in the sense that there is no maximum limit on the cost of conflict (i.e., that is, a state should just keep on accumulating stockpiles of ever more destructive weapons as long as it can monetarily afford them). There is no built-in mechanism within the model that provides the maximum limit. Such a limit can be shown to exist inherently in some models of Perfect Deterrence Theory, beyond which further strengthening of deterrence becomes totally redundant (i.e., making a case for minimum deterrence). This is a desirable feature to have in the model of deterrence. The theory also gives due consideration to the importance of maintaining the ‘status quo’ which is somehow neglected in the past. The status quo did not receive much attention, as the focus was heavily on the cost of conflict. The emphasis was on the punishment side. Moreover, States A and B no longer have to be undifferentiated in the theory. If needed, one state can be specifically designated as challenger determined to upset the status quo while the other state, as defender, is determined to keep the status quo. This will better approximate a realworld situation. ‘Capability’ and ‘credibility’ are two critical variables in the analysis of a deterrence situation. In Perfect Deterrence Theory, capability is defined as one’s ability to hurt the other (i.e., adversary) while credibility is defined in terms of one’s willingness to fight rather than capitulate. These variables together with other utility variables (e.g., a utility for A wins, B wins, Status Quo and Conflict) are used to determine rational choices and the conditions under which those choices exist. These conditions usually take the form of mathematical inequalities and many insights are gained through analyzing these inequalities. At some decision points in the game (or tree),10 it may be necessary that States A and B update their belief about the other’s determination to fight rather than capitulate based on conditional probability.11 Zagare & Kilgour provide all mathematical details in the appendix section of their book.3, 12 Their work is firmly founded on logic and, hence, model predictions are the direct consequences of a rational decision-making process. In practice, rational choices are nothing but Nash equilibria. Determining these choices simply amounts to finding Nash equilibria. There can be more than one Nash equilibrium under a given condition, which is perhaps a less desirable feature of the theory as it loses predictability. It is simply not possible to know which course of action will be taken in a situation with multiple Nash equilibria.13 Hence, multiple equilibria may be able to explain the success or failure of a deterrence situation that has occurred in the past. One can only hypothesize which one might have been in play. In the theory, only a Nash equilibrium that fulfills Selten’s ‘Perfectness’ condition (i.e., being subgame-perfect) is thought to be a ‘rational’ choice. This condition is used to eliminate all choices which have at least one incredible (a technical term as explained later) decision made along the decision path. Only subgame-perfect Nash equilibria are of true interest as they are free of irrationalities. Accordingly, Zagare & Kilgour have named their deterrence theory with this game theory term ‘Perfect’ in front. It does not mean ‘Perfect Deterrence’ in the ordinary sense of ‘perfect,’ as such deterrence has never existed and never will. Perfect Deterrence Theory has been specifically chosen to be the basis of our study for these reasons. We sought to draw out valuable implications for South Korea based on Zagare & Kilgour’s findings.3 Basically, what can this deterrence theory tell us about strengthening the security of South Korea and continuing to preserve peace and stability in the face of North Korea’s growing nuclear threat? In the next chapter, basic concepts in Perfect Deterrence Theory are reviewed.

#### Perfect deterrence theory is accurate and robust.

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The specific purpose is to fill this evidentiary gap by subjecting perfect deterrence theory—a recently developed theory of general deterrence—to a systematic test. I do so for several reasons. First, perfect deterrence theory (Zagare and Kilgour 2000) is supported by a **formal logic** with explicit theoretical expectations that facilitates empirical testing. Second, several preliminary tests of perfect deterrence theory have rendered promising, albeit provisional results (Senese and Quackenbush 2003; Quackenbush and Zagare 2006).1 And finally, as Huth (1999) points out, standard formulations of deterrence—to the extent that they have been explored empirically—are without compelling support. Perfect deterrence theory is an axiomatically distinct theoretical alternative to classical deterrence theory, which focuses on ideas such as brinkmanship and mutual assured destruction. Perfect deterrence theory highlights the importance of two variables: capability and credibility. A state’s threat is capable if the threatened party believes that it would be worse off if the threat were carried out than if it were not. For example, if Defender has a capable threat, then Challenger prefers Status Quo to Conflict. One additional equilibrium—Steadfast Deterrence Equilibrium—exists. As with the Certain Deterrence Equilibrium, Status Quo is the only possible outcome. However, this equilibrium exists at intermediate and **high values of Defender credibility**, and thus coexists with equilibria of other types. Therefore, through the Steadfast Deterrence Equilibrium, perfect deterrence theory predicts that the Status Quo is always possible as long as Defender’s threat is capable. Thus, Zagare and Kilgour’s (2000:149) claim that successful “deterrence could conceivably emerge under (almost) any conditions in a one-sided deterrence relationship.” hese independent variables constitute the equilibrium outcome predictions of perfect deterrence theory. However, a number of alternative explanations of international behavior exist. Therefore, several control variables, representing the major foci of recent conflict studies, are used to test the robustness of the results obtained. Some of these variables (particularly relative power and S score) are components of the utility functions that form the basis of the equilibrium predictions to be tested. However, it is possible that these variables exert an independent influence on deterrence outcomes in addition to their influence on equilibrium predictions. Furthermore, since these individual components are combined in a different, nonlinear fashion within the unilateral deterrence game to generate equilibrium predictions, multicollinearity between the equilibrium predictions and the control variables is not present.16 To examine the robustness of these results against alternative explanations, the full multinomial logit model was run including the control variables. The full model, shown in Table 3, produces a highly significant fit to the data. The results of the full model indicate that the predictions of perfect deterrence theory are quite robust. Therefore, perfect deterrence theory’s predictions of Status Quo, Defender Concedes, Challenger Defeated, and Conflict are all strongly supported by the empirical record, and these predictions are robust against alternative explanations. Thus, perfect deterrence theory provides a proportional reduction in the error of non-status quo predictions of 20 percent. Although improvement is always possible, these results nonetheless support perfect deterrence theory.

#### The military is necessary for the stability and to deter aggression

White house archives 02. The archived White House website is a useful resource for photographs, speeches, press releases, and other public domain records of presidency. White House Archives. “Maintaining Military Advantage Through Science and Technology Investment.” National Archives and Records Administration, National Archives and Records Administration, 2002, <https://clintonwhitehouse4.archives.gov/WH/EOP/OSTP/nssts/html/chapt2.html#:~:text=U.S.%20military%20capabilities%20not%20only,defense%20commitments%20around%20the%20world>.

Our defense science and technology investment enables us to counter military threats and to overcome any advantages that adversaries may seek. It also expands the military options available to policymakers, including options other than warfare in pursuing the objectives of promoting stability and preventing conflict. Science and technology help to counter special threats such as terrorism that cannot be met by conventional warfighting forces, and they underpin the intelligence capabilities necessary to assess the dangers our nation faces. The U.S. military also relies on science and technology to make our advanced military systems more affordable through their entire life cycle. And by maintaining a close dialogue with the warfighters, the defense S&T community not only remains sensitive to user needs but also sensitizes the user to the possibilities that technology offers for responding to evolving threats. U.S. military capabilities not only protect the United States and its citizens from direct threats, they also help maintain peace and stability in regions critical to U.S. interests and underwrite U.S. defense commitments around the world. Maintaining a strong defense capability means that the U.S. Armed Forces, and the Department of Defense more broadly, must be prepared to conduct the following kinds of missions, as described in the President's national security strategy: Deterring and defeating aggression in major regional conflicts. U.S. forces must be capable of offsetting the military power of regional states with interests opposed to those of the United States and its allies. To do this, the United States must be able to deter and, if necessary, defeat aggression, in concert with regional allies, by projecting and sustaining U.S. power in two major regional conflicts that occur nearly simultaneously. Providing credible overseas presence. Some U.S. forces must be forward deployed or stationed in key overseas regions in peacetime. These deployments contribute to a more stable and secure international environment by demonstrating U.S. commitment, deterring aggression, and underwriting important bilateral and multilateral security relationships. Forward stationing and periodic deployments also permit U.S. forces to gain familiarity with overseas operating environments, promote joint and combined training among friendly forces, improve interoperability with friendly forces throughout the world, and respond in a timely manner to crises. Conducting contingency operations. The United States must be prepared to undertake a wide range of contingency operations in support of U.S. interests. These operations include smaller-scale combat operations, multilateral peace operations, noncombatant evacuations, counterterrorism activities, and humanitarian and disaster relief operations. Countering weapons of mass destruction. While the United States is redoubling its efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and associated missile delivery systems, we must at the same time improve our military capabilities to deter and prevent the effective use of these weapons. We are pursuing this objective by sustaining adequate retaliatory capabilities and by increasing our capabilities to defend against weapons of mass destruction, to locate and neutralize or destroy them before they are used during a conflict, and to fight in an environment in which such weapons have been used. Finally, to meet all these requirements successfully, U.S. forces must be capable of responding quickly and operating effectively across a wide range of environments. That is, they must be ready to fight. Such high combat readiness demands well qualified and motivated people; adequate amounts of modern, well-maintained equipment; realistic training; strategic mobility; and sufficient support and sustainment capabilities.

## Alt fails

### Empirics

#### Alt fails – US Military isn’t perfect but Obama admin proves demilitarization is impossible

John R. Deni, 10-30-2015, "Obama’s Failure to Demilitarize U.S. Foreign Policy," War on the Rocks, https://warontherocks.com/2015/10/obamas-failure-to-demilitarize-u-s-foreign-policy/Dr. John R. Deni is a Research Professor of Security Studies at the Army War College’s Strategic Studies Institute.//CDMoney

The Obama administration has received much attention for its policy of rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region. The rebalance has been described as President Obama’s signature foreign policy initiative. Launched in 2009, it has received much attention from academics, practitioners, think tanks, and the media. In reality, the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific has been more evolutionary than revolutionary; a U.S. shift in focus and grand strategy began well before President Obama’s inauguration in January 2009. If the Obama presidency in fact initiated a revolutionary rebalancing, it was his effort to rebalance American foreign policy generally from over-reliance on the military and toward greater reliance on diplomacy and development. Despite a concerted effort, when viewed through several lenses it seems clear that demilitarization has failed and U.S. foreign policy remains very, perhaps overly, militarized. As a result, the Pentagon can expect to be handed messy military operations short of inter-state war that it may not be prepared, equipped, or organized to handle efficiently or effectively. In the 2008 presidential campaign, candidate Barack Obama pledged to correct what he perceived as a fundamental imbalance between the three-legged stool that comprises U.S. foreign policy ­— defense, diplomacy, and development — through such measures as expanding the State Department’s Foreign Service. Once in office, the Obama administration expressed its intent to rebalance away from defense and toward diplomacy and development though a variety of strategies as well as policy statements. Most recently, the 2015 National Security Strategy explicitly notes that military force is not the sole means of achieving U.S. national security objectives, arguing, “our first line of action is principled and clear-eyed diplomacy, combined with the central role of development in the forward defense and promotion of America’s interests.” In addition to published strategies and policy pronouncements, the Obama administration repeatedly emphasized diplomacy and development in policy implementation over, or instead of, large-scale military measures. Across a number of issues, the administration has sought to rely less on overwhelming American military power to accomplish foreign policy objectives. A short list of examples could include maintaining drawdown timelines in Iraq and (with some modification) in Afghanistan, “leading from behind” in Libya, nuclear negotiations with Iran, and relying on sanctions to pressure Russia’s withdrawal from Ukraine. Relying on diplomatic, political, and development-based solutions typically takes time to bear fruit. In contrast, wielding military force often yields results more quickly, even if the apparent success is illusory in the long run. Critics of the Obama approach conflate the emphasis on diplomacy with indecision, and hence weakness. However, the tragedy of President Obama’s rebalance toward diplomacy and development is not that it represents an America in retreat, but rather that the rebalance has not succeeded in demilitarizing U.S. foreign policy, as seen in three separate contexts. First, available fiscal data show the continuing dominance of defense spending relative to international affairs spending. Even under sequestration scenarios, that budget will continue to dwarf the amount of money spent on diplomacy and development. Second, despite congressional concerns about the risks of granting the Department of Defense increased authority in security cooperation, Congress continues to do just that. The Department of Defense continues to expand its activities into areas over which the State Department previously had purview. Finally, based on several examples over the last two decades or more, many experts, practitioners, and observers have concluded that the civilian instruments of American foreign policy simply lack the capacity and capability to handle the complex, large-scale challenges facing U.S. national security. In particular, the challenge of failed or failing states has laid bare Washington’s inability to implement so-called “whole of government” solutions. As a result, the Department of Defense continues to be the problem-solving agency of choice for legislators as well as those in the executive branch. The implications of a continued militarization of American foreign policy are significant, most consequentially for the U.S. military. Despite political intent and rhetoric, the Department of Defense is very likely to be relied upon again and again to achieve national security objectives, both within and outside its particular areas of competence. As such, it should take some preparatory steps. First, the military services should make a more holistic, institutional commitment to embrace security cooperation as a core mission. There is some evidence that this is underway, but there is much room for improvement, especially in terms of doctrine, acquisition, and personnel policies. Second, the military needs to improve its ability to assess whether and where security cooperation tools are likely to be successful. All too often, the U.S. military becomes a captive of its “can-do” attitude, despite what seem like obvious and insurmountable challenges in hindsight. Finally, if the best military advice is ignored by senior policymakers on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, the Department of Defense needs to recognize and prepare for “muddling through” missions it may only have a small chance of achieving. Hence, the U.S. military must prepare for a future not terribly unlike the very recent past, characterized by messy stability operations, hybrid warfare, and disorder short of major interstate war.

### Russia

#### Alt is a romanticized pipe dream of demilitarization – Ukraine proves Russia will take advantage

**Broad, 22** (William J. Broad, 2-5-2022, accessed on 7-20-2022, The New York Times, "Ukraine Gave Up Nuclear Weapons 30 Years Ago. Today There Are Regrets.", https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/05/science/ukraine-nuclear-weapons.html)

At the end of the Cold War, the **third largest nuclear power on earth was** not Britain, France or China. It was **Ukraine**. The Soviet collapse, a slow-motion downfall that culminated in December 1991, resulted in the newly independent Ukraine inheriting roughly 5,000 nuclear arms that Moscow had stationed on its soil. Underground silos on its military bases held long-range missiles that carried up to 10 thermonuclear warheads, each far stronger than the bomb that leveled Hiroshima. Only Russia and the United States had more weapons. **The removal of this arsenal often gets hailed as a triumph of arms control.** Diplomats and peace activists cast Ukraine as a model citizen in a world of would-be nuclear powers. But **history shows** the **denuclearization to have been a chaotic upheaval that shook with infighting, reversals and discord among the country’s government and military.** At the time, both Ukrainian and American experts questioned the wisdom of atomic disarmament. The **deadly weapons**, some argued, **were the only reliable means of deterring Russian aggression**. Today Ukraine has no easy path to producing or acquiring the materials to build a bomb. Even so, the nuclear genie is once again stirring as Russian troops encircle the nation and wage a shadow war in its easternmost provinces. “**We gave away the capability for nothing**,” said Andriy Zahorodniuk, a former defense minister of Ukraine. Referring to the security assurances Ukraine won in exchange for its nuclear arms, he added: “Now, every time somebody offers us to sign a strip of paper, the response is, ‘Thank you very much. We already had one of those some time ago.’” Western analysts say the current Ukrainian mood tends to romanticize the atomic past. “The gist is, ‘We had the weapons, gave them up and now look what’s happening,’” said Mariana Budjeryn, a Ukraine specialist at Harvard University. “On a policy level, I see no movement toward any kind of reconsideration. But on a popular level, that’s the narrative.” “Regret is part of it,” Dr. Budjeryn, a Ukrainian native, added in an interview. “The other part is whatever one feels as a result of being subjected to injustice.” At first, Ukraine rushed to get the Soviet arms off its soil. Bombs, artillery shells, land mines and the relatively small warheads atop short-range missiles were the easiest to relocate and most likely to fall into unfriendly hands. More difficult to move were the long-range missiles, which could weigh 100 tons and rise to a height of nearly 90 feet. In January 1992, a month after the Soviet Union ceased to exist, Ukraine’s president and defense minister ordered military commanders and their men to pledge loyalty to the new country — a move that would exert administrative control over the remaining arms. Many refused, and the soldiers who managed Ukraine’s nuclear forces fell into a period of tense bewilderment over the fate of the arsenal and its operational status. **Volodymyr Tolubko**, a former nuclear-base commander who had been elected to the Ukrainian Parliament, **argued that** Kyiv should never give up its atomic edge. In April 1992, he told the assembly that **it was “romantic and premature” for Ukraine to declare itself a nonnuclear state** and insisted that it should retain at least some of its long-range warheads. **A residual missile force, he declared, would be enough to “deter any aggressor.”** While his stance never gained wide support, “it compounded existing tensions,” according to a detailed history of Ukraine’s nuclear disarmament. In the summer of 1993, John J. Mearsheimer, a prominent international relations theorist at the University of Chicago who was no stranger to controversy, lent his voice to the issue of atomic retention. He argued in Foreign Affairs that a nuclear arsenal was “imperative” if Ukraine was “to maintain peace.” The deterrent, he added, would ensure that the Russians, “who have a history of bad relations with Ukraine, do not move to reconquer it.” In Kyiv, the government in 1993 went so far as to consider seizing operational control of its nuclear missiles and bombers. But that never came to pass. Instead, Ukraine punted. It demanded that, in exchange for nuclear disarmament, it would need ironclad security guarantees. That was the heart of the agreement signed in Moscow early in 1994 by Russia, Ukraine and the United States. In late 1994, the pledges got fleshed out. The accord, known as **the Budapest Memorandum, signed by Russia, Ukraine, Britain and the United States, promised that none of the nations would use force or threats against Ukraine and all would respect its sovereignty and existing borders. The agreement also vowed that, if aggression took place, the signatories would seek immediate action from the United Nations Security Council to aid Ukraine**. While Kyiv had failed to get what it wanted — the kind of legally binding guarantees that would come with a formal treaty ratified by the U.S. Senate — it received assurances that Washington would take its political commitments as seriously as its legal obligations, according to Dr. Budjeryn, a research analyst at the Managing the Atom project at Harvard’s Kennedy School. In May 1996, Ukraine saw the last of its nuclear arms transported back to Russia. The repatriations had taken a half decade. What undid the diplomatic feat was the “collective failure” of Washington and Kyiv to take into account the rise of someone like Vladimir V. Putin, Steven Pifer, a negotiator of the Budapest Memorandum and a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine now at Stanford University, said in an interview. After Russian troops invaded Crimea in early 2014 and stepped up a proxy war in eastern Ukraine, Mr. Putin dismissed the Budapest accord as null and void. “They’ve been fighting a low-grade war for eight years,” Mr. Pifer, who just returned from Kyiv, said of the Ukrainians. “You can’t find bullets in the stores. A lot of civilians are arming up.” In Ukraine, the Crimean invasion and the lengthy war led to a series of calls for atomic rearmament, according to Dr. Budjeryn, author of “Inheriting the Bomb,” a forthcoming book from Johns Hopkins University Press. In March 2014, **Volodymyr Ohryzko**, a former foreign minister, **argued that Ukraine now had the moral and legal right to reestablish its nuclear status**. In July, an ultranationalist parliamentary bloc introduced a bill for arsenal reacquisition. Later that year, a poll showed that **public approval stood at** nearly **50 percent for nuclear rearmament**. Last year, Ukraine’s ambassador to Germany, Andriy Melnyk, said **Kyiv might look to nuclear arms if it cannot become a member of NATO. “How else can we guarantee our defense?”** Mr. Melnyk asked.

### T/ – Demil esc

#### Demilitarization decks deterrence theory, which guarantees escalation

**Mazarr 20** (Michael Mazarr, Senior Political Scientist and Researcher at RAND Corporation, 12-3-2020, accessed on 7-20-2022, NL ARMS Netherlands Annual Review of Military Studies 2020: Deterrence in the 21st Century—Insights from Theory and Practice, "Three Fundamental Conditions for Successful Deterrence", )

Much of **classic deterrence theory can be boiled down to a simple proposition: The potential aggressor must believe that the defender has the capability and will to do what it threatens**.36 This criterion is, again, perceptual: The question is not whether the defender actually has such capabilities or will, it is whether the aggressor believes that it does. **Deterrence depends on the perception of the “threatener’s determination to fulfil the threat if need be”—and, more importantly, on the potential aggressor’s “conviction that the threat will be carried out”**. 37 **Deterrence fails, Bruce Russett concludes, “when the attacker decides that the defender’s threat is not likely to be fulfilled.**” 38 This axiom highlights two distinct factors—capability and will. Perceived weakness in either can undermine deterrence. Capability is straightforward enough. As suggested earlier, the immediate, local balance of forces is not always a key determinant of deterrence success—but **a defender’s broadly perceived suite of capabilities, military and otherwise, must be strong enough to convince a potential attacker that it is likely to pay a heavy price for aggression.** Will is a much more abstract variable and easily subject to misperception. Aggressors have repeatedly convinced themselves that a defender did not have the will to respond, especially in cases of extended deterrence. Will is partly a function of the national interests involved: If a defender is seen to have vital interests at stake, a potential attacker will believe threats of response. **Aggressors can try to undermine a defender’s willingness to respond by using “salami slicing” approaches—using a long series of low-level aggressions to change the facts on the ground** without ever taking action that would justify a major response. Such strategies are designed to put the defender in a dilemma: It cannot respond to every small violation, but if it does not begin to punish minor transgressions, its strategic position will erode over time. The United States confronts this challenge with Chinese and Russian grey-zone campaigns today.

#### NATO is key to global peace – demilitarization would cause China & Russia escalation

**Binnendijk, 19** (Hans Binnendijk, 3-19-2019, accessed on 7-20-2022, Defense News, "5 consequences of a life without NATO", https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/03/19/5-consequences-of-a-life-without-nato/)

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

## **Nuclear Deterrence Good**

#### **Effective Nuclear deterrence reduces the risk for both Nuclear and Conventional conflict between Nuclear Powers.**

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The eventuality of a nuclear attack has always represented one of the most dangerous threats to the safety **of a country, inasmuch the precision and lethality of nuclear devices permit an adversary to cripple in an extremely short period of time** **the command, control and communication (C3) structure of the attacked state, in what is called a “decapitation strike”** (Walton, 2010: 215). **The only effective deterrent for such an attack remains the threat of another nuclear strike, in what is called a “second-strike capability”.** Anyway, today’s nuclear threats are extremely different from the ones that lead to the establishment of the classic balance of terror during the Cold War. In a 2008 report, the US Secretary of Defense indicates as the current most urgent causes for concern terrorism and nuclear proliferation (US Secretary of Defense, 2008: 9). The two phenomena are closely linked, since the two most likely scenarios of terrorist acquisition of nuclear weapons – acquisition of HEU (highly enriched uranium) with or without the assistance of a government and theft or transfer of a completed weapon – require the existence of a nuclear arsenal in a sympathising or unreliable country (Gallucci, 2006: 53). As previously said, the main strategy developed to deal with the threat of a nuclear attack conducted by a non-state actor is expanded deterrence; anyhow, this measure must be implemented by steps to prevent horizontal nuclear proliferation, that is, the growth in the number of actors armed with nuclear weapons. In fact, the enlargement of the nuclear club has increased the likelihood of a nuclear strike taking place: since a single weapon is sufficient to conduct such an attack, it can be deduced that, while vertical proliferation (the growth in the number of warheads within a country) does not make the eventuality of such an attack more likely, horizontal proliferation does. Nuclear deterrence has traditionally been associated with the neorealist view that a world with more nuclear actors, and ideally a world composed only by nuclear actors, is the prerequisite to a lasting peace founded on the fear of nuclear war (Berkowitz, 1985: 115). However, this model does not consider the current relevance of non-state actors and so-called rogue states and their asymmetrical relationship with the traditional players. One of the most serious challenges to nuclear deterrence in the Second Nuclear Age is, in fact, represented by the issue of its applicability to actors with a different behaviour than the Cold War-era US and USSR (Walton, 2010: 214). These new actors may not conform to a model of rational behaviour, the latter being a fundamental prerequisite for deterrence to work. Hence, the major contemporary challenge for nuclear deterrence is to find ways to adapt itself to actors that may be non-rational: this means forcing them to assume a rational behaviour. The reduction of the “nuclear threshold” referred to in the US Nuclear Posture Review can be read in the light of these facts not as an introduction of flexible response strategies in nuclear policy, but as an action consistent with the need for improved deterrence schemes. Being credibility far more influential than capability as a variable that decides the effectiveness of a nuclear deterrent (Lowther, 2009: 32), the aggressive policy of nuclear pre-emption which is discussed in the above said document and in the US National Military Strategy to combat Weapons of Mass Destruction (US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2006: 18) can be seen as a way to make the prospect of nuclear attack more real in the minds of the potential enemies of the US. Since the nuclear taboo does not apply to terrorist organisations or rogue states ruled by irrational leaders, the only way to counter them is acting as if its validity was lost also for the traditional actors (in this case, the US). The matter is different with regard to the relationships within the circle of the established nuclear powers. In this case, nuclear deterrence is based on the schemes of the Cold War, as the policies of Russia and the US show. In fact, the current expenditure for nuclear weapons, despite significant cuts, is still extremely high, as previously mentioned. China has a considerably inferior arsenal compared to that of the two former superpowers, sufficient only to assure a policy of “minimal deterrence” (Lieber and Press, 2006: 8). The concept of minimal nuclear deterrence could be the most suitable to today’s security issues regarding the relations among declared nuclear armed states, and there are sectors of the public opinion lobbying for an even greater reduction in the nuclear stockpiles of the US: among the others, this position is supported by the Federation of the American Scientists (Kristensen et al., 2009: 21). Anyway, at the moment the official strategy of the US is oriented differently, and the same can be said for Russia. While at the beginning of the First Nuclear Age the US relied on nuclear weapons to counterbalance Soviet conventional forces, today the situation has reversed, and Russia keeps an apparently anachronistic large storage of nuclear weapons to cope with the drastic reductions which took place after the Cold War in its non-nuclear offensive capabilities. NATO has stated in its Deterrence and Defence Posture Review that the current amount of its strategic nuclear weapons is dependent on the reciprocal level of these weapons on the Russian soil, so it is very unlikely that there will be drastic reductions, similar to those that occurred at the end of the Cold War, by the US and its allies in the foreseeable future. **Nuclear Deterrence of Non-nuclear Attack** The role of nuclear deterrence in averting the threat of a conventional attack is currently proving to be alive especially with regard to non-traditional nuclear actors, that is, non-declared nuclear powers, states outside the NPT and states that have violated the terms of the NPT. Countries in this category have not been attacked militarily in recent times, and there is some evidence that their nuclear capabilities could have played a major role in defending them. It is the case of North Korea, a part of Bush’s “axis of evil”: her policy towards the development of WMD programs was far more aggressive than that of Iraq (on her current and past programs: NTI, 2012), but she has not suffered any attack by the US nor by any of their local allies. It can be argued that it was her very progress in the development of WMDs, and especially of nuclear weapons, that permitted her to avoid an external aggression. Given the sensitivity of the American public opinion toward the number of casualties during recent conflicts, it is easy to understand that a retaliatory strike conducted by an actor facing foreign invasion is considered as an unacceptable condition by the US. On the other side, the threat of a nuclear attack should be questioned the survival of the state apparatus must be considered seriously: in fact, the price to pay to break the nuclear taboo is high, but certainly lower than that of regime capitulation: so, these actors gain in credibility what they lack in capability. **Nuclear deterrence has a role also in averting conventional attacks in a regional context. The conflict between India and Pakistan exemplifies this point: in fact, despite the existence of sources of tension between the two countries, t**hese actors have not engaged in major open hostilities since their development of a nuclear arsenal. **The fear of nuclear escalation may be the explanation for the restraint of these governments in an area like Kashmir**, where since the acquisition of nuclear weapons both sides have only supported a low-intensity conflict (Joeck, 1997: 36). In any case, nuclear deterrence of non-nuclear attack seems inconsistent with regard to the traditional nuclear actors. In fact, these have continued to experience major conventional conflicts (it is, for example, the case of Russia with Georgia). It is possible that the threat of a nuclear retaliation lacks credibility when only the aggressor is armed with nuclear weapons – as the behaviour of many nuclear powers in time of war may lead to think – but this would be hardly true in the case of a WMD attack. In this respect, the biggest innovations are those developed by the US within its strategy to combat global terrorism. The same policy of expanded deterrence which has been discussed above is applied also to non-nuclear threats, in particular with regard to the scenario of a terrorist use of WMDs (Huntley, 2006: 49-50). In the National Military Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, Washington has confirmed its willingness to pursue a policy aimed at “dissuading, deterring and defeating those who seek to harm the US directly […] especially extremist enemies with weapons of mass destruction” (US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2006: 9). Nuclear deterrence is the most likely way to counter terrorism to be used in the future, since pre-emptive war lacks popular support and has been recognised to be an excessively expensive strategy. As Trager and Zagorcheva argue, nuclear deterrence may prove to be an effective method to counter the threat posed by non-state actors, as long as terrorists’ political aims will be influenceable by states (2005/2006: 88). **Conclusion** **Nuclear deterrence is still relevant in dealing with contemporary security issues.** Although different strategies concerning the use of nuclear weapons have been proposed in recent times, their application would be extremely controversial, and for this reason is very unlikely. Nuclear deterrence is still an important part of the official strategy of the US to fight traditional threats, and has been adapted to meet also today’s new security concerns. The other nuclear armed states, the traditional as well as the non-traditional ones, have shown their willingness to maintain the nuclear taboo, pursuing in most cases a minimal deterrence policy. **The threat of a nuclear strike can deter both nuclear and non-nuclear attacks**, the contemporary security scenario requires an evolution of deterrence rather than a discharge of the concept as a whole. In fact, nuclear weapons are still among the most powerful and intimidating weapons with which states can arm themselves, and the stability of a system based on deterrence still remains attractive, although since the end of the Cold War maintaining this system has become far more complicated. However, nuclear deterrence alone cannot be the answer to every security issue in the contemporary world, and its application needs to be strengthened by other strategies. The main role it held during the First Nuclear Age is lost, but its relevance, although resized, is not.